



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2016

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ARTS COUNCIL OF JOHNSON COUNTY ANNOUNCES 2016 SHOOTING STARS AWARDS RECIPIENTS

*18 High School Seniors Receive College Scholarships
For Excellence in the Literary, Performing and Visual Arts*

108 High School Seniors Nominated in Nine Categories

OVERLAND PARK, KS – April 4, 2016 – The Arts Council of Johnson County announced 18 scholarship recipients at the 2016 Shooting Stars Gala on Sunday, April 3 at Johnson County Community College. This 19th annual Shooting Stars Gala honored 108 Johnson County high school seniors for achievement in the literary, performing and visual arts through recognition and college scholarships.

In November, the Arts Council announced the 108 finalists nominated for 2016 awards. This special recognition program was created in 1997 by former Arts Council of Johnson County chairman Bob Endres. Bob's vision was to create a program that celebrated young Johnson County artists for their artistic excellence in high school. Only the best of the best high school artists are chosen to participate in the Shooting Stars Program.

Since its founding, the Shooting Stars program has awarded more than \$200,000 in college scholarships and \$65,000 in teacher honorariums. At the April 3 Shooting Stars Gala, nine first place scholarships of \$1,400 each, nine second place scholarships of \$700 each, and nine teacher honorariums of \$350 each were awarded. The program is sponsored by the support of area foundations, corporations and individual donors. Honorary Chairs of the event were David and Demi Kiersznowski, Founders and Owners of DEMDACO, a wholesale gift company and RedRock Traditions, a direct selling company.

"Demi and I would like to thank and congratulate the Arts Council of Johnson County, the parents and friends of the young artists being recognized today, and most importantly you, the artists, for allowing today to be possible," said David Kiersznowski in his remarks to the audience. "You have distinguished yourselves as being the very finest artists in all of Johnson County in the eyes of your teachers, and that is a significant



accomplishment. You have shown both a degree of mastery and proficiency in your work, and others have seen that it you. Communities might be able to exist without the arts, but I don't think they can flourish. Artists are out storytellers, they are the ones who mourn with us during tragedy, and celebrate with us during moments of joy. They are the ones who help us look honestly at ourselves and our communities, and they help us envision the possibilities for being better. So to you, the artists, we are grateful."

Students are nominated by their Arts teachers for this recognition. Arts teachers from schools throughout Johnson County are invited to nominate two students each year. Students who live in Johnson County but attend school outside of the county may be nominated by their Arts teachers. To participate in Shooting Stars, students must meet these criteria: live in Johnson County, Kansas; be in the 12th grade and will graduate in the spring; be nominated by an Arts teacher from their high school, and submit an application. Nominations were accepted in October and finalists were named in November. The finalists auditioned or submitted a portfolio of work for review by independent judges in the following categories.

Literature (9)	Photography (13)	Production and Design (6)
Strings (7)	Theatre Performance (17)	Two-Dimensional Art (21)
Three-Dimensional Art (11)	Voice Classical (12)	Winds and Percussion (12)

"Today, Shooting Stars not only celebrates the arts but also acknowledges the critical role the arts play in our future workforce," said Abby Beckloff, President of the Arts Council of Johnson County Board of Directors. "Adding the arts into the 21st century skills mix means adding creativity, ingenuity, and perspective to science, technology, engineering and math careers for the future. Many of our Shooting Stars scholarship recipients and finalists plan to pursue studies and careers in the arts; even if that changes over time and these budding artists pursue other paths, their participation in the arts makes them uniquely qualified to contribute to wide variety of future endeavors," Beckloff continued.

"Many Shooting Stars Finalists excel in science, technology, engineering, arts and math," added Sarah VanLanduyt, Arts Council of Johnson County Executive Director. "It's not uncommon for them to major in both the visual arts and pre-med or music and engineering. The judges say that selecting the scholarship recipients is a challenging task because of the high-caliber of talent expressed by each of the nominees."

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2016 Shooting Stars Scholarship Recipients

Literature

- 1) Kaitlyn O'Neal nominated by Molly Runde, Olathe North HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
- 2) Kayla Wiltfong nominated by Amy Andersen, Shawnee Mission East HS (\$700 scholarship)

Teacher honorarium presented to Molly Runde, Olathe North HS

Photography

- 1) Rian Stallbaumer nominated by Greg Schieszer, Shawnee Mission West HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
- 2) Jenna Fackrell nominated by Pat St. Louis, Shawnee Mission South HS (\$700 scholarship)

Teacher honorarium presented to Greg Schieszer, Shawnee Mission West HS

Production and Design

- 1) Mona Jahani nominated by Mark Swezey, Shawnee Mission South HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
- 2) Heather Jackson nominated by Jeremy Riggs, Olathe South HS (\$700 scholarship)

Teacher honorarium presented to Mark Swezey, Shawnee Mission South HS

Strings

- 1) Emily Shehi, nominated by Brigid Mayer, Olathe East HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
- 2) Isaac Witte nominated by Adam Keda, Blue Valley West HS (\$700 scholarship)

Teacher honorarium presented to Brigid Mayer, Olathe East HS

Theatre Performance

- 1) Tasia Jewel nominated by Steve Landes, Blue Valley Northwest HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
- 2) Lauren Taylor nominated by Edward Shafer, Olathe East HS (\$700 scholarship)

Teacher honorarium presented to Steve Landes, Blue Valley Northwest HS

Three-Dimensional Art

- 1) Kelly Wood nominated by Michael Johnston, Blue Valley HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
- 2) Payton Pierce nominated by John Butcher, Blue Valley Northwest HS (\$700 scholarship)

Teacher honorarium presented to Michael Johnston, Blue Valley HS



Two-Dimensional Art

- 1) Ahna Valdez, nominated by Lori Ludwig, Olathe East HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
 - 2) Jia Fu nominated by Tom Holland, Blue Valley North HS (\$700 scholarship)
- Teacher honorarium presented to Lori Ludwig, Olathe East HS

Voice Classical

- 1) Patrick Bessenbacher nominated by Samuel Anderson, Rockhurst HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
 - 2) Eli Huber nominated by Susan Scheibler, Olathe East HS (\$700 scholarship)
- Teacher honorarium presented to Samuel Anderson, Rockhurst HS

Winds and Percussion

- 1) Noah Zoller nominated by Justin Love, Olathe North HS (\$1,400 scholarship)
 - 2) Carson Christensen nominated by Jeff Smikahl, Olathe East HS (\$700 scholarship)
- Teacher honorarium presented to Justin Love, Olathe North HS
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About the Shooting Stars Program:

The Shooting Stars Recognition, Scholarship & Awards Program was created in 1997, by former Arts Council of Johnson County chairman Bob Endres. His vision was to create a program that celebrated young Johnson County artists for their artistic excellence in high school. Only the best of the best high school artists are chosen to participate in the Shooting Stars Program. Students are nominated by their Arts teachers each year, and independent judges select the scholarship recipients. The full list of the 108 finalist nominees follows at the end of this release.

About the Arts Council of Johnson County:

The Arts Council of Johnson County is dedicated to the enrichment of the community through the Arts. By focusing on the Arts as an effective economic development tool to foster a strong regional identity, ACJC advocates for policies that strengthen the Arts in Johnson County and the metropolitan area; champions Arts learning opportunities for all ages; amplifies Johnson County's voice in the broader metropolitan area Arts discussions; and contributes to the growth of the Arts within the 21 municipalities of Johnson County. The ACJC works to build a creative culture, transforming the region into a vibrant, thriving area desirable to residents, new businesses, visitors and tourists.

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2016 Shooting Stars Program Finalists, Nominating Teachers and Schools

Literature

Cory Bestwick nominated by Heather Tow, Olathe East HS
Maya Bluitt nominated by Dylan Carter, Shawnee Mission West HS
Stephanie Meyers nominated by Maureen Davis, Blue Valley HS
Kaitlyn O'Neal nominated by Molly Runde, Olathe North HS
Alexandria Pasquale nominated by Phillip Hamilton, De Soto HS
Kameron Ptasnik nominated by Jessica Skoglund, Olathe Northwest HS
Margaret Russo nominated by Susan Whitfield, Blue Valley North HS
Emily Wilkinson nominated by Lindsey McFall, Shawnee Mission South HS
Kayla Wiltfong nominated by Amy Andersen, Shawnee Mission East HS

Photography

Jenna Fackrell nominated by Pat St. Louis, Shawnee Mission South HS
Sarah Gabel nominated by Carla Roberts, Olathe South HS
Alexandra GillamCorkin nominated by Mark Mosier, Blue Valley HS
Keely Grosvenor nominated by Aimee Price, Blue Valley West HS
Jack Hatzfeld nominated by Hattie Gallagher, Olathe Northwest HS
Elizabeth Hicks nominated by Melissa Sellers, Olathe East HS
Vincent Lowry nominated by Terra Henderson, Saint James Academy
Mallorie McBride nominated by Brian Pollack, Blue Valley Northwest HS
Mollie Mytinger nominated by Adam Finkelston, Shawnee Mission East HS
Rebecca Renton nominated by Alison Crane, Blue Valley North HS
Rian Stallbaumer nominated by Greg Schieszer, Shawnee Mission West HS
Grant Swank nominated by Danielle Williams, Maranatha Academy
Reilly Zink nominated by Kathleen Bock, Olathe North HS

Production & Design

Grant Cole nominated by Chris Palmer, Shawnee Mission North HS
Kelly Edwards nominated by Dustin Pence, Olathe North HS



Heather Jackson nominated by Jeremy Riggs, Olathe South HS
Mona Jahani nominated by Mark Swezey, Shawnee Mission South HS
Connor Johnston nominated by Jeff Lady, Gardner-Edgerton HS
Leah O'Connor nominated by Tom DeFeo, Shawnee Mission East HS

Strings

Orunima Chakraborti nominated by Stephen Phalp, Blue Valley North HS
Adeline Chang nominated by Cecily Mahan, Olathe North HS
Tamiaka Melancon nominated by Joel Martin, Olathe Northwest HS
Elena Nanneman nominated by Curtis Mulvenon, Shawnee Mission West HS
Caroline Olson nominated by Jonathan Lane, Shawnee Mission East HS
Emily Shehi nominated by Brigid Mayer, Olathe East
Isaac Witte nominated by Adam Keda, Blue Valley West HS

Theatre Performance

Elsa Bernauer nominated by Brian Cappello, Shawnee Mission East HS
Alexandra Carroll nominated by Robin Murphy, Olathe Northwest HS
Rebecca Carroll nominated by Keli Rodgers, Shawnee Mission Northwest HS
Rachel Field nominated by Mark Swezey, Shawnee Mission South HS
Tasia Jewel nominated by Steve Landes, Blue Valley Northwest HS
Lance Jewett nominated by Marsha Moeller, Blue Valley HS
Maggie Martin nominated by Kim Spillman, Saint Thomas Aquinas
Kori Martiny nominated by Sydney Baumgart, Shawnee Mission North HS
Michael Polelyev nominated by Ted Hanlon, Maranatha Academy
Alexis Pudvan nominated by Max Brown, Blue Valley North HS
Andrea Strickler nominated by David Hastings, Olathe South HS
Lauren Taylor nominated by Edward Shafer, Olathe East HS
Rex Templin nominated by Jason Hagg, De Soto HS
Trevor Thoeke nominated by Jeff Lady, Gardner-Edgerton HS
Siera Thompson nominated by Jon Copeland, Mill Valley HS
Samantha Walker nominated by Dustin Pence, Olathe North HS
Erin Zipse nominated by Laurie VanderPol, Blue Valley West HS



Three-Dimensional Art

Paige Bennett nominated by Brad Reinking, Spring Hill HS
Ashley Bogdan nominated by Tim Barnes, Olathe Northwest HS
Mariah Case nominated by Jennifer Dixon-Perkins, Olathe South HS
Allison Eaton nominated by Tim Mispagel, De Soto HS
Juliana Gogol nominated by Adam Finkelston, Shawnee Mission East HS
Emily LaRocco nominated by Sherri Hanna, Olathe East HS
Melia Ortiz nominated by Hollie Rice, Olathe North HS
Payton Pierce nominated by John Butcher, Blue Valley Northwest HS
Jason Wang nominated by David Hunt, Shawnee Mission Northwest HS
Jenna Wilson nominated by Jean Lockhart, Shawnee Mission West HS
Kelly Wood nominated by Michael Johnston, Blue Valley HS

Two-Dimensional Art

Emma Arnold nominated by Luan Taylor, Shawnee Mission West HS
Madison Bender nominated by Hollie Rice, Olathe North HS
Alexandra Berkowitz nominated by Kim Francis, Blue Valley HS
Brooke Bowlin nominated by Danielle Williams, Maranatha Academy
Ellen Johannah Cairns nominated by Abbey Thomas, Olathe Northwest HS
Kyle Carnes nominated by Tim Mispagel, De Soto HS
Sara Coble nominated by David Kalkman, Gardner-Edgerton HS
Francesco DiMare nominated by Connie Creek, Pembroke Upper School
Jia Fu nominated by Tom Holland, Blue Valley North HS
Gretchen Gambill nominated by Erica Crist, Mill Valley HS
Lauren Gawlak nominated by Jen Dixon-Perkins, Olathe South HS
Lauren Hart nominated by Debra Waldorf, Blue Valley West HS
Mallory Iszard nominated by Chris LaValley, Blue Valley Northwest HS
Caroline Kalmus nominated by Terra Henderson, Saint James Academy
Grace L'Esperance nominated by Judy Frankovic, Saint Thomas Aquinas
Casey Mispagel nominated by Jennifer Hudson, Shawnee Mission South HS
Madison Rubalcava nominated by Theresa Wallerstedt, St. Teresa's Academy
Zachary Ruschill nominated by melissa Terryberry, Shawnee Mission Northwest HS
Hannah Scofield nominated by Adam Finkelston, Shawnee Mission East HS



Joshua Swiastyn nominated by Jill Rodick, Kansas City Christian

Ahna Valdez nominated by Lori Ludwig, Olathe East HS

Voice Classical

Anna Arends nominated by Marsha Moeller, Blue Valley HS

Alice Barnard nominated by Juli O'Mealey Simmons, Shawnee Mission North HS

Patrick Bessenbacher nominated by Samuel Anderson, Rockhurst HS

Natalie Boos nominated by Elise Peterson, Olathe South HS

Alden Bostwick nominated by Joe Heidesch, Saint Thomas Aquinas

Victoria Davlantes nominated by Jason Sickel, Blue Valley North HS

Hannah Habiger nominated by Garrett Epp, Olathe North HS

Clayton Henriksen nominated by Kimberly Modelski, Blue Valley West HS

Eli Huber nominated by Susan Scheibler, Olathe East HS

Abbie Lane nominated by Todd Burd, Gardner-Edgerton HS

Hadley Oehlert nominated by Pamela Williamson, Olathe Northwest HS

Allen Weinert nominated by Sheree Stoppel Mill Valley HS

Winds & Percussion

Noah Bryan nominated by Chad Reed, Shawnee Mission North HS

Carson Christensen nominated by Jeff Smikahl, Olathe East HS

Clark Elford nominated by Adam Lundine, Blue Valley Northwest HS

Carley Eschliman nominated by Chad Coughlin, Olathe South HS

Parker Kremeier nominated by Jeffrey Bishop, Shawnee Mission Northwest HS

Joseph Quigley nominated by Will Biggs, Gardner-Edgerton HS

Brandon Rathburn nominated by Edward Protzman, Blue Valley Southwest HS

Steven Schmoll nominated by Daniel Freeman, Blue Valley North HS

Sophie Solomonson nominated by Robert Davis, Olathe Northwest HS

Jaycie Thaemert nominated by Matt Bradford, De Soto HS

Lauren Walbert nominated by Bill Thomas, Shawnee Mission West HS

Noah Zoller nominated by Justin Love, Olathe North HS

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