



2025-2026 SPOTLIGHT AWARDS

PARTICIPATION HANDBOOK

PART 10 – OUTSTANDING LEAD PERFORMER NOMINEE INFORMATION

Tennessee Performing Arts Center
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ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT AWARDS PROGRAM



The Spotlight Awards program is an arts education initiative of the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) which celebrates, supports, and grows the artistry and community within high school theatre programs in Tennessee while developing confidence, creativity, empathy, and collaboration among schools. The Spotlight Awards strives to embody a spirit of camaraderie, inclusion, celebration for the arts, and a growth mindset.

Program Goals

- To strengthen our community by instilling values of artistic excellence, creativity, a growth mindset, and collaboration in our participants
- To provide high quality, enriching educational experiences in dance, theatre, and music for students, directors, and school arts programs
- To celebrate, support, grow, and advocate for high school theatre education by recognizing excellence in area high school theatre productions
- To grow and develop artists, theatre audiences, and arts advocates in Tennessee by building a rich and collaborative high school theatre community
- To engage community members, schools, and families in an inclusive celebration of theatre

Thank you to our sponsors Nissan North America – Official Education Partner, Vanderbilt University, Piedmont Natural Gas, and KraftCPAs.

Special thanks to our Founding Sponsor, Lipscomb University's College of Entertainment and the Arts.

National High School Musical Theatre Awards – The Jimmy Awards

The Spotlight Awards program is one of over 50 regional awards program affiliated with The National High School Musical Theatre Awards® (the Jimmy Awards®), presented by the Broadway League Foundation. The Jimmy Awards® are a national celebration of outstanding student achievement, recognizing individual artistry in vocal, dance, and acting performance and elevating the importance of theatre arts education in schools. For more information on the Jimmy Awards, visit www.jimmyawards.com.



The depth, scope, and education-centric mission of the Jimmy Awards® coupled with its extensive television and media exposure has made participating in the program an aspiration for a growing number of high schools. Based on feedback from participating theatres, school administrators are now directing both human and financial resources to improve the quality of theatre arts education in their districts. This renewed enthusiasm for the performing arts in schools is already helping to invigorate local theatres and the communities they serve.

SPOTLIGHT AWARDS PROGRAM VALUES

Community

We know that the lure of competition may be hard to ignore, but the Spotlight Awards is designed to be **celebratory rather than competitive** in nature, and the awards are only a fraction of the program. We are an Awards Ceremony 1 day of the year, **but we are an Education and Community program every day of the year** focused on goals such as encouraging collaboration and creativity, strengthening our community, championing inclusion, celebrating and supporting arts education and achievements, and developing a growth mindset.

The Spotlight community is a loving and safe place to learn about yourself and the arts industry we all love. We invite you to attend workshops, interact with us digitally, and find ways to engage with our community – it was created for you.

Respect and Belonging

We believe every young artist has value and potential, and every participating student and educator should **contribute to an environment that is empowering, educational, exciting, and welcoming** to all. All participants should be treated with dignity and respect, and in turn should treat others with dignity and respect. The Spotlight Awards seeks to build community amongst our region's high school theatre programs, all of which are **worthy of celebration** for the value they bring to our youth and our communities.

Growth

Participating schools challenge themselves to **continually grow and create the best work** in their unique circumstances. **So enjoy the journey, celebrate your achievements and the achievements of others, and find ways to continually learn and grow along the way.** Work hard, push yourself, challenge yourself, take a step out of your comfort zone - it's in these moments that growth happens.

Inclusion

To enrich the artistic experience, we strive to make room on the stage, around the production table and behind the scenes to students and community members. **Our wish for each of our participants is that they see the light in this world, in themselves, and in others.** Everyone is unique and special, and it's those unique qualities in each of us that make the world so beautiful. Be the best possible version of yourself, and choose to find the good in everyone around you and to celebrate with them.

Creative Excellence

The Spotlight Awards readily recognizes that artistic excellence provides new insights into the world around us, leading us to question and appreciate what we have never experienced. Excellence in the arts occurs when **an experience affects and changes us in novel ways, providing both fresh and relevant perspectives.** We celebrate the creativity and outstanding work happening in our high school arts programs.



Photo by Caitlin McNameey for MA2LA Photography.

OUTSTANDING LEAD PERFORMER DEFINED

Outstanding Lead Performer **NOMINEE**

- ✓ Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees must be included on the Jimmy Awards Qualifying Roles list.
- ✓ The full list of Lead Nominees will include 1 teacher-nominated Nominee from each participating school. Additional Nominees may be added by adjudicator selection.
- ✓ All Nominees are invited to participate in the Lead Performer Intensive weekend and to perform in the Closing Number at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.
 - *Nominees that wish to be considered for Semifinalist, Finalist and Award Recipient categories must submit an audition video by April 27 for review. Students will not be notified if they are a semifinalist until the Intensive weekend and should prepare for a possible live audition.*
 - *Nominees that choose to participate in the Intensive and perform at the Ceremony, but do not wish to be considered for further award consideration can opt out of additional audition elements.*

Outstanding Lead Performer **SEMIFINALIST**

- ✓ **Nominees that wish to be considered for Semifinalist, Finalist and Award Recipient categories must submit an audition video by April 27 for review.** Semifinalists will be selected by a panel of Broadway professionals from submitted audition videos using the provided rubric (page 11).
- ✓ During the Intensive Weekend, Semifinalists will be announced at the end of the first day (May 2). They will perform in a live audition for panelists during the second day (May 3).

Outstanding Lead Performer **FINALIST**

- ✓ Finalists will be selected from the live Semifinalist auditions during the Intensive weekend, using the provided rubric on page 11.
- ✓ Students will be notified by Monday, May 4 if they are a Finalist.
- ✓ Finalists will perform a solo from their school's nominated role at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.

Outstanding Lead Performer **Award Recipients** – aka Jimmy Awards Nominee

- ✓ The Award Recipients will be announced at the end of the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.
- ✓ Two students are selected after Semifinalist auditions as the Award Recipients (no judging happens during the ceremony) but not announced until the end of the Awards Ceremony.
- ✓ These 2 students will continue to New York as Jimmy Awards Nominees the following month.

ACCEPTING YOUR NOMINATION – ALL OUTSTANDING LEAD NOMINEES

Lead Performer Intensive Information Form – Due April 24, by 5:00 PM

Nominations will be announced on April 23, 2026. Lead Performer Nominees need to accept their nomination by completing this form. Otherwise, an alternate candidate will be contacted.

Nominee Acceptance and Event Registration Form - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LeadPI26>

- Nominees and a Parent/Guardian should complete this form together.
- Nominees may opt out of their nomination on this form if they do not wish to participate or are not available for rehearsals.

In order to complete this online form Nominees will need to:

- ✓ Confirm availability to all required events and acknowledge all required submissions (found on pages 7-8).
 - Understand the commitment asked of Nominees moving forward**
 - Select Option 1 (non-audition pathway, closing number performance only) or Option 2 (submitting audition video for additional consideration and closing number performance)
- ✓ Know their top and bottom comfortable note in vocal range
- ✓ Know their vocal part in a Choral setting
- ✓ Have a digital resume and headshot ready to upload into the application, titled with their name and school.
- ✓ Print and complete the 4 waivers found on Pages 12-15 (Nominees under 18 will require Guardian signatures on each form) to upload into the Registration Form.
 - Forms can also be downloaded from our website under the Lead Performer Nominee and Awards Ceremony Portal - <https://www.tpac.org/inclusive-arts-1/spotlight-awards>

Student Commitment and Scheduling**

The Lead Performer Intensive, closing number rehearsals and Awards Ceremony dates fall in the middle of proms, graduations, etc. Students should take time to consider their priorities for the month of May.

- If they have too many events on their calendar already, they may choose to decline the nomination – if they are the only nominee for your school, another student will be selected in their place.
- Students should not accept the nomination and agree to mandatory events, then proceed to miss or leave early. If they cannot commit to the requirements, it is understood and acceptable for them to decline and allow someone else to take their spot.



All forms and submission links can be found on our website under the Lead Performer Nominee and Awards Ceremony Portal - <https://www.tpac.org/inclusive-arts-1/spotlight-awards>

GENERAL INFORMATION: LEAD PERFORMER INTENSIVE – MAY 2-3

All Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees will attend rehearsals and workshops throughout the weekend of May 2-3, 8:00 AM – 6:30 PM each day - All nominees should be prepared to be present for the full time each day, updated times will be provided.

**Please note – students will have the option in their acceptance form to indicate their preference for check-in on May 3. If they are selected as a Semifinalist, they will need to arrive between 8-8:30 AM to be ready for their live auditions. However, students that are not Semifinalists may choose to arrive at this time as well if they are riding together with other students.*

Dress for the Intensive Weekend

Nominees will participate in a group dance call, workshops, and rehearsals. They should dress for movement, while maintaining an appropriately professional appearance. It is recommended that nominees dress in layers and have jackets on hand, as TPAC spaces have varying temperatures throughout the day.

Audition dress should be professional and not distract from the audition (i.e. make sure all movement is unhindered, and all garments will stay in place, etc.). Semifinalists will have the opportunity to change into rehearsal clothing after their audition time if they wish.

Adult Attendance with Nominees

Parents/guardians/teachers are not required to attend the Intensive. If they choose to attend, they will be limited in what sessions they can observe and will not be provided lunch with the Nominees.

Gender Identity

Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees will be a combination of teacher nominated students and judge selections, regardless of gender identity. The Jimmy Awards categorizes their nominees as Best Actor and Best Actress Nominees corresponding to their gender identification, not the gender of the role that they played. For the purposes of the Jimmy Awards, Lead Performer Nominees will need to select a category in case they are selected to attend the Jimmy Awards. Students identifying as non-binary or gender-fluid may choose to select the category in which they wish to be adjudicated (regardless of the gender of the role) OR they may be adjudicated based on the gender of the role they played.

Student Commitment and Scheduling

The Lead Performer Intensive, closing number rehearsals and Awards Ceremony dates fall in the middle of proms, graduations, etc. Students should take time to consider their priorities for the month of May.

- If they have too many events on their calendar already, they may choose to decline the nomination – if they are the only nominee for your school, another student will be selected in their place.
- Students should not accept the nomination and agree to mandatory events, then proceed to miss or leave early. If they cannot commit to the requirements, it is understood and acceptable for them to decline and allow someone else to take their spot.

Closing Number Preparation

Familiarize yourself with the Closing Number prior to attending the Intensive.

- Sheet music and rehearsal tracks will be provided to Nominees after completion of Registration Forms. Nominees should be familiar with the song prior to attending the Intensive.
 - *Optional - Nominees interested in one of the solo parts should look for the details provided with sheet music to submit a sound recording.*

LEAD PERFORMER INTENSIVE SCHEDULE OUTLINE

Saturday, May 2, 2026

8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Check in – TPAC’s Jackson Hall
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Welcome, Introductions and What to Expect
9:30 – 10:15 a.m.	Dance Call Warm-Up with Tosha Marie
10:15 – 10:30 a.m.	Grade Level Breakout Discussions
10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Workshops and Games
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Lunch break / Friends Life Treat Truck
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Rehearse Closing Number Vocals
1:30 – 4:30 p.m.	Rehearse Closing Number Blocking
4:30 – 6:15 p.m.	Workshops and Activities
6:15 – 6:30 p.m.	Closing discussion

Semifinalists announced by 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 3, 2026

8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	<u>Semifinalist Check in*</u> – TPAC’s Jackson Hall <i>*Please note – Nominees will indicate in the acceptance form their preference for check-in on May 3. If they are selected as a Semifinalist, they will need to arrive between 8-8:30 AM to be ready for their live auditions. However, students that are not Semifinalists may choose to arrive at this time as well if they are riding together with other students.</i>
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Opening Session (Stretching and Breathing Exercises)
9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Semifinalist Auditions (Jackson Hall) Creative Space – Games, Activities, Mindfulness, Lunch (Rehearsal Hall)
1:30 p.m.	All Nominees Check in – TPAC’s Jackson Hall
2:00 p.m.	Welcome and What to Expect / Warm Up
2:15 – 4:30 p.m.	Workshops and Activities
4:30 – 6:15 p.m.	Rehearse Closing Number
6:15 – 6:30 p.m.	Closing Games and discussion

Finalists announced by 8:00 p.m.



REQUIRED SUBMISSIONS – FOR AWARD/FINALIST CONSIDERATION

Nominees have the option to attend the intensive and perform in the closing number only, taking the non-audition path. However, Nominees that wish to submit an audition for consideration as a Semi-Finalist, Finalist or Lead Performer Winner, will submit additional content, detailed below.

Nominee Video Audition – To be considered for Semifinalist – Due April 27, by 5:00 PM

Nominees that wish to be considered for Semifinalist, Finalist and Award Recipient categories **must submit an audition video by April 27 for review.** (Nominees that do not wish to be considered for further opportunities can opt to attend the Intensive and perform in the Ceremony, without submitting an audition video.) Video auditions will be reviewed by a panel of Broadway professionals who will select the call-back list.

First Step – Watch Self-Taping Tips with Tamiko Robinson Steele

(<https://vimeo.com/tpac/auditiontips?share=copy&fl=sv&fe=ci>)

- ✓ When you follow the link, you will need to enter your name and school so we have a record that you watched the video as required.
- ✓ Keep in mind – this video will be viewed by Broadway professionals in the industry, so make sure you follow instructions and provide an audition showing your best.

Audition Video Content

- Begin with a slate. *“Hello, my name is ____, and I will be performing an excerpt from the song (song title) from (show title).”*
- Take a deep breath and plant your feet. Let yourself feel grounded and take that brief moment to pause and transition to your character before starting the audition.
- Nominees will perform 1 song for the Video Audition.
 - 1 solo Broadway song of their choice, 1-2 minutes in length
 - This song can be from your nominated role, or any other Broadway song of your choice.
 - **Consider song choice carefully** – choose a song that sits in your vocal range and shows your talent well, both acting-wise and vocally.
- Watch your audition, make sure the lighting and sound are good, and you feel you are showing your talent. Allow yourself to re-record no more than 3 times before selecting your best take. Edit the beginning and ending of the video as needed to create a professional video package with clean transitions.

Submit Video by using this request link - <https://www.dropbox.com/request/5e4xE19nioDhmjNJaB7i>

- To submit your video, you will need to title the files PRIOR to uploading to this link.
- Please label all files with FIRST NAME LAST NAME – LPI AUDITION VIDEO.
- Once your files have been titled correctly, use the dropbox link to upload directly to Spotlight Administration.

All forms and submission links can be found on our website under the Lead Performer Nominee and Awards Ceremony Portal - <https://www.tpac.org/inclusive-arts-1/spotlight-awards>

REQUIRED EVENTS – ALL OUTSTANDING LEAD NOMINEES

Outstanding Lead Performer Intensive – May 2-3, 2026

All Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees will attend rehearsals and workshops throughout the weekend of May 2-3, 8:00 AM – 6:30 PM each day - All nominees should be prepared to be present for the full time each day, updated times will be provided.

Closing Number Rehearsal – May 20, 2026, 4:00 – 7:00 PM CT, TPAC’s Jackson Hall

All Outstanding Lead Nominees will gather for a final rehearsal of the closing number. **Nominees that are unable to attend the rehearsals will not perform in the ceremony.*

Closing Number Tech Rehearsal – May 23, 2026 – estimated 5:00-7:00 PM – exact time given by May 1

All Outstanding Lead Nominees will gather for a final tech rehearsal of the closing number. **Nominees that are unable to attend the rehearsals will not perform in the ceremony.*

Spotlight Awards Ceremony – May 24, 2026, 3:00 – 6:30 PM CT, TPAC’s Jackson Hall

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is an inclusive community celebration of arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement, growth, and artistry in high school musical theatre and provides an opportunity for students to share their art with each other.

EVENTS OPTIONAL FOR NOMINEES / REQUIRED FOR FINALISTS

Virtual Master Class – Acting the Song with Broadway actor Adam Kantor – May 6, 5:00-6:30 PM

Adam Kantor is an actor and singer. He is best known for his roles on Broadway, most notably Mark Cohen in the closing cast of Rent, which was captured in Rent: Filmed Live on Broadway, Motel in the 2015 revival of Fiddler on the Roof, and as an original cast member in The Band's Visit.

Razzle Dazz’ALUM – Alumni Reunion and Reception – June 4, 6:00-8:00 PM CT

Reception held in honor of the Finalists and other graduating seniors presented by the Spotlight Society Alumni Association. Students will enjoy a dessert reception, karaoke and games, and Spotlight Society Induction for graduating seniors.



SEMIFINALIST – LIVE AUDITION NEEDS

Audition Content – Semifinalist Live audition May 3

Students should prepare 3 songs for their audition sessions, providing a track at check-in for each (on a USB drive and uploaded prior to attendance – details sent to semifinalists in announcement).

1. 1 song from their nominated role, 32-bars in length (same song performed on Audition Video)
 - *If 32 bars of their song is less than 1 minute in length, students can opt to perform an extended version for the call-back audition, up to 2 minutes.*
2. 1 solo song of their choice, 1-2 minutes in length (Same song performed on Audition Video)
3. A third song of their choice prepared if needed – Judges may request a different song. Be ready!

***Nominees are encouraged to have additional options prepared for their auditions in case panelists ask to see something else.*

Judging Panel

Semifinalists are selected from audition videos by Broadway professionals. The Semifinalists will then audition for a small panel of program administration and local industry professionals. Our panel of judges is filled with representatives that have substantial education, experience, and passion for the performing arts, and includes professional theatre artists, Adjudication Advocates and TPAC administration.

Determining Finalists and Award Recipients

To determine the semifinalists, finalists and recipients of each award, the judging panel considers all candidates with a fresh perspective, focused heavily on the audition videos and live auditions on May 3.

Criteria and Tools used:

- Rubric scoring and panelist feedback for the live auditions on May 3 (main selection criteria)
 - Scoring rubric used by panelists on Page 11.
- Cumulative observations of each nominee during performances, video submissions, audition sessions, rehearsal, dance call and workshops combined with school adjudication feedback
- Required forms and support material submitted by the nominees

The Spotlight Awards administration brings a variety of factors into consideration in reaching their decisions. All decisions of TPAC administrators are final.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR AUDITION

No audition is exactly like another, except for one thing – the judges are on YOUR SIDE. They want you to do well, and they want to see you at your best. See below for a walkthrough of your auditions at the Intensive weekend.

Lead Performer Intensive Audition Guide

- Enter the room with a smile and greet the judges! This is the chance for them to see YOU and your personality. Show them why you will be great to work with in the future.
- Cross directly to the audio volunteer to test your track volume. Listen to the volume from the location you plan to begin. Adjust as needed BEFORE beginning your introduction. Let the audio volunteer know their cue (will you pose or nod at them, etc.)
- Next, greet the judges again and slate.
 - *What does it mean to slate? A slate is a introduction that includes general information the judges need to know. In this case, we would like you to slate in the following way: “Hello, my name is ____, and I will be performing an excerpt from the song (song title) from (show title).”*
- Take a deep breath and plant your feet. Let yourself feel grounded and take that brief moment to pause and transition to your character before starting the audition.
- After your performance, judges may ask you questions about why you selected your song, what your character is going through, who they are speaking to, or what is happening in the scene. Make sure you have done your homework and are prepared to answer these questions.
- Always have additional material prepared in case the judges ask for something else. If the judges ask you to do something else - don't worry! This doesn't mean anything good or bad, just that they want to see something else you can do. It can be requested for a variety of reasons and is not an indicator that you did anything wrong or that you will definitely be selected.
- After your audition the judges will thank you, and you are done! Thank them for their time and know that you did your best and it was awesome.

Audition Tips

- Looking at the judges – some judges like it, others don't. The general rule is that if you are in a large auditorium, it's ok to look at them if you choose, but in small spaces it's better to look above their heads instead of directly at them. Choose a focal point that works for your scene – who are you talking to? Focus there.
- If you lose your place or drop a line, pause and take a deep breath. Keep going from that spot if possible, but if not it's ok – don't apologize. Starting over isn't the end of the world. Take another breath and inform the judges that you will start over. You don't need to apologize for being nervous! The judges want you to succeed and will applaud you for staying in control of the situation.
- Don't make excuses. Auditions don't always happen when you are at your best and healthy. Take care of yourself and your voice as much as possible beforehand. Do not tell the judges you are sick at an audition. Instead, show them that you are giving 100% regardless. They will realize you will do even better when you are at top health without you saying it.
- Often judges will ask you questions about why you selected your song, what your character is going through, who they are speaking to, or what is happening in the scene. Make sure you have done your homework and are prepared to answer these questions.

LEAD PERFORMER AUDITION RUBRIC

Professionalism and Attitude	
<p><u>10 Points:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brought headshot and resume as requested; Calendar requirements met (Rehearsal, On Time, Etc.) - Demonstrated positive attitude, community spirit and camaraderie, collaborative growth-focused mindset - Professional behavior and appearance - Clear preparation for auditions, workshops, and rehearsals - Likeable, friendly and represents themselves and the program in a positive way - Takes notes and adjusts performance to reflect them <p><i>0 – Actor is unsupportive of the other participants or the program; No effort to meet requirements; Behavior is unprofessional and/or negative</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>	/10
Performance	
<p>Characterization and Emotional Expression (Establishes character, commits to and maintains character with authentic acting choices)</p> <p><u>10 Points:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actor and character are well integrated with clear understanding of character objectives - Obvious commitment to character within performance - Believable character and emotional expression with levels - vocally and physically - Clearly comprehends overall story and meaning of lines - Made interesting choices that are true to the character/scene <p><i>0 - Actor is unsuccessful establishing character/continually breaks character; No clear objectives/expression</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>	/10
<p>Energy, Focus and Stamina (Demonstrates control of performance by maintaining energy, showing intentional focus and movements, and connecting with their audience through performance)</p> <p><u>10 Points:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitment to physical choices that suggest character; appearing natural, imitating gestures of real life - Arms, hands and facial movements work together to involve the entire body - Actor maintains vocal stamina and exhibits control of their voice - Maintains energy and focus throughout the performance - Focal point illustrates the scene for the audience, making it clear who is in the scene and the environment - Aware of the audience and sensitive to responses while staying clearly engrossed in the world of the scene <p><i>0 - Actor makes few choices resembling the character or physicality lacks commitment; movements seem random and unrelated to the meaning of the lines; Unable to maintain focus and energy</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>	/10
<p>Voice, Diction and Musicality (Vocal Inflection, Volume, Clarity/Enunciation, Pitch, Interpretation)</p> <p><u>10 points:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voice is easily heard in all parts of the room; Speech is very clear with all words distinctly pronounced - Changes vocal qualities appropriately for meaning of the lines, including interesting levels of emotion and vocal animation to enhance the performance - Emotional expression, characterization and storytelling carries into musicality, showing a clear understanding of the meaning within the song and shares the interpretation vocally - Vocally strong with a pleasant tone and on pitch during performance <p><i>0 - Voice is too low or words mumbled and difficult to understand; Uses almost no changes in vocal qualities or voice appears flat as if "rote reading"; Unable to stay on pitch or express meaning of the song</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>	/10
Stage Presence and Overall Impact	
<p><u>10 Points:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appears comfortable performing in front of the group - Keeps body positioned to share facial gestures and expressions with the audience - Enthusiastic and confident, audience-engaging performance - Makes the audience feel something, pulling them into the story emotionally/mentally - Demonstrates interesting choices and risk taking that engages the audience - Exhibits flexibility, takes notes and makes adjustments to performance <p><i>0 – Actor lacks enthusiasm and presents a flat performance without impact.</i></p> <p>Notes:</p>	/10

/50

MEDIA CONSENT AND RELEASE

In order to complete the Lead Performer Intensive Registration Form Nominees and/or Guardians will need to sign this document and upload as a PDF or JPG within the online form.



Tennessee Performing Arts Center Spotlight Awards

INDIVIDUAL MEDIA CONSENT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT

The Media Consent and Release Agreement set forth herein is given by _____ (the “Student”). If the Student is under eighteen (18) years of age, this Consent and Release agreement is given by the parent or legal guardian of the Student, both for him or herself and on behalf of the Student.

I/we hereby give my/our consent for photographing, filming, audio/videotaping, and/or transmission via broadcast/cable television of the Student’s image and voice, and release to Tennessee Performing Arts Center (“TPAC”) and the Broadway League Foundation (“Partner Organization”) all rights of any kind to TPAC’s Spotlight Awards materials in which the Student appears. This is a full release of all claims I/we or my/our heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns now and hereafter have against TPAC, or its employees, as regards to any lawful use that may be made by them of said photographic reproductions, films, audio/videotape, social media and/or web, or transmission via broadcast/cable television.

Further, I/we acknowledge that the Student’s portrait, picture, likeness, or voice may be used for purposes consistent with the Partner Organization and educational or promotional purpose that Partner Organization and those acting pursuant to its authority deem appropriate and lawful, including promotional or advertising efforts.

Such uses as may be made will not constitute a direct endorsement by the Student of any product or service. I/we understand that I/we will not receive any fee, now or in the future, for the use of the Student’s likeness.

I/WE HAVE READ THIS MEDIA CONSENT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT, FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS, HAVE SIGNED IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT INDUCEMENT, ASSURANCE, OR GUARANTEE, AND AGREE WITH ALL OF ITS TERMS.

Student Name – Printed _____

Student Signature _____

If Student is under 18:

Parent/Guardian Name – Printed _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

WAIVER OF LIABILITY

In order to complete the Lead Performer Intensive Registration Form Nominees and/or Guardians will need to sign this document and upload as a PDF or JPG within the online form.

TENNESSEE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity Agreement

The waiver, assumption of risk, and indemnity agreement set forth herein is given by _____ (the "Student"). If the Student is under eighteen (18) years of age, this waiver, assumption of risk, and indemnity agreement is given by the parent or legal guardian of the Student, both for him or herself and on behalf of the Student. The undersigned, both for him or herself and/or on behalf of the Student, agrees that by participating in [The Spotlight Awards workshop] (the "Program") at Tennessee Performing Arts Center ("TPAC"), the undersigned and the Student represent and warrant that Student does not have any medical or other condition that would limit the Student's safety during physical activity.

Waiver: In consideration of being permitted to participate in the Program, I, for myself, my heirs, personal representatives, and assigns, hereby waive, release, discharge and covenant not to sue TPAC, its officers, directors, agents, employees, and volunteers from/for liability from any and all claims including the negligence of TPAC, its officers, directors, agents, employees, and volunteers, resulting in personal injury, accidents or illnesses arising from, but not limited to, participation in the Program.

Assumption of Risks: Participation in the Program involves risks inherent to physical activity regardless of precautions taken. These risks include, but are not limited to, personal injury including bodily injury such as sprains, joint, limb, or back injuries.

I have read the previous paragraph, and I am aware of and understand these and other inherent risks in participating in the Program. My participation in the Program is voluntary, and I knowingly assume all such risks.

Indemnification and Hold Harmless: I agree to indemnify and hold TPAC, its officers, directors, agents, employees, independent contractors, volunteers, agents and affiliates (the "Indemnitees") harmless from all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, actions, costs and expenses including reasonable attorney's fees that arise from my participation in the Program, unless caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the Indemnitees.

Severability: I agree that this waiver, assumption of risk, and indemnification agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the law of the State of Tennessee. If any portion of this agreement is held to be unenforceable, that portion will be severed from this agreement and the remaining terms shall continue in full legal force and effect.

Acknowledgement: I acknowledge that I have completely read and fully understand this waiver of liability, assumption of risk, and indemnity agreement. By my signing this agreement, I understand that I am giving up substantial rights, including the right to sue or bring claims that are not excepted in this waiver. I am voluntarily and freely signing this agreement, and intend by my signature, to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law.

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN
OF STUDENT

STUDENT

Signature Date

Signature Date

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN
OF STUDENT

STUDENT

Print

Print

PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT

In order to complete the Lead Performer Intensive Registration Form Nominees and/or Guardians will need to sign this document and upload as a PDF or JPG within the online form.

TENNESSEE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER Participation Agreement and Consent for Emergency Treatment

I am the parent or legal guardian of _____ (the “Student”), who desires to attend [Spotlight Awards Intensive Weekend] (the “Program”) at the premises of the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (“TPAC”), 505 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37243. The Program includes on stage and backstage access, physical movement, workshops and auditions.

I am familiar with the intended activities and demands of a comprehensive performing arts training program on stage and backstage, including both physical fitness expectations and the inherent unavoidable risks of injury and harm, and I represent and warrant that the Student is able to participate fully in the Program, that no health professional has advised me of any risks or that would limit or impede the Student’s full and safe participation in the Program, and that I understand and accept the inherent and unavoidable risks of injury and harm that may occur due to the Student’s participation in this Program. I agree further that if the Student sustains any injury or illness prior to the commencement of the Program, I shall advise TPAC promptly in writing so that an assessment can be made whether the Student can participate in the Program. I therefore, consent to my child’s participation in the Program, and I further consent to my child’s participation in any other activity taken in connection with the Program.

An inherent risk of exposure to infectious diseases, including COVID-19, exists in any place where people are present. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, senior citizens and, people of any age with underlying medical conditions are especially vulnerable.

By attending the Program, you and the Student voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to any infectious diseases, including COVID-19, including without limitations risks of illness, personal injury and death, and even if arising from the negligence of TPAC or its respective employees, volunteers, independent contractors, agents or affiliates, unless caused by gross negligence or willful misconduct.

I accept responsibility for medical expenses for any injuries or illness that the Student may sustain or experience while participating in the Program. I hereby grant permission for the Student to receive emergency medical treatment as appropriate during participation in the Program as may be authorized by an adult member of the Program staff. I understand that if the Student has to take prescription medication or receive scheduled medical treatments, I shall notify TPAC in writing and shall consult with the Program staff as to appropriate arrangements. It is not the responsibility of TPAC to make such arrangements.

Parent/Legal Guardian PRINT NAME

Parent/Legal Guardian SIGNATURE

Date

SPOTLIGHT AWARDS CEREMONY AT TPAC

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is a community celebration of arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement, growth, and artistry in high school musical theatre and provides an opportunity for students to share their art with each other.

Time and Place

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony will take place May 24, 2026, 3:00-6:30 pm in TPAC's Jackson Hall (505 Deaderick Street, Nashville). Doors will open to the public at 2:00 p.m. *Please note that estimated run times are subject to change and are included in this handbook for planning purposes only.*

Awards Ceremony Attire

The Spotlight Awards is a red-carpet event based on the Tony Awards. The dress for this event is formal. Audience members are encouraged to arrive early to get their picture taken on the red carpet.

Transportation

Buses will be able to drop off and park nearby. Cars will need to find parking in one of the lots downtown but be aware that many lots do have parking costs. Plan ahead for your parking if you are coming in cars – and remind parents of this as well.

Ticketing for Schools

Schools participating in Adjudication will get a small group of free tickets to the Awards Ceremony in the orchestra level. Additional seats can be purchased for tier or balcony seating and will be provided to schools based on availability.

Ticketing for Guests (Friends, Family and the Public)

Tickets are very limited for the Spotlight Awards Ceremony beyond the participating school attendees. This event is specifically designed to allow the students and teachers to celebrate and share art with each other, therefore school group tickets will be confirmed before opening any seats to the public. Tickets can be purchased at www.tpac.org once tickets are on sale in the Spring.

Viewing Room Option (Friends, Family and the Public)

As we celebrate our 10th Anniversary of the Spotlight Awards program, we anticipate larger audience demand for our ceremony. We are currently planning for a viewing option of a live video feed in Polk Theater during the ceremony. No additional details are known at this time as we are still planning for this element. More information will come later.

Award Presentation

The Spotlight Awards will present both school and individual awards for those participating in the School Adjudication track and will acknowledge both students and teachers. Schools will select someone to act as representative for all nominations on stage. The full outline of the ceremony and award presentations will be provided as we get closer to the ceremony.



Photo by MA2LA Photography.

PERFORMANCE NUMBERS DURING THE CEREMONY

School Performances - Outstanding Musical Nominations

The 10 selected nominees in the Outstanding Musical category will perform a 2.5-minute production number. (No exceptions will be made over 3 minutes) Performance groups are limited to 50 people. Consider which number best showcases your production and how to remount it on TPAC's stage. TPAC reserves the right to choose which number will be performed.

School Performances - Crowd Pleaser Performances

Other performances may be included each year, such as Crowd-Pleaser selections. Those selected will perform a 2-2.5-minute production number. (No exceptions will be made over 2.5 minutes) Performance groups are limited to 50 people. Consider which number best showcases your production and how to remount it on TPAC's stage. TPAC reserves the right to choose which number will be performed.

Outstanding Lead Performer Finalists - Solo Performances

The Outstanding Lead Finalists will each perform a solo from their nominated role during the awards ceremony. Solos should be approximately 2 minutes in length, no longer than 2.5 minutes. Due to licensing rights, no medleys or creative interpretations are permitted.

Opening Number - Community Performance

Each year the opening number varies slightly, sometimes performed by our Spotlight Ceremony Host but often including alumni or other community members. Anyone included in this performance will be required to attend rehearsals.



Photo by MA2LA Photography.



Photo by MA2LA Photography.

Closing Number - Community Performance

The group of Outstanding Lead Performer Nominees are invited to perform the closing number of the Awards Ceremony. Lead Nominees will rehearse at the Lead Performer Intensive sessions on May 2-3 and on May 20 at TPAC. Nominees who are unable to attend these events will not perform in the ceremony.

Encore Ensemble - Community Performance

All Community and Show Review participants will have the opportunity to include students in the Encore Ensemble performance during the Spotlight Awards Ceremony. Students in the Encore Ensemble will be required to attend rehearsals for this performance. Alumni and additional ensemble members from other schools will also be asked to join this amazing community performance. More details on the Encore Ensemble can be found in Part 2 of the Handbook – Community Recognition and Scholarship Opportunities.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Costumes and Props

Costume accessories and hand-held props that can be easily transported and kept by the student in their seat may be utilized to suggest character, time, and place if needed. There are no dressing rooms available for changing into costumes. Directors should consider the formal dress of the evening when preparing for performances. Students may need to add tights to a dress or take off shoes for dance numbers.

Tech Rehearsal and Sound Check

Anyone performing – either a solo or ensemble number – must attend one tech rehearsal on Saturday, May 23. All performance elements will be practiced on Jackson Hall stage in the order of the ceremony timeline. Schools will be notified of their time slots, rehearsal and ceremony performance order by May 1. The tech rehearsal will include an orientation period, a chance for school director(s) to finesse spacing on the stage, a run through of the number with the technical staff and stage manager, and mic check for soloists. Students should arrive fully knowing their music and blocking so that the tech rehearsal can be used for final tweaks.

TPAC event staff reserve the right to remove a school from showcase activity for any missed staging rehearsal. These determinations are at the full discretion of program staff. Under no circumstances will a missed tech rehearsal be excused due to safety considerations related to lights, camera blocking, travel pathways, etc. Anyone not available for this rehearsal time will not be able to perform at the ceremony and will be replaced in the ceremony timeline.



Photo by MA2LA Photography.

Technical Elements

No scenic elements will be allowed for the performance. All performances will take place on a bare stage. A lighting “look” will be created for your performance by a TPAC lighting designer based on information provided by the director on the mood of the scene.

Microphones

Up to 10 handheld mics will be provided to students when they line up backstage Right. These microphones will be returned to a stagehand Stage Left when exiting. There will also be four shotgun microphones on the downstage edge of the stage.

Accompaniment or Tracks

Schools may choose to supply a musical track or provide their own accompanist. A piano will be available on stage (Upstage Left) for your use and will not be moved during the event. School-provided accompanists will need to be present for tech rehearsals and the ceremony (and included in your school ticket count for seating).

Sheet Music and Tracks for Ceremony Performances

Schools performing to tracks during the Spotlight Awards Ceremony will submit digital sheet music (marked with performance needs) **and** digital tracks by May 5. Schools performing with their own accompanist will still submit digital sheet music (marked with performance needs) by May 5. Submission details can be found in Part 4 of the Handbook – Adjudication Track Overview.



2025-2026 SPOTLIGHT AWARDS

PARTICIPATION HANDBOOK

LEAD PERFORMER FINALIST INFORMATION

Tennessee Performing Arts Center
505 Deaderick Street
Nashville, TN 37243

SpotlightAwardsNashville@gmail.com

Cassie LaFevor – clafevor@tpac.org



REQUIRED DEADLINES AND EVENTS – OUTSTANDING LEAD FINALISTS

Finalist/Parent Virtual Meeting – May 4, 5:30-6:30 PM

All finalists and at least one parent/guardian will join a zoom meeting on May 4 to discuss all requirements moving forward.

Performance Information Form – Due May 5 for all Finalists

Performance Information Forms will be submitted individually by the Lead Finalists. This form is due May 5, and should be submitted online - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Perform25>

Virtual Master Class – Acting the Song with Broadway actor Adam Kantor – May 6, 5:00-6:30 PM

Adam Kantor is an actor and singer. He is best known for his roles on Broadway, most notably Mark Cohen in the closing cast of Rent, which was captured in Rent: Filmed Live on Broadway, Motel in the 2015 revival of Fiddler on the Roof, and as an original cast member in The Band's Visit.

Closing Number Rehearsal – May 20, 2026, 4:00 – 7:00 PM CT, TPAC’s Jackson Hall

All Outstanding Lead Nominees will gather for a final rehearsal of the closing number. **Nominees that are unable to attend the rehearsals will not perform in the ceremony.*

Solo and Closing Number Tech Rehearsal and Finalist Interviews – May 23, 2026

Estimated on site 3:00-7:00 PM – exact time given by May 1

Spotlight Awards Ceremony – May 24, 2026, 3:00 – 6:30 PM CT, TPAC’s Jackson Hall

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is an inclusive community celebration of arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement, growth, and artistry in high school musical theatre and provides an opportunity for students to share their art with each other.

6:30-7:00 p.m. Lead Performer Winners and their Parents meet at the red carpet.

Broadway Dreams Summer Intensive – May 25-30, 2026

Broadway Dreams is turning 20, and are celebrating with the biggest, boldest, most electric Summer Intensive Tour EVER. During their week-long intensives, you’ll train in acting, singing, and dancing through master classes taught by legends who actually get it. Next-level coaching, real-world casting insight, and the chance to perform for directors and decision-makers who can open real doors.

Razzle Dazz’ALUM – Alumni Reunion and Reception, presented by the Spotlight Society Alumni Association

June 4, 2026, 6:00-7:30 PM Central Time

All Finalists are invited to a Reception in their honor to celebrate their artistic work, and to officially welcome any graduating Seniors into the Spotlight Society. Students will enjoy a dessert reception, karaoke and games, and Spotlight Society Induction for graduating seniors.

Other Media Requests

TPAC often gets interview questions or requests for our Finalists leading up to the ceremony. Please keep watch on emails for these opportunities.

SOLO PERFORMANCE INFORMATION FOR FINALISTS

The Outstanding Lead Finalists will each perform a solo during the awards ceremony. Solos should be 32 bars, approximately 2 minutes in length.

Stage Information

The performance space on Jackson Hall stage is 44'w by 32' deep. All performance entrances will be from Stage Right, and after each performance students will exit Stage Left.

Accompaniment Options

A piano will be available on stage (Upstage Left) for your use and will not be moved during the event. Finalists may choose to supply a musical track or provide their own accompanist. School-provided accompanists will need to be present for sound checks as well as for the ceremony.

Sound Check

All those performing at the awards ceremony are required to attend sound check. If you will be using a track, this should be given to TPAC ahead of time. If you have an accompanist with you, they need to attend sound check as well.

Technical Elements

No scenic elements will be allowed for the performance. All performances will take place on a bare stage. A lighting "look" will be created for your performance by a TPAC lighting designer based on information provided by the director on the mood of the scene.

Microphones

Wireless mics will be given to students Stage Right and returned to a stagehand Stage Left when exiting. There will also be four "shotgun" microphones on the DS edge, in the event that a wireless mic goes out.

Awards Ceremony Attire / Costumes

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony is a red-carpet-style event based on the Tony Awards. The dress for this event is formal. For the performance students may need to add tights to their dress or take off shoes for dance numbers.

Costume accessories and hand-held props that can be easily transported and kept by the student in their seat may be utilized to suggest character, time, and place if needed. There are no dressing rooms available for changing into costumes.