



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GRAND ISLAND** – The Nebraska State Fair and Vision Productions, Inc. presented the 8th Annual Galaxy of Stars® Talent Search two day competition at Fonner Park, the Semi-Finals on Saturday, September 1st and the Finals on Sunday, September 2nd. Since its beginning in 1993, the Galaxy of Stars® Talent Search has grown to be the biggest talent search in Nebraska, featuring singers, dancers, instrumentalists, variety acts and songwriters. Forty-two performances by contestants from thirty-two cities across Nebraska competed on the Bristol Windows Stage in the Semi-Finals. Twenty-nine of the Highest Scoring performances advanced to the Finals with contestants competing for over \$5,000.00 in cash, prizes, trophies and recording sessions.

### FINALISTS

The Top Five Highest Scoring Performances in each Age Division and fourteen of the next highest scoring performances in all three age divisions advanced to the Finals. Competing in the Finals Competition in no ranking order: **COMETS** - **McKenzie Steiner**, Vocal-Lincoln; **Lexie Jackson**, Vocal-Gering; **Jessica Vogt**, Vocal-Omaha; **Jamie Chen**, Pianist-Alliance; **Morayah Cupp**, Vocal-Champion, and **Reagan Gausman**, Vocal-Columbus. **SHOOTING STARS** - **Jennelle Christine**, Vocal-North Platte; **Kiana Meradith**, Vocal-Bennington; **Shelby Stevens**, Vocal-McCook; **TAPS Honors Dance Team** - Connor Kinney, Tori Ronspies, Jessica Emory, Kim Svitak, Melissa Svitak, Jed Shermer, Ryan Johnson, Samantha Emory, Liz Selting, Jill Schindler, Andrea Steffen, Kassidy Steffen, Shianna Oestreich and Therese Lux – Norfolk/Tilden; **Halle Stephens**, Vocal-Arapahoe; **Kayleah Moravec**, Vocal-Seward; **Lindi Johnson**, Vocal-McCook; **The Stage Dance Team** - Sarah Ryan, Chloe Ryan, Camerin Burtle, Jesica Bowen, Jessica Nichols and Zoe Hipp - North Platte; **Katie Marie Goesch**, Vocal-Grand Island; **Silvia Galvan**, Vocal-Hebron; **Carlie Bauer**, Vocal-Minden, and **Ashtyn Kleinsmith**, Dance-Walton. **NOVAS** – **Johnny Ray Scott**, Vocal-McCook; **Chel-C Morgan**, Vocal-McCook; **Bo & Kerrie Jo**, Group Vocal-Elkhorn/Waterloo; **Jessica Swerczek**, Vocal-Lincoln; **Allen Glaser**, Vocal-Kearney; **Kerrie Jo Varley**, Vocal-Waterloo; **TAPS Honors Dance Team** – Emily Burroughs, Kim Svitak, Connor Kinney, Jessica Emory, and Samantha Emory – Norfolk; **Bobby O'Dell**, Vocal-Elkhorn; **Alex Fegley & Justin Slafter**, Group Vocal-Grand Island/Omaha; **Stacy Lynn Pospisil**, Dance-Hallam; **Justin Hanshew**, Vocal-Scottsbluff, and **Johnna Jane**, Vocal-North Platte.

### NEBRASKA STATE FAIR AWARDS AND WINNERS

Cash Awards were presented by the Nebraska State Fair and Vision Productions, Inc; Trophies and Medals were presented by Dee Lichtenberger, Laser Art Design, Callaway, and Vision Productions, Inc. and Recording Sessions were presented by Tom and Terri Ware, Ware House Productions, Inc., Omaha.

**Above and Beyond Awards** were presented to individuals, businesses or organizations that have gone “Above and Beyond” to support and encourage Nebraska talent: **Deanna Floe** - Scottsbluff, and **Janna Ryan** – North Platte.

**“Dream, Believe, and Achieve” Award** was presented to **Trish Linscott** - Omaha, for exemplifying the vision of the Galaxy of Stars®: Dare to “DREAM” big, “BELIEVE” in your God given talents and strive to “ACHIEVE” your highest goals and aspirations.

## Overall Awards:

- MEGA STAR** (Highest Scoring Contestant Overall)  
\$500.00 Cash & Trophy: **Jamie Chen, Comet**, Piano - *Alliance*
- SHINING STAR** (Highest Scoring Contestant in Star Quality, The Shine Factor")  
\$100.00 & Trophy: **Jamie Chen, Comet**, Piano - *Alliance*
- SUPERSTAR** (Voted Overall Best Performance by All Contestants)  
\$100.00 & Trophy: **Johnna Jane, Nova**, Vocal - *North Platte*
- PEOPLES CHOICE** (Voted Overall Best Performance by Audience)  
\$100.00 & Trophy: **TAPPS Honors Dance Team, Shooting Stars** - Connor Kinney, Tori Ronspies, Jessica Emory, Kim Svitak, Melissa Svitak, Jed Shermer, Ryan Johnson, Samantha Emory, Liz Selting, Jill Schindler, Andrea Steffen, Cassidy Steffen, Shianna Oestreich and Therese Lux - *Norfolk/Tilden*.

## Age Division Awards:

### COMETS (12 & Under)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place** \$200.00 Cash & Trophy: **Jamie Chen**, Piano, *Alliance*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** \$100.00 Cash & Trophy: **McKenzie Steiner**, Vocal, *Lincoln*  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** \$ 50.00 Cash & Trophy: **Reagan Gausman**, Vocal, *Columbus*

### SHOOTING STARS (13 to 18):

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place** \$200.00 Cash & Trophy: **Lindi Johnson**, Vocal, *McCook*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** \$100.00 Cash & Trophy: **Katie Marie Goesch**, Vocal, *Grand Island*  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** \$ 50.00 Cash & Trophy: **Jenelle Christine**, Vocal, *North Platte*

### NOVAS (19 & Over)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place** \$200.00 Cash & Trophy: **Johnna Jane**, Vocal, *North Platte*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** \$100.00 Cash & Trophy: **Justin Hanshew**, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** \$ 50.00 Cash & Trophy: **Jessica Swerczek**, Vocal, *Lincoln*

## Overall Vocal Award (Highest Scoring Individual or Group – All Age Divisions):

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place** Recording Session 4 Hours/\$600.00 Value: **Johnna Jane**, Nova, Vocal, *North Platte*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** Recording Session 2 Hours/\$300.00 Value: **Justin Hanshew**, Nova, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*

**GALAXY OF STARS® SONGWRITING CONTEST:** The Top Three Songwriters of the Galaxy of Stars® Songwriting Contest were presented their awards at the Finals Awards Ceremony, and songwriters of the Top Fifteen Original Songs were acknowledged on stage during the Awards Ceremony.

## Songwriter Awards:

**1<sup>st</sup> Place:** \$200.00 Cash, 4 Hours/\$600.00 Value Recording Session & Trophy; **2<sup>nd</sup> Place:** \$100.00 Cash, 2 Hours/\$300.00 Value Recording Session & Trophy, **3<sup>rd</sup> Place:** \$50.00 Cash & Trophy. Songwriters of the Top Fifteen Original Songs received a Galaxy of Stars® Medal.

## Top Three Original Songs:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place** "Mr. Shy Guy" **Royce Swain, Omaha** (Accepted on his behalf  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** "What Did I Do To Deserve You" **Royce Swain, Omaha** by his son, Kent Swain)  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** "Husker Football Uniform" **Robert DeBusk, Eagle**

For additional information go to the official Galaxy of Stars® website at [www.galaxyofstarstalentsearch.com](http://www.galaxyofstarstalentsearch.com) and visit the Nebraska State Fair at [www.statefair.org](http://www.statefair.org).