

2016 CAREER AWARD WINNERS LIAISON REPORT

Alyce Erickson

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Liaison for Career Award Winners

As liaison for the Career Award Winners, my job is to be the link between the National Award Winners and the NSAL Community. Since 2016 is the year of the Musical Theatre Competition, we shall travel back in time to view some of the winners and read about the Career Award Winners, Winston Scholarship recipients and their very interesting lives and accomplishments. We are proud of these talented young artists and wish them the best.

A message from NSAL to all young artists: Our thoughts are more powerful than we realize. **We are what we think**, and it takes practice to point our minds in a positive direction, so **make a difference** in your life and in the lives around you.

For 2016, the **Winston Voice Scholarship recipient** is **Michael Pandolfo**, a 22-year old voice major at the University of Kentucky, entered by the Kentucky Chapter. Michael is a former First-Place National winner of the Schmidt Vocal Competition, a Young Arts winner, and the recipient of a full scholarship for study this coming summer at the Seagle Music Colony in upstate New York. He will represent the Winston Voice Scholarship in a short recital on Thursday evening at the National NSAL Meeting.

Amy Broadbent, 2015 Winston Voice Scholarship recipient, used her scholarship for a month-long program at Opera Studio Weimar, where she sang Pamina in Mozart's *Magic Flute*, and she thanks NSAL for the wonderful experience. In the year since, she

has soloed with the Washington Master Chorale, the Washington Bach Consort, and the Reading Choral Society, and this summer will be the soprano vocal fellow at the Oregon Bach Festival. She also sang with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, The Crossing, the Thirteen, and the choirs at the National Cathedral and Basilica of the National Shrine. Her exciting most recent news is that she has been chosen for the Navy's professional chorus, the Sea Chanters.

Alena Titova, 2016 Winston Art Scholarship recipient, age 18, will graduate in 2016 from Old Dominion High School in Sterling, Virginia. The native of Russia became a US citizen when her parents were naturalized several years ago. She is the recipient of a \$2,000 Naomi Winston Scholarship in Two-Dimensional Art. She won Best of Show last year in the Congressional District Art Competition, and hopes to attend the Parsons Summer Intensive Studies in New York City for a July course in *Drawing: The Figure*. She hasn't selected a college, but plans to major in the visual arts.

Catherine Chen, Two-Dimensional Art
2015 Winston Art Scholarship recipient



Catherine, age 17, Florida East Coast Chapter, received \$2,000 for summer study at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) for the California State Summer School of the Arts (CSSSA) Animation Program. "It was a life-changing decision. After I attended the program, I decided to study animation in college. The program was intensive and introduced me to a more minimalist perspective different from traditional fine arts. Thank you NSAL for your generosity and guidance." She has been accepted into University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts, Yale, MIT, Carnegie Mellon, Brown, Rhode Island School of Design, and California Institute of the Arts. She will most likely attend University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts for its Animation and Digital arts program. She has won some Scholastic Art and Writing awards: 2 gold medals, 1 American Vision, and 1 silver portfolio with distinction. She also won Honorable Mention for National Young Arts Cinematic Arts, best student animation for the Fort Lauderdale International film festival, and has been named an Elks Scholar for community service and leadership activities.

Jonathan Michael Majors



Jonathan Michael Majors, representing the Chautauqua Chapter, won the **2015 Drama Competition** National Society of Arts and Letters First Place Award of \$10,000. Mr. Majors holds a BFA from the School of Arts at the University of North Carolina and is currently attending Yale University as a Master of Fine Arts

Candidate in the Yale School of Drama. He has received the MFA Lloyd Richards Scholarship and the SAFD Rec. Here is a publicity announcement for one of his roles:

“Guy Pearce, Mary-Louise Parker and Rachel Griffiths will star in “When We Rise,” on ABC. Also cast are Austin McKenzie (“Spring Awakening”) as the young Cleve Jones; Emily Skeggs (“Fun Home”) as the young Roma Guy; and **newcomer Jonathan Majors as the young Ken Jones**. The period piece tells the history of the gay rights movement, starting with the Stonewall Riots in 1969.”

Lara Anderson Dohner, representing the Saint Louis Chapter, won the **2015 Drama competition** Dorothy Nicholson Stabell Memorial Second Place Award of \$8,000. Ms. Dohner holds a BFA in Acting from The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University in St. Louis. She received the Gold Award in 2010-2011 from the Iowa High School State Speech Association. Ms. Dohner has studied with Paul Mason Barnes, David Caldwell, Tamilla Woodard, Milissa Rain Anderson, John McCluggage, and Doug Finlayson, and makes her home in Dubuque, Iowa. In 2016 she has been working with a Children’s Theatre.

Megan Hilty



Megan Hilty was the first Musical Theatre Competition winner in 2004, representing the Pittsburgh Chapter. In a few short years, Megan Hilty has gone from understudy on Broadway to a star of stage, screen, and music. Her impressive accomplishments have made her one of the fastest rising talents in the entertainment world. Megan was born in Bellevue, Washington on March 29, 1981. Drawn to music at a young age, she explored a career in opera before deciding to pursue musical theatre. After graduating from the Washington Academy of Performing Arts Conservatory High School in Redmond, Washington, she moved to Southern Oregon and spent two years waiting tables and working odd jobs while performing in shows such as *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Hello Dolly!*, and *My Fair Lady*. She then enrolled in Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she performed in a variety of college and regional productions. She graduated from CMU in 2004 with a Bachelor's degree in Theatre. Upon graduation, Megan was offered the role of "Glinda" (standby) for the Broadway Company of *Wicked* and was workshopping the role of "Doralee" in *9 to 5: The Musical*, Dolly Parton's adaptation of the popular film. In 2009, she was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Actress in a Musical, an Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Actress in a Musical, a Drama League Award, and an Ovation Award for Best Actress in a Musical. In 2011, Megan joined the cast of NBC's *Smash* as "Ivy Lynn." The show aired from 2012-2013 and was nominated for a Golden Globe for Outstanding Musical or Comedy Series, while also offering Megan the opportunity to record both covers of popular hits and original songs from the musical within the show, "Bombshell." Megan starred in the New York City Center production of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* as Lorelei Lee. In 2015, Megan returned to the Broadway stage in *Noises Off*. In 2016 Megan guest-starred on *Project Runway*, *Difficult People*, and *The Good Wife*. She maintains an active concert schedule, both with symphony orchestras throughout the United States and in solo concert at smaller venues. Megan also has an active voiceover career, providing the voice of

"Rosetta" in the Disney *Fairies* series. Megan and her husband, Brian Gallagher, were married in November 2013 and celebrated the birth of their daughter Viola in September 2014. They live in New York City.

Allan Washington



Allan Washington was the 2012 Musical Theatre first Place Winner, from the Virginia/North Carolina Chapter. Allan has been living and working in New York City since winning the 2012 Musical Theatre Competition, and he is currently in rehearsal for the Pre-Broadway production of "THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL!", in which he is in the ensemble, playing the role of Larry the Lobster.

Jim Goza



Jim Goza, the 2012 Musical Theatre Competition Third Place winner, is an actor, writer, and producer. His credits include:

B Side: Myself (*pre-production*) Cast (rumored) 2015,

The Sound of Magic Devoted follower 2015

Marionettes (Short) Kevin 2014

Blue Planet: War in Heaven (Video Game) UEF Second Fleet (Male) 2013

The Working Dead (TV Series) Jim

Danger at the Doorstep (2013)

Breaking Fat (TV Series short) Male Customer

You Dropped Something (2013) Male Customer 2012

Love Struck Dead (Short) 2011

Zombie Go Boom (TV Series) Host (2011-2012), Writer (1 credit) 2012

Love Struck Dead (Short) 2012

Jim is currently working as a Personal Trainer in Fayetteville and engages in local productions and performances regularly around Northwest Arkansas.

Nadine Sierra



Nadine Sierra (born May 14, 1988) is an American [operatic soprano](#). She was the **2008 Florida East Coast Voice Competition First Place winner and National Second Place winner**. On February 21, 2009, she won the [Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions](#) Finals in New York. In January 2016 she performed at [Venice New Year's Concert](#) with [Stefano Secco](#) and at [La Scala](#) of Milan as Gilda in [Rigoletto](#) with [Leo Nucci](#). A native of [Fort Lauderdale, Florida](#), she attended the [Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts](#) in West Palm Beach, Florida, and trained at [The Mannes College of Music](#) and [Marilyn Horne's Music Academy of the West](#), where she was the youngest person ever to receive the Marilyn Horne Foundation Award. She became a Young Artist with the [Palm Beach Opera](#) when she was 14 and made her operatic debut there two years later as the Sandman in [Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*](#). She also appeared on the [National Public Radio](#) program [From the Top](#) when she was 15 performing "O mio babbino caro" from [Gianni Schicchi](#). She was invited back to [From the Top](#) in 2010, a show taped in Burlington, Vermont, with commentary by Marilyn Horne. She appeared at the United States Supreme Court Building in May 2009 where she sang solo and with [Thomas Hampson](#) in the [Justices Chambers](#). In 2009 she competed in Helsinki, Finland, in the Mirjam Helin International Competition where she was awarded second place. She had her debut concert in Helsinki, Finland in 2009. In October 2009 she performed in the Marilyn Horne Mediterranean Cruise to Italy, Croatia, Turkey and Greece. In March 2010 she performed at the [Musashino Hall](#), Tokyo, Japan. She appeared as the Princess with [Gotham Chamber Opera's](#) production of [Xavier Montsalvatge's](#) opera [El gato con botas](#) at the [New Victory Theater](#). In January 2011 she returned to Palm Beach Opera's [Orfeo ed Euridice](#) in the title role. In May 2011 she appeared as Tytania in Boston Lyric Opera's [A Midsummer Night's Dream](#). In January 2011 she became a [San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow](#) and the following May appeared in the company's premiere of [Christopher Theofanidis'](#) opera [Heart of a Soldier](#) with Thomas

Hampson in the main role. In January 2012 she appeared as Gilda in [Florida Grand Opera's *Rigoletto*](#). Sierra is featured in the book *Driven: Six Incredible Musical Journeys* where author Nick Romeo dedicated one of the chapters ("Journeys") to her.

Hannah Hammel



Hannah Hammel, flutist, received 2014 Honorable Mention, Woodwinds Competition. Hannah is a first year master's degree candidate at Rice University, on a full scholarship and stipend covering all expenses. This summer she will be playing with the Richmond Virginia Symphony and will be playing a concerto (Doppler's "Hungarian Fantaisie") with an ad hoc Richmond orchestra. She will also be attending the Pacific Music Festival in Japan and competing in the National Flute Association's Young Artist Competition in San Diego, CA. Hannah says she is "very grateful for NSAL's investment in her career!"

Colin Donnell



Colin Donnell was the winner of Musical Theatre in 2004, from the Bloomington, IN Chapter. He starred on Broadway in *Violet*, until it ended its limited run in August. He starred opposite Patti Murin in the Encores! Production of *Lady, Be Good* at New York City Center. He and Patti were married in June 2015. He had a role in the Showtime production of *The Affair* and is set to star in a pilot for a new TV series called *Love is a 4-Letter Word*. He and Patti “spent their honeymoon” in St. Louis last July, starring in Irving Berlin’s *Holiday Inn*. He joined the NBC series, *Chicago Med* as a regular, playing a doctor in trauma surgery.

Charnette Batey



Charnette Batey was the **second-place winner in Musical Theatre in 2012** from the Bloomington, IN Chapter. Charnette graduated and received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre from Indiana University in May 2012. Shortly after graduation Charnette moved to New York! She starred as Deena Jones in *Dreamgirls* at The Gallery Players in Brooklyn, New York. She is currently traveling with the second National Tour of *The Book of Mormon*.

Ashley Jini Park, **seventh-place national winner in musical theater in 2012**, from Mid-Michigan Chapter, recently performed as Tuptim in *The King and I* (Broadway) and before that as Gabrielle in Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella* (First National US Tour), and in the Ensemble in *Mamma Mia*.

Erin Farrell



Erin Farrell was a national competitor in musical theater in 2004, from the Mid Michigan Chapter. She is now an Adjunct Professor in Musical Theatre at Florida Southern College, and Dance and Acting Instructor at Dance Station Orlando. Since 2006 she has been a freelance performer (actor, singer, dancer working professionally in regional theatres, independent film and national and regional commercials). Before that she spent nine years as a Director, Choreographer, and Teacher with Starlight Productions Youth Theatre.

Yaroslova Poletaeva



Yaroslova Poletaeva received the NSAL Lynn University Strings Scholarship. Here is her speech at the 2016 Red Rose Gala at Mar-a-Lago Club:

“I am a Violinist from Russia and since being in the United States The National Society of Arts and Letters has made a major difference in my life. I believe in music more than anything else, it makes people better – and nicer, and inspires people to do beautiful and courageous things. What an incredible achievement music can be – and what a pleasure it has been performing on so many wonderful occasions for the members and guests of NSAL. Thank you for all the awards. I am at a point in my life where my dreams are finally coming true. I want to thank you and NSAL for the generosity of spirit. Through your support, I am able to bring my ideas and my beliefs to people from other countries and continents all over the world. I will never forget the blessings of true friendship and inspiration that NSAL has brought to my life and words can not express how much I appreciate being chosen to be the 2016 NSAL Lynn University Scholarship recipient for Strings. Here’s to my new

home...and to my wonderful friends who believe in the arts more than anything else. Thank you Ms. Erickson and Florida East Coast for making a difference in the lives of so many young artists.”

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARTS AND LETTERS HIGH SCHOOL PILOT PROJECT



The National Society of Arts and Letters Florida East Coast Chapter is pleased to announce the formation of the NSAL High School Pilot Project at Boca Raton Community High School in Boca Raton, Florida. The program, chaired by Alyce Erickson and Kirsten Stephenson and sanctioned by Dean Prieur, began with the 2015 academic year; start-up funds were donated, and a professional mentor has donated time and services. On February 27, 2016, the young artists had a Photography Exhibition and Master Class at the Florida Atlantic University Theatre Lab. Mr. Stephen Crowley, New York Times Pulitzer Award recipient for Photography, along with Mr. Rob Sweeten, Teacher and Department Chair for Photography, conducted the Master Class and individual sessions with the students. The area of interest may vary from year to year but shall be a discipline from within the visual and performing arts and literature categories. The HSPP class exhibited their photography

and were presented and honored at the Red Rose Gala on April 1, 2016.

The Florida East Coast Chapter held its 34th Annual Red Rose Gala at Mar-a-Lago, former home of Marjorie Meriwether Post, on April 1, 2016. We had 130 performing and non-performing Young Artists as a vital part of the Gala. All competition and scholarship winners were Greeters and we had the entire Lynn Philharmonia Orchestra perform, along with five Chamber groups. One of the groups, “the Lyric Chamber Group,” just won first place in a competition in New York. Twenty-one High School Pilot Project Photographers also attended and had Photography Exhibit at the Red Rose Gala. We were honored to have our President, Dorothy Lincoln-Smith, Incoming President, Judy Park, and Past President Barbara Branscum and her husband Cleveland join us at the Red Rose Gala.

Lynn University Conservatory of Music young artists performing with the Philharmonia Orchestra



Florida Atlantic University Madrigal Singers

