



**2018-2019**

## **Rules and Guidelines**

**Starlight Theatre**  
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Kansas City, MO 64132

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## **Section I – Participant Eligibility**

- A. To be eligible for participation in the Blue Star Awards, a school must:
1. be any public or private high school located within a driving distance of 50 miles from Starlight Theatre. All schools that participated in the Blue Star Awards during the 2017-2018 school year are exempt from the mileage policy.
  2. present a musical theatre production to be adjudicated no later than Sunday, March 31, 2019.
  3. complete and submit a Registration Form.
  4. within six weeks of being notified of acceptance, submit a \$75 registration fee.
- B. Productions entered must fall into one of the following categories and be billed accordingly in the program:
1. a published musical, operetta, or revue (either currently held by a licensing house or having entered public domain);
  2. an original piece of musical theatre that features an original script, music, and/or lyrics and is covered under a valid copyright; or
  3. an original compilation of material from other sources that is presented as musical theatre with the approval or permission of the original creators or their representatives.

## **Section 2 – Participant Benefits**

- A. **Adjudicator Commentary**  
Starlight Theatre will provide schools with summary reports of adjudicator comments. This is intended to provide the schools with as much educational feedback as possible.
- B. **Fundraising Tickets**  
Starlight Theatre will donate two tickets to a Starlight Theatre Broadway production to each participating school. Schools are to use the tickets for a raffle, auction, or other theatre department fundraising effort. (Please note that ticketing restrictions may apply due to contractual agreements with national tours.)
- C. **Specialized Tours**  
Participating schools are invited to bring theatre students and/or cast members to Starlight Theatre for an in-depth tour of our facility. This tour can be customized if there are areas of particular interest.
- D. **Blue Star Teen Ensemble**  
When Starlight Theatre self-produces a musical requiring a teen ensemble, Blue Star Awards participating students are one of the select pools allowed to audition. Audition notices will go out to teachers to notify them of audition dates and times.

## **Section 3 – School Publicity**

- A. **Program Copy**  
All participating schools are required to include the Blue Star Awards Logo Copy in their show programs. Inclusion of this information serves as an endorsement of the school's production and recognition of participation in the Blue Star Awards. The Blue Star Awards Logo Copy will be provided via e-mail.

## Section 4 – Awards

### A. Award Categories

Awards are presented based on the adjudication and nomination process in the following categories:

- Outstanding Artistic Contribution by a Student\*
- Outstanding Orchestra
- Outstanding Costume Design and Construction, Tiers I & II
- Outstanding Scenic Design and Construction, Tiers I & II
- Outstanding Hair and Makeup Design
- Outstanding Lighting Design
- Outstanding Technical Crew
- Outstanding Actor in an Ensemble Role
- Outstanding Actress in an Ensemble Role
- Outstanding Ensemble
- Outstanding Actor in a Featured Role
- Outstanding Actress in a Featured Role
- Outstanding Actor in a Supporting Role
- Outstanding Actress in a Supporting Role
- Outstanding Actor in a Lead Role
- Outstanding Actress in a Lead Role
- Outstanding Overall Production

\*Outstanding Artistic Contribution by a Student

- a. This award is intended for a student or students who contributed to the direction, music direction, and/or choreography of the production.
- b. To qualify, the student/s had to have taken full responsibility for directing one or more scenes, teaching and working with performers/musicians in learning one or more songs, and/or creating and teaching the choreography for one or more songs.
- c. To be considered for the award, the following must be submitted **no later than ten days (not business days) prior to the first performance** of a school's musical:
  1. the Outstanding Artistic Contribution by a Student Nomination Form;
  2. a one-page essay written by the student/s, which details his/her/their contributions to the production as well as what he/she/they learned from the experience (offering specifics about the applicable scene/s and/or song/s); and
  3. a recommending teacher letter of 500 words or less providing details about the student's/s' contributions and why he/she feels the student/s should be considered for the award.
- d. Multiple students may be considered together for this award; however, no more than three students who worked equally on the same aspect/s of the production will be considered in tandem.

### B. Eligibility Restrictions

1. If any adults are used for lead, supporting, or featured roles, then the adult performer/s will not be considered for a nomination for either Outstanding Actor/Actress in a Lead Role, Outstanding Actor/Actress in a Supporting Role, or Outstanding Actor/Actress in a Featured Role, and the

school will not be considered for a nomination for Outstanding Overall Production. Additionally, although commentary may be provided for youth or adult cast members, only high school students are eligible to receive nominations and awards.

2. Adults may be used as ensemble members in a production but may only comprise 5% or less of the total ensemble. The ensemble is defined as all cast members that cannot be considered as having lead, supporting, or featured roles.
  - a. For the Outstanding Overall Production category, if more than 5% of the ensemble is composed of adults, the school will not be considered.
  - b. For the Outstanding Ensemble category, if any amount of adults is used as ensemble members, the school will not be considered.
3. For the Outstanding Orchestra category, only schools composed of 75% or more student musicians will be eligible.
4. For Outstanding Scenic Design and Construction or Outstanding Costume Design and Construction, schools that rent 50% or more of their sets or costumes will be ineligible. Additionally, for both categories, students must contribute at least 50% to the design *and* 50% to the construction to be eligible.
5. For all technical categories, if the majority of work was done by adults, the school will not be eligible for the applicable category.
6. Determination of eligibility will be based on information provided by the school in the Production Information Form.

#### C. Budget Tiers

The Outstanding Costume Design and Construction and Scenic Design and Construction categories are divided into two tiers based on the amounts schools have budgeted for the categories. The budget tiers are defined annually as higher or lower than the median of all schools' budgets provided on the Production Information Form.

#### D. Technical Achievement Award

1. This award is intended to recognize a student/s who has/have given his/her/their time and talent in a backstage capacity (i.e. stage manager, deck/set crew, board operator, dresser) or design field (i.e. lighting, scenic, costume) for the current year's Blue Star Awards production. Students at all high school grade levels may be considered for this award; however, no more than three students who worked equally on the same technical aspect/s of the production will be considered in tandem.
2. To be considered, the following must be submitted by Monday, March 25, 2019:
  - a. Technical Achievement Award Application;
  - b. a recommending teacher letter of 500 words or less discussing the student's/s' contribution to the current production and to the school's musical theatre program overall;
  - c. a one-page essay written by the student/s, which details his/her/their contributions to the production as well as what he/she/they learned from the experience (offering specifics about the applicable backstage and/or design contributions); and
  - d. support materials pertaining to the student's/s' technical field/s of expertise.

E. Rising Star Scholarships

1. Two \$2,500 Rising Star Scholarships are awarded to one female and one male high school senior who, during their high school career, made outstanding contributions to their high school's musical theatre program, including the current year's Blue Star Awards participating production.
2. Applicants do not have to study Theatre or Musical Theatre in college to be considered.
3. To be considered, the following materials must be submitted by Monday, March 25, 2019:
  - a. Rising Star Scholarship Application;
  - b. a high school academic transcript (copy acceptable);
  - c. a résumé of work, volunteer, and theatrical activities;
  - d. an acceptance letter/proof of admission to an institution of higher education;
  - e. a 500-word or less essay describing his/her musical theatre experiences at his/her high school, including what he/she learned about him/herself because of these experiences, and why he/she chose his/her anticipated major; and
  - f. a recommending teacher letter of 500 words or less describing the student's participation in and contribution to the school's musical theatre program during his/her high school career.

F. Community Impact Award

1. This award is intended to recognize a high school musical theatre program that found a way/s to connect its participating production with its community in a meaningful fashion.
2. To be considered, the following materials must be submitted by Monday, March 25, 2019:
  - a. a one-to-two-page summary of your community engagement initiative, including examples of cast/crew participation;
  - b. additional supplemental materials (flyers, letter of support from the community, project outline, etc.); and
  - c. one to four photos from the project.

### **Section 5 – Adjudication**

A. Three adjudicators attend each registered production and complete a comprehensive written response, which includes commentary that is later provided to each participating school.

B. High-Definition Filming

1. Every production is filmed in high definition by Starlight Theatre to ensure that each participating school is fairly and accurately represented. The video component will only be used by the Blue Star Awards Nomination Committee to reach final decisions on nominations and winners.
2. Unless it is simply not possible, schools must provide a central/prime location in the house of the theatre from which to film, rather than a sound or lighting booth.

C. Adjudicator Tickets

Schools must reserve six tickets (two per adjudicator) at no cost during their show's run as requested. Once adjudicators are chosen for each show, Starlight Theatre's Education and Outreach Department will contact coordinating teachers to request that tickets be set aside at Will Call for adjudicators to pick up at the performance.

#### D. High-Volume Weekends

Increasingly each year, the highest volume of productions taking place in the fall perform during the month of November. Over the years, as we have added new schools to the program and returning schools have made scheduling adjustments, the number of schools performing on and around November weekends has increased substantially. This yearly increase has made it incredibly difficult (approaching impossible) to accommodate all of the related adjudicator and videography scheduling. With this in mind, the following guidelines have been adopted with regard to **November performances** in order to ensure Starlight Theatre can properly manage the intense scheduling requirements for this period:

1. In the order that their registration forms are received, the first ten schools returning to the program from the prior year will automatically be accommodated with adjudicator and videography scheduling for each week of November so long as their registration form was received by the deadline date. Returning schools that do not submit the form by the deadline date forego their priority status.
2. For those schools over and above the first ten whose productions fall in these weeks, Starlight Theatre will make every effort to accommodate their productions depending on the final layout of the full scheduling.
3. Schools over and above the first ten whose productions fall in these weeks that *cannot be accommodated* after every attempt is made will be contacted by Starlight Theatre's Education Manager to request one of the following in order to ensure participation:
  - a. that an additional performance that can be adjudicated and/or filmed be added, or
  - b. that access be granted for adjudicators and/or the videography team to another performance that will take place, but was not included in the original production schedule listing (i.e. an all-school matinee performance, a "friends and family" performance, etc.)
4. Each year, schools returning from the previous season that submit their registration materials by the deadline will receive priority scheduling. New schools, plus returning schools that did not meet the registration deadline but wish to register and whose performances fall in these high-volume weeks, will only be admitted based on Starlight Theatre's ability to accommodate them once returning schools that met the deadline for registration have been scheduled. New schools and returning schools that did not meet the registration deadline will be subject to the requests noted in Section 5D, 3a and 3b above.

#### E. Double Casting

If a school double casts one or more roles in their production, the coordinating teacher must notify Starlight Theatre's Education and Outreach Department at the time of registration. The school must select one set of cast members to be adjudicated and inform Starlight Theatre regarding which dates and times the selected cast will be performing. Multiple students may not be adjudicated for the same role.

#### F. Evaluation Areas

Adjudicators consider a multitude of areas when evaluating each Blue Star Awards category. The following pages contain the areas they are asked to evaluate per category.

## *Technical Categories*

### *Artistic Contribution by a Student (Direction, Music Direction, and/or Choreography):*

#### *Direction*

- Believability and clarity of story and plot
- Dialogue interpretation
- Dynamics between performers
- Animation and energy of performers
- Performance level consistency
- Character consistency
- Physical pictures
- Effective use of space
- Effective use of performers

#### *Music Direction*

- Clarity and diction
- Animation and energy of performers
- Pitch and tonality
- Rhythm
- Vocal balance (i.e. ensemble to principals)
- Overall balance (i.e. orchestra to performers)
- Consistency of musical elements

#### *Choreography*

- Appropriate for period and location of the show
- Inventive and creative
- Use of effective patterns
- Use of space
- Variety of movement
- Execution by performers
- Animation and energy of performers
- Level of difficulty
- Visual consistency of choreographic elements

#### *Orchestra*

- Balance with stage performers
- Balance between orchestral parts
- Pitch and tonality
- Appropriate tempi
- Rhythm
- Execution
- Elements of professionalism (i.e. dress, deportment, etiquette)

### ***Scenic Design and Construction***

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained location
- Ease of movement
- Appeared sturdy and safe
- Functional
- Complete and finished
- Size appropriate
- Well-executed

### ***Lighting Design***

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained location
- Helped to focus the attention of the audience
- Well-executed

### ***Costume Design and Construction***

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained character
- Established and maintained location
- Gave performers full range of motion
- Well-executed (fit, neatness, attention to detail, etc...)

### ***Hair and Makeup Design***

- Established and maintained mood
- Established and maintained time period
- Established and maintained location
- Established and maintained character
- Well-executed (fit, neatness, attention to detail, etc...)

### ***Outstanding Technical Crew (adjudicated from curtain to curtain\*)***

#### ***Lighting Crew***

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Executed cues with accuracy
- Completed their tasks with no performance interruptions
- Transitioned smoothly between cues

### ***Sound Crew***

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Executed cues with accuracy
- Maintained balance between performers and orchestra
- Maintained balance among performers
- Provided clarity

### ***Deck/Set Crew***

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed their tasks with no performance interruptions

### ***Flying Effects Crew (re: flying of performers only)***

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed tasks with no performance interruptions
- Appeared to be safely executed

### ***Costume Crew***

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed their tasks within a timely manner
- Accuracy and completion of the performer's look

### ***Hair and Makeup Crew***

***\* Pre-show application as well as curtain-to-curtain maintenance are considered.***

- Helped to maintain the design elements
- Maintained the world of the play
- Moved quickly and effectively
- Completed their tasks within a timely manner
- Accuracy and completion of the performer's look

### ***Overall Technical Review***

Technical Elements considered:

- Design of lights, set, costumes, hair and makeup served the show
- Smooth transitions between scenes and duty execution by crews

## *Performance Categories*

Adjudicators consider the following for each of the individual performance categories:

### **Singing:**

- Pitch and tone
- Rhythm
- Diction
- Phrasing and interpretation
- Expression and artistry

### **Acting:**

- Animation and energy
- Believability
- Dialogue interpretation
- Relationship to other performers
- Character consistency
- Elements of poise and ease on stage
- Stage presence

### **Stage Movement:**

- Accuracy
- Character consistency
- Fluidity
- Motivation of movement
- Animation and energy
- Spatial awareness

### **Dancing:**

- Precision
- Animation and energy
- Execution of choreography
- Expression and artistry
- Spatial awareness

In addition to the previous elements, adjudicators considered the following for the Ensemble:

### **Singing:**

- Vocal balance
- Balance of harmonic parts

### **Acting:**

- Dynamics between performers

### ***Overall Performance Review***

Performance elements considered:

- Story, plot, and theme transmitted effectively to the audience
- Musical score executed successfully
- Choreography executed successfully
- Elements of student understanding and involvement in the overall performance

## **Section 6 - Nominations**

### **A. Blue Star Awards Nomination Committee**

1. Starlight Theatre convenes a nomination committee of selected adjudicators that reviews and evaluates adjudicator feedback and high-definition videos of performances.
2. The committee members possess knowledge of and experience in the theatre, and acknowledge the disparity of production requirements among shows and differences in allotted budgets.

3. The completed Production Information Forms are reviewed and considered by the committee during the nomination and award voting process.
  4. Starlight Theatre strives to ensure that of the three assigned adjudicators for each production, at least one is a nomination committee member. In cases where this is not possible, at least one nomination committee member will view the videotaped performance in its entirety.
- B. Receiving Nominations
1. When the review process is complete, official nominations are made and announced to all schools and the general public in late April/early May.
  2. Schools that earned nominations will receive banners listing nominations received and a nomination packet including all necessary ceremony information.
  3. For schools receiving one or more nominations, a Nominee Information Questionnaire will be provided at the time of the announcement to be completed and submitted to Starlight Theatre. Accompanying this form must be production photos, as indicated on the form, for all nominated performance and technical categories.
  4. For all nominees performing songs from their production in the Blue Star Awards Ceremony (actor in a lead role, actress in a lead role, overall production), the relative school must submit musical scores including piano, bass, and percussion parts to Starlight Theatre.

### **Section 7 - Ceremony**

- A. The 2019 Blue Star Awards Ceremony will be held at Starlight Theatre on the evening of Thursday, May 23, 2019. The official date is always dependent upon Starlight Theatre's production calendar.
- B. Admission, Seating, and Parking
1. Admission to the Blue Star Awards Ceremony is free of cost. Seating is "general admission" with all guests entering the venue on the east side via Gate 7.
  2. All vehicles will be charged a parking fee.
  3. Schools nominated for Outstanding Overall Production will have reserved seating according to the number of participating students listed in the school's Production Information Form.
- C. Outstanding Actor/Actress in a Lead Role Nominees
1. All nominees for Outstanding Actor/Actress in a Lead Role are invited to perform their signature songs during the Blue Star Awards Ceremony in a medley arranged by Starlight Theatre's music director.
  2. When students receive their nomination, they are required to submit the scores of the song of their choosing including piano, bass, and percussion parts.
  3. Nominees will be required to participate in rehearsals for the medley prior to the ceremony. Rehearsal schedules will be distributed when nominations are announced.
  4. Students should wear a costume from their production when performing in the medley.

D. Outstanding Overall Production Nominees

1. All schools nominated for Outstanding Overall Production are asked to perform one musical number from their production during the Blue Star Awards Ceremony.
2. The selected song should be one of the ensemble numbers from their show.
3. The maximum performance time allowed is five minutes.
4. Nominated schools are required to submit the score of the song of their choosing including piano, bass, and percussion parts, as well as their Nominee Information Questionnaire.
5. Performing schools may not make special lighting or scenic requests.
6. Performing schools must be blocked to only utilize the stage space, with no students permitted to perform in/from the audience seating.
7. Costuming and a limited number of hand props are encouraged. Dressing rooms will be provided, as well as a small area for prop storage backstage.
8. Performers are required to wear footwear when performing on the Starlight Theatre stage.
9. All performers will be required to attend a rehearsal at Starlight Theatre prior to the ceremony. Rehearsal schedules will be distributed when nominations are announced.
10. Students who perform during the ceremony must be currently enrolled in the affiliated high school or had to have been an enrolled student at the time of the school's production. As the Blue Star Awards is established to recognize the accomplishments of high school students, for Outstanding Overall Production nominee casts that include students who are younger than high school age, only non-high-school-aged students whose roles are classified as supporting or featured (*not* ensemble) **and** whose participation is germane to the audience's understanding of the number may perform. Inclusion of such cast members remains at the discretion of Starlight Theatre's Education Manager

E. Blue Star Award Winners

1. Each individual award (i.e. Outstanding Actor/Actress in a Lead Role) given out the night of the ceremony should be kept by the winning student.
2. Group awards, such as Outstanding Ensemble, Outstanding Orchestra, etc., will go to the school itself to be displayed as part of its theatre's history.