2019-2020 Spotlight Awards – Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards

ADJUDICATOR GUIDE

Lipscomb University Theatre Department  
One University Park Drive  
Nashville, TN 37204-3951

Beki Baker – beki.baker@lipscomb.edu  
Tessa Bryant – tessa nbryant@gmail.com

Tennessee Performing Arts Center  
505 Deaderick Street  
Nashville, TN 37243

Cassie LaFevor – clafevor@tpac.org  
Jack French – jfrench@tpac.org
ABOUT THE SPOTLIGHT AWARDS PROGRAM

The Spotlight Awards program is an education initiative which celebrates and supports the educational value, artistry, and community of high school theatre programs while developing confidence, creativity, and collaboration among high school students in Tennessee. The Spotlight Awards strives to embody a spirit of camaraderie and celebration for the arts.

Program Overview
Each participating high school registers their school’s musical for review by an adjudication team of arts professionals who will provide feedback for the performance. Each reviewer submits a completed rubric with comments regarding all aspects of the production within a few weeks after the performance. Teachers and students use these insights to make their next show even stronger. Outstanding nominees in each category are announced in April. In May, as a culmination of the program, all participants attend the Spotlight Awards Ceremony at TPAC, an annual showcase celebrating the outstanding achievements of participating high school musical theatre productions and students.

Throughout the season, students and directors will be invited to participate in learning opportunities in connection to the performing arts. These opportunities may include but are not limited to: discounted tickets when available to TPAC Education performances and workshops; performance opportunities; workshops with industry professionals; and professional development for educators.

Program Goals

- To celebrate, support and advocate for high school theatre education by recognizing excellence in area high school theatre productions
- To provide high quality educational experiences in dance, theatre, and music for students, directors, and school arts programs
- To build confidence, creativity and collaboration in students participating in the arts in our community
- To engage local families and community members in a celebration of theatre
- To grow and develop theatre audiences and arts advocates in Tennessee by building a high school theatre community

The Spotlight Awards program is Nashville’s regional awards program affiliated with the National High School Musical Theatre Awards (NHSMTA) (also known as the Jimmy™ Awards, named in honor of James M. Nederlander, legendary Broadway theatre owner and producer). The Jimmy™ Award for Best Performance by an Actress and Best Performance by an Actor is awarded annually to two grand prize winners selected from a group of student performers representing participating professional theatres. For more information on the Jimmy Awards, visit: www.jimmyawards.com
SCHOOL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

The Spotlight Awards are open to high schools in Tennessee producing musical theatre productions. To be eligible for participation, a school must meet the following criteria.

Affiliation and Location
Participating schools must be located in Tennessee and may not participate in another Jimmy Awards regional awards program during the same school year. Schools should be within 2 hours drive from TPAC, with the cut-off travel time being 2 hours and 10 minutes.

Production Date and Type
The high school production must take place between October 31, 2019 and April 18, 2020. Participation may be limited based on performances happening in High-Volume Weekends. The high school production must be included on The Jimmy Awards list of Qualifying Shows. For a full listing of the Qualifying Shows, visit www.jimmyawards.com.

Performance Selection
The Spotlight Awards only accepts 1 musical submission per school, per year. If a school is presenting multiple shows during a school year, they will select which one to submit for judging at the time of registration. If a school has multiple casts performing the musical, the school must select one cast to be adjudicated and eligible for awards.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Applications Open – August 12-16, 2019
Payment and Roster Due for Kickoff Event – August 30, 2019
Kickoff Event and School Orientation – September 14, 2019
Social Media Representative Training – September 17, 2019
Adjudicator Training at Lipscomb University – October 5, 2019
Performance Window – October 31, 2019 - April 18, 2020
Nominee Announcement – April 24, 2020
Outstanding Lead Nominees Audition Session – May 2-3, 2020
Spotlight Awards Ceremony – May 16, 2020
The Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards Ceremony is a community celebration of local arts education that acknowledges outstanding achievement 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 16, 2020, 7:00-10:00 pm in TPAC’s Jackson Hall (505 Deaderick Street, Nashville).

**Awards Ceremony Attire**
The Nashville High School Musical Theatre Awards is a red-carpet-style event based on the Tony Awards. The dress for this event is formal.

**Ticketing**
Adjudicators are allowed 1 comp ticket to the Awards Ceremony. Additional tickets can be purchased at [www.tpac.org](http://www.tpac.org) once tickets are on sale.
ADJUDICATION OVERVIEW

Community instead of competition
Schools are not directly competing against each other, but rather challenging themselves to continually grow and create the best possible work they can in their circumstances. The Spotlight Awards program works to create a spirit of community and growth among high school theatre programs. Our ceremony is based on the Tony Awards, acknowledging nominees as well as award recipients, and celebrating the overall arts happening in our community. We hope that each school will cultivate the arts community by supporting each other during the year, as well as at the ceremony.

About our adjudicators
Our adjudicators are volunteers with substantial education, experience and passion for the performing arts. Among their ranks are teachers, theatre critics, seasoned performers, directors, choreographers, arts administrators, teaching artists, and musical theatre aficionados. The Spotlight Awards administration makes every effort to send adjudicators skilled in various areas of theatre production to each school and to rotate the pool so that the same adjudicators do not attend shows at the same school in consecutive years. In addition to adjudicators, at least one Spotlight Award administrator will attend each school’s performance.

Spotlight Awards Adjudicators will have:
• A degree in a relevant field (music, theatre, dance, etc.);
• And/or extensive work experience in one of those disciplines on a professional or academic basis;
• And/or are professional artists or educators with knowledge of the American musical theatre canon;
• And/or demonstrated experience in or knowledge of musical theatre.

Conflict of Interest
Adjudicators are required to alert the Spotlight Awards administrators immediately if there is a conflict of interest with a participating school. Adjudicators having a relationship, either professional or personal, with a particular school are not assigned to evaluate that school’s production.

Travel Stipend
Adjudicators are eligible to receive a travel stipend of $40. Payment will not be made until an invoice and the ballot have been submitted.

Social Media Representative
Participating schools have the option of providing a Social Media Representative for their production to boost the excitement for their schools’ musical and the Spotlight Awards program events by posting, tagging, liking, sharing, and more! These Representatives will also have access to the Spotlight Awards Instagram account for 1 week during the year to showcase their school. This position can be faculty, parents or students, and are required to attend an online training with TPAC’s Social Media Manager.

We would also like to have adjudicator engagement on the Instagram page, and encourage you to like, post, share, and interact with us throughout the year. If you are interested in being a Social Media Representative during the year, please let Spotlight Administration know.
ATTENDING A PERFORMANCE

Production Detail Form
The week prior to attending the performance, adjudicators will receive information from the school’s Production Detail Form, as well as reminders about qualifying roles and award eligibility. This information will allow adjudicators to understand the performance concept and challenges at the school prior to scoring.

Anonymity
The Spotlight Awards asks schools to allow the adjudicators to attend performances anonymously, so they can fairly evaluate the production without lobbying from cast members’ families and friends or other school representatives. Adjudicators should not receive preferential seating, treatment or gifts of any kind.

Performance Tickets
Adjudicators may have 1 or 2 tickets for shows they are judging. These will be at will call under the name “Jimmy Ward”. Schools are asked to respect the anonymity of the adjudicators, and not provide preferential treatment. Seating on aisles or towards the rear of the theatre is requested.

Confidentiality
Adjudicator feedback is submitted through a secure online form. Adjudicators will not provide oral critiques following the performance, nor should teachers or students expect to speak to the adjudicators at all. Adjudicators are not allowed to discuss the results, evaluations, scores, or feedback with anyone other than Spotlight Awards administrators in any format. This includes, but is not limited to: faculty, staff and students from a participating high school, other adjudicators, colleagues, social media networks, etc.

Questions for the Director
After viewing a performance, if you have questions about who an actor or stagehand was, or who designed something, etc. please contact Spotlight administration with those questions. Adjudicators should NOT stay after the performance to speak to school representatives.
SUBMITTING YOUR FEEDBACK

Adjudicators will evaluate how well a school is meeting or exceeding their own potential based on that school's unique resources and challenges, regardless of budget or size of the production. Different teams of reviewers attend each production, meaning that each school is evaluated independently of other school productions. Adjudicators are asked not to compare schools, but to provide valuable feedback in hopes of celebrating the achievements of each production and offering insights for strengthening future shows.

Feedback
Each adjudicator is asked to focus their feedback in a positive way, with the goal of encouraging and growing the arts in our community in mind. Adjudicator feedback is meant to serve as an educational tool, for teachers and students to use these insights to make their next show even stronger. Please be constructive, specific, and objective with your feedback.

School Feedback Template
Adjudicator feedback is shared with schools in two parts, ballot scoring range information and written feedback. (We do not share individual scores with schools or nominees, just as the Tony Awards do not share the numbers of votes each nominee gets.)

- For school awards, participants will be given a score RANGE (Developing, Proficient, Skilled or Advanced). Therefore, a school will show “Skilled” on their feedback template, not the number score.
- For individual awards, participants will be given a name of a student nominee, not the number score.

Ballot Submission
Ballots are submitted online at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020SpotlightBallot](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020SpotlightBallot). Adjudicators have 1 week to turn in their ballots to the Spotlight administrators.

Determining Nominees
In order to determine all nominations and the eventual recipients of each award, The Spotlight Awards administration considers all eligible candidates with a fresh perspective and thoroughly reviews the Adjudicator feedback, scoring and mandatory support material.

Criteria and Tools used for nominations:
- Ballots submitted by adjudicators, including scores, comments, and adjudicator nominations
- Required forms and support material (photos, posters, programs) submitted by the school
- Experience and accumulated musical theatre knowledge of The Spotlight Awards administration, which will acknowledge the disparity of production requirements between shows and recognize the level of difficulty in mounting certain works

The Spotlight Awards administration brings a variety of factors into consideration in reaching their decisions regarding nominations. In some cases, this may lead to the office overriding the Adjudicators, but this is only done when deemed necessary. All decisions of The Spotlight Awards administrators are final.

Scoring for Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress Awards
Outstanding Lead Actor and Outstanding Lead Actress nominations must be based on the National High School Musical Theatre Awards Qualifying Roles list. To view the full list, visit [www.jimmyawards.com](http://www.jimmyawards.com).

Scores from adjudicators will determine the top 15 nominees for each of these 2 categories. Additionally, the 20 remaining spots will be filled by wild card selections from each of the remaining schools, for a total of 50 Nominees. To determine the final award recipients, the adjudicator score will count for 80% of the final score and the panel scores at the audition session will provide the remaining 20% of the score.
HONORS AWARDED

Participating schools will have their musical reviewed by a panel of adjudicators. Based on the adjudicators’ comments and scores, schools and individuals will be nominated in specific categories to be recognized and honored at the awards ceremony at TPAC on Saturday, May 16, 2020. Participation in the Spotlight Awards program does not guarantee receipt of any nominations or awards.

Award Categories for 2019-2020:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Awards</th>
<th>Individual Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Vocals</td>
<td>• Outstanding Male Dancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Ensemble</td>
<td>• Outstanding Female Dancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Costume Design</td>
<td>• Outstanding Male Soloist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Hair and Makeup Design</td>
<td>• Outstanding Female Soloist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Lighting Design</td>
<td>• Outstanding Ensemble Actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Set Design</td>
<td>• Outstanding Ensemble Actress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Orchestra</td>
<td>• Outstanding Supporting Actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Sound Design</td>
<td>• Outstanding Supporting Actress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Technical Execution</td>
<td>• Outstanding Comedic Actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Design Concept</td>
<td>• Outstanding Comic Actress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Choreography</td>
<td>• Outstanding Dramatic Actress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Music Direction</td>
<td>• Outstanding Technical Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Direction</td>
<td>• Outstanding Lead Actor**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outstanding Musical *</td>
<td>• Outstanding Lead Actress **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All-Star Cast

All-Star Crew

* 10 Nominees in the Outstanding Musical category are invited to perform at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.
** All 50 Outstanding Lead Nominees are invited to perform the Closing Number at the Awards Ceremony. The 6 Outstanding Lead Finalists will perform solos at the Spotlight Awards Ceremony.

Nominee Announcement

Nominees for all awards (excluding All-Star Cast and Crew) will be announced on April 24, 2020. The All-Star Cast and Crew will not be announced until the Awards Ceremony.

Eligibility

Eligibility is at the discretion of the Spotlight Awards administration, which reserves the right to amend rules as necessary to maintain a fair process.

Gender Identity

Although we are currently limited by the gender naming standards used on Broadway and by the National High School Musical Theatre Awards, the Spotlight Awards program is committed to honoring our students by identifying them in the way with which they are most comfortable within our existing parameters. In order to do that, we ask for teachers to help by letting us know which category (Actor or Actress) is most appropriate when your students are being evaluated. Awards are nominated based on the gender identity of the student, not the gender of the character.
AWARD RUBRIC OVERVIEW

In the theater, we tell stories.

The Spotlight Awards adjudicators will review the storytelling abilities put to work in each production. We are looking for a tale well told, by your production team, your ensemble, and your individual performers.

We want to see how well you use the elements of theater to tell the story you have chosen:

- How well does your company understand the story they are telling? How clearly do they relate that story and its themes to the audience?
- How passionately do your actors embody their characters and express their journey through this story?
- How do your actors use performance the skills of musical theater (singing, dancing, and acting) to enhance the story?
- How collaborative was your company in presenting a unified concept for the audience to engage with?
- How did you showcase the unique talents and resources that only your school has in order to advance the story and concept you created?
- How creatively did your company transfer the story from page to the stage?
- How does your storytelling create a memorable experience, creating emotion and change in your audience?

**Rubric Scoring**

Each rubric is comprised of elements to be rated on a 1-10 rating scale and includes detailed descriptions of each scoring range. An overarching look at what we are looking for in each scoring range is below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOPING (1-2)</th>
<th>PROFICIENT (3-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presented the story practically, so that the events logically transpired but without impact to the characters. At times the effort to improve skills supersedes the story.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Created a layered story with clear, evolving characters through a practical approach with moments of creativity evident.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All technical elements served the basic requirements outlined in the script, but there is no evidence of collaboration with other areas to present a unified concept.</strong></td>
<td><strong>An attempt was made to present a unified concept with input from all technical and performance components.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The musical selection was not appropriate or did not showcase the school’s talents and resources, and produced few engaging moments of musical theater.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The musical selection rarely showcased the school’s unique talents and resources, producing some interesting elements of musical theater but with obvious missed opportunities.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLED (6-8)</th>
<th>ADVANCED (9-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strong storytelling with solid, believable characters and a creative approach.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Masterful storytelling with authentic, emotion-driven characters and a meaningful, memorable and unique approach.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A clear vision of the concept for the production was carried out with some evidence of creative collaborations from technical and performance areas.</strong></td>
<td><strong>A clear, focused vision of the concept for the production was fully integrated with creative collaboration from each technical and performance area to ensure design consistency and advance nuanced themes.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The musical selection was appropriate and showcased some of the diverse talents of the school’s performers and technicians, producing mostly strong elements of musical theater.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The musical selection was appropriate and showcased the diverse talents of the school’s performers and technicians, producing elements of quality musical theater.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AWARD ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

School Production and Design Awards
- We encourage participating schools to use readily available school resources, faculty and students. The use of a professional/guest artist may disqualify the school from that category. See specific award requirements for more information.
- All School award scores are a combination score of design/storytelling interpretation (out of 10 points possible) added to execution of the element (out of 10 points possible).

Outstanding Orchestra
The orchestra must consist of at least 75% students and/or faculty. Schools using more than 25% professional/guest musicians are not eligible. Schools using tracks are not eligible.

Outstanding Costume Design
Design must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest designer are not eligible. At least 60% of the costumes must be newly designed/created or changed from previous use versus pulled from stock/rented. Schools that rent, purchase as final product, or borrow more than 40% of their costumes are not eligible. Volunteers may help construct/build costumes.

Outstanding Hair and Makeup Design
Designs must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest designer are not eligible. Volunteers may help apply makeup for the performance.

Outstanding Lighting Design
Designs must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest designer or professional/guest lighting crew during the performance are not eligible. Volunteers may run this element during the performance.

Outstanding Sound Design
Designs must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest designer or professional/guest sound crew during the performance are not eligible. Volunteers may run this element during the performance.

Outstanding Set Design
Designs must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest designer are not eligible. At least 60% of the set must be new or changed from previous use. Schools that rent, purchase as final product, or borrow more than 40% of their scenery and props are not eligible. Volunteers may help construct/build scenery and props.

Outstanding Design Concept
Design concept must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest designer are not eligible.

Outstanding Choreography
Choreography must be created by students and/or faculty at the school. Schools using a professional/guest choreographer are not eligible.

Outstanding Music Direction
Schools using live music accompaniment or tracks are both eligible for this award. Schools using a professional/guest musical director are not eligible.
AWARD ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS (CONTINUED)

School Production - Combined Score Awards

Outstanding Technical Execution
Scores for this award category are combined execution scores from Outstanding Lighting Design, Outstanding Sound Design, and Outstanding Set Design. Includes the quality of technical implementation, including but not limited to the flow and execution of the stage crew, lighting execution and technical effects, sound mixing and microphones, projection, etc. The technical run crew must consist of 90% students and/or faculty. Schools using more than 10% professional/guest technicians are not eligible.

Outstanding Direction
This category combines scores from evaluation categories – Direction Concept, Staging and Movement, Pacing and Preparedness, Character Coaching and Ensemble Work, and Overall Experience. Schools using a professional/guest director are not eligible.

Outstanding Musical
This category combines scores from 6 award categories, listed below. The 10 nominees in the Outstanding Musical category will perform a production number during the awards ceremony.

- Outstanding Direction
- Outstanding Music Direction
- Outstanding Vocals
- Outstanding Ensemble
- Outstanding Design Concept
- Outstanding Technical Execution

Teacher Nominated Individual Awards

All-Star Crew
The All-Star Crew will include 2 students from each school who are nominated by their teachers. Teachers will nominate students deserving of this honor based on their hard work, team spirit, and leadership skills.

Outstanding Technical Achievement
This award is intended to recognize a student who has given 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 their current year’s musical. This award is presented based on teacher nominations. To recommend a student for this award, teachers should submit a 1-page letter of recommendation discussing the student’s contribution to the production and to the school’s musical theatre program overall. Letters must be submitted by April 15.

Award criteria includes:
- Teacher recommendation, including at least 3 ways the musical theatre program benefits from the crew member
- Teacher recommendation, including at least 1 specific way the crew member contributed to this year’s musical (the musical that is entered into the Spotlight Awards)
- Consideration of the school technical execution scores and percentage of student-run technical elements in your musical
Performance-based Individual Awards

- Eligible performers must be registered in grades 9-12.
- Roles performed by a professional/guest actor are not eligible.
- Faculty members and K-8 students are not eligible for acting awards but may perform in the musical.
- Students are nominated based on their gender identity, not the gender of the character role.
- If a school presents a co-production or shares performers with another school, students may only be nominated for their role in one musical production.
- If a school has multiple casts performing the musical, the school must select one cast to be adjudicated and eligible for awards.

Additional Criteria for Classifying Lead, Supporting and Ensemble Awards

- **Lead Roles** include at least one solo song, appearances in more than one scene with spoken dialogue, and appear in both or all acts.
  - Can be nominated for Outstanding Comedic Actor and Actress, Outstanding Dramatic Actor and Actress, Outstanding Soloist, Outstanding Dancer
  - Additionally, Lead Roles that are on the Jimmy Awards list of Qualifying Roles will be scored in the Outstanding Lead Actor or Actress category
- **Supporting Roles** are scripted, named characters with either spoken or sung dialogue which help drive the action of the play forward.
  - Can be nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actor and Actress, Outstanding Comedic Actor and Actress, Outstanding Dramatic Actor and Actress, Outstanding Soloist, Outstanding Dancer
- **Ensemble Roles** are named or unnamed characters with less than 5 lines of spoken or sung dialogue.
  - Can be nominated for Outstanding Ensemble Actor and Actress, Outstanding Soloist and Outstanding Dancer

All-Star Cast

The All-Star Cast will include 2 students from each school nominated by adjudicators. These students will be nominated based on their standout performance, and can be given to lead, supporting, or ensemble roles.

Outstanding Lead Actor and Outstanding Lead Actress

Outstanding Lead Actor and Outstanding Lead Actress nominations must be based on the National High School Musical Theatre Awards Qualifying Roles list. To view the full list, visit [www.jimmyawards.com](http://www.jimmyawards.com).

Scores from adjudicators will determine the top 15 nominees for each of these 2 categories. Additionally, the 20 remaining spots will be filled by wild card selections from each of the remaining schools, for a total of 50 Nominees. Nominees will attend an audition session for a panel of Spotlight administrators and professional theatre artists. Through two rounds of auditions, the Outstanding Lead Nominees will be narrowed down to 3 Finalists in each category that will perform a solo at the Awards Ceremony. To determine the final award recipients, the adjudicator score will count for 80% of the final score and the audition panel will provide the remaining 20% of the score.