



Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) Spotlight Awards – Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards

Dear Parents, Guardians, and School Administrators,

We are thrilled to welcome you and your child to TPAC's Spotlight Awards program! Whether your child is stepping onto the stage for the first time or has experience in theatre, Spotlight is a wonderful opportunity to explore musical theatre, develop performance skills, and build confidence in a fun, supportive environment. Creating live theatre is an experience that young people will remember for the rest of their lives, and it is truly our pleasure to be a small part of the journey for each of our participants.

Many of you may be new to the wonderful world of theatre or not aware of what the Spotlight Awards are. We want everyone involved to understand both the benefits and responsibilities that go along with this fantastic opportunity for students.

What is the Spotlight Awards Program?

- TPAC's Spotlight Awards is a regional program of **The National High School Musical Theatre Awards® (NHSMTA®)**, **otherwise known as the Jimmy Awards®** named for Broadway impresario James "Jimmy" M. Nederlander. Presented by The Broadway League Foundation Inc., their purpose is to elevate the importance of theatre arts education in schools and reward excellence in student performance. Over the years, the Jimmy Awards/NHSMTA has grown into nearly 60 affiliated performing arts centers in communities throughout the United States and impacts over 180,000 students from 2,600 high schools.
<https://www.jimmyawards.com/>
- TPAC's Spotlight Awards program is a statewide initiative supporting the talents, educational endeavors, and friendships of high school theatre students in Tennessee to build a strong and inclusive theatre community. We are an Awards Ceremony 1 day of the year, **but we are an Education and Community program every day of the year.** The Spotlight Awards served 76 schools in the 2025-2026 School Year with performance feedback, master classes, free community events, scholarships and more.

Why is this important for my school/my child?

The Spotlight Awards is part of a National program, along with 60 other arts centers across the country. Students that are part of this program get valuable experiences, feedback from theatre professionals, master classes, and networking opportunities **to benefit them in any path they follow in the future.** Our program alumni have made connections with artists, casting agents, business managers, non-profits, college programs and administrators, and community leaders. In the arts industry, Spotlight alumni continue to be booked in Broadway tours, work in New York, and in administrative positions at non-profits. Not only do we provide opportunities for students to learn and grow, we provide experiences with professionals in multiple industries as well as scholarships and recognition opportunities.

Participant Responsibilities

The Spotlight Awards Ceremony on May 16 features school performances, meaning your child may have additional rehearsal after their school musical closes. Some of these may happen at their school, while others will take place at TPAC. Check with your child's director for information on school rehearsals.

Scheduled Rehearsals:

- *Encore Ensemble Members – May 5 and 11, 4:00-7:00 PM; May 15, Tech Run Estimated time 1:00-2:00 PM; Ceremony May 16, 3:00-6:30 PM*
- *Lead Performer Nominees, Closing Number Performance – May 1-2 Lead Performer Intensive, 8:30-6:30 each day; May 12, 4:00-7:00 PM; May 15, Tech Run Estimated time 5:30-7 PM; Ceremony May 16, 3:00-6:30 PM*
- *School performances –Tech Run at TPAC on May 15. Schools have the schedule for their time on stage.*

Tickets to the Awards Ceremony

- Tickets will go on sale to the Public on May 5 at 10:00 AM on tpac.org. Any parents, friends, siblings, spouses, etc. will be able to purchase tickets online at this time. Tickets sell out within minutes, so be ready to get your tickets!
- There is a strict 2 ticket per household limit. Multiple orders from the same household will be cancelled.
- Public tickets for Jackson Hall are around \$20-25 depending on the ticket.

Frequently Asked Questions

My child isn't in high school, why are they part of this program?

Middle schools may participate in Spotlight in a variety of ways. Their shows may receive reviews from arts professionals, which provide valuable feedback on the performance. Additionally, Events and opportunities offered throughout the year are designed to help students hone their skills and advance their understanding of the craft. And finally, our Encore Ensemble includes Middle and High School participants nominated to perform in our Awards Ceremony on TPAC's Jackson Hall stage on May 16.

My child is not an actor or singer, what does this have to do with them?

Spotlight includes opportunities for all aspects of theatre, both on- and off-stage. We provide many opportunities for our tech students, and students may be recognized for set design, sound operation, costume design, hair and makeup design, lighting design, and more. All roles are equally valuable to the creation of theatre.

My child isn't in a musical, why are they part of this program?

Non-musical shows may participate in our *show review* program, in which a panel of arts professionals attend each school's musical and provide feedback on the performance. These participants can be part of our Encore Ensemble which includes students nominated to perform in our Awards Ceremony on TPAC's Jackson Hall stage on May 16.

Where can I find more information on the program guidelines?

You may find information and resources provided on our website at: <https://www.tpac.org/spotlight>

Where do I find more information on the Jimmy Awards?

You can find information on their website - <https://www.jimmyawards.com/>

Particularly, if you want to know about the process, check out the PBS documentary series "Broadway or Bust" that shows the early years of the program. You can find clips here - <https://tn.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/bob12/>