



YOUNGARTS ANNOUNCES THE 2025 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS IN THE ARTS

High Honor Bestowed by the President of the United States to 20 of the Nation's Most Talented Artists, All YoungArts Award Winners and Graduating High School Seniors

MIAMI (September 29, 2025) – YoungArts is proud to announce that 20 of its most accomplished YoungArts award winners have been named 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, one of the highest honors granted to graduating high school seniors in the United States. Since 1981, YoungArts has served as the sole nominating agency for this prestigious distinction, furthering the organization's mission of supporting and elevating the next generation of creative leaders across the country.

These 20 exceptional young artists join a prestigious cohort of 161 total U.S. Presidential Scholars in 2025. The full class includes two students from each U.S. state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 at-large scholars, 20 in career and technical education, and 20 in the arts.

Clive Chang, President and CEO of YoungArts, said, "The 2025 class of U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts inspires us to think creatively and critically about the world around us. We are honored, as sole nominating agency for the U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, to help ensure that artistic excellence is celebrated alongside academic and technical accomplishments. It is a thrill to have these young change-makers in the YoungArts community, and we look forward to supporting these artists throughout their careers."

The 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, nominated exclusively by YoungArts, are:

Name	City, State	School	YoungArts Winner Year, Discipline
Andres Jimenez	Madison, WI	eAchieve Academy	2024, 2025, Dance
Arim (Ariana) Kim	Irvine, CA	Orange County High School of the Arts	2025, Classical Music
Beth Anne McGowan	Dallas, TX	Highland Park High School	2023, 2024, 2025, Dance
Caroline Matthews	Allen, TX	Lovejoy High School	2025, Design
Crystin Herring	Los Angeles, CA	Windward School	2025, Theater
Denver Whaley	Lehi, UT	Juan Diego Catholic High School	2025, Visual Arts
Elena Weng	Sunnyvale, CA	Harker School	2025, Jazz
Hannah Cho	Tustin, CA	Pacific Academy Irvine	2023, Classical Music
Jan Vargas-Nedvetsky	Wilmette, IL	North Atlantic Regional High School	2024, Classical Music
Jinan Laurentia Woo	Englewood Cliffs, NJ	Columbia Grammar & Preparatory School	2023, Classical Music
Kayla McCarty	Riverside, CA	Ramona High School	2025, Theater

Kento Hong	Scarsdale, NY	Edgemont Junior Senior High School	2024, 2025, Classical Music
Macie Krause	Colleyville, TX	Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts	2024, Dance
Matthew Yu	Conroe, TX	The Woodlands College Park High School	2024, Visual Arts
Naliyah Salahuddin	Miami, FL	New World School of the Arts	2025, Visual Arts
Nathaniel Zhang	Folsom, CA	California Online Public School	2023, Classical Music
Riley Walsh	Parkland, FL	Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School	2025, Film
Samuel Nelson	Jacksonville, FL	Douglas Anderson School of the Arts	2025, Theater
Tom Liu	New York City, NY	Collegiate School	2024, 2025, Classical Music
Veronica Ye	Allen, TX	Lovejoy High School	2025, Visual Arts

The 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts join a legacy of YoungArts winners who served in previous cohorts, including Tony Award-nominated performer and choreographer Desmond Richardson; Los Angeles Music Center President Rachel S. Moore; novelist and National Book Award Finalist Allegra Goodman; Grammy Award-nominated violinist Jennifer Koh; BRAVO’s “Work of Art” winner Abdi Farah; OBIE Award-winning actress Donna Lynne Champlin; Tony Award-nominated choreographer and educator Camille A. Brown and RCA Records award-winning singer-songwriter, and Grammy Award-nominated artist Chris Young.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by executive order of the President to recognize the country’s most distinguished high school seniors for academic achievement, leadership, and service. Fifteen years later, the inclusion of the arts ensured that artistic excellence would be celebrated alongside academic and technical accomplishments. YoungArts has been a longstanding partner in this effort.

Becoming a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts

The first step to becoming a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts is to apply to YoungArts, which is the sole nominating agency for this honor. To be eligible for the YoungArts program, applicants must be 15–18 years old or in high school grades 10–12. To be further considered for a nomination as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts, applicants must be high school seniors and meet all of the U.S. Presidential Scholars requirements.

YoungArts award winners demonstrating excellence in the performing, visual or literary arts are selected annually through a blind adjudication process. This year, more than 800 YoungArts award winners were selected. In January, 175 winners with distinction from across the nation attended National YoungArts Week, where they participated in a week of intensive classes and workshops with internationally renowned artists, and shared their work through performances, readings, exhibitions and screenings that were open to the public.

During National YoungArts Week, eligible participants are further evaluated, award levels are determined, and nominations are made for that year’s U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts candidates. After a rigorous selection process, YoungArts nominates 60 candidates for an invitation to apply to the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. Finally, the Commission on Presidential Scholars selects 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts each year.

About U.S. Presidential Scholars

In 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established by executive order of President Lyndon B. Johnson to recognize and honor the nation’s top graduating high school seniors. In

1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrated talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

Scholars are selected annually by the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, appointed by the President, based on academic achievement, personal characteristics, leadership and service activities, and writing ability. This year, over 5,000 candidates qualified for the 2025 program determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT and ACT exams, through nominations made by Chief State School Officers, or other partner recognition programs or YoungArts.

Since its inception, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored over 8,000 of the nation's high-performing students. U.S. Presidential Scholars are honored for their accomplishments during the online National Recognition Program each June. To commemorate their achievement, the Scholars are awarded the Presidential Scholars Medallion.

The 161 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and from U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, and 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in Career and Technical Education.

About YoungArts

YoungArts—the national foundation for the advancement of artists—was established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison to identify exceptional young artists, amplify their potential, and invest in their lifelong creative freedom. YoungArts provides space, funding, mentorship, professional development and community throughout artists' careers. Entrance into this prestigious organization starts with a highly competitive application for talented artists ages 15–18, or grades 10–12, in the United States that is judged by esteemed discipline-specific panels of artists through a rigorous adjudication process.

For more information, visit youngarts.org, [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) or [Facebook](#).

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