



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 5, 2013

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GRAND ISLAND – The Nebraska State Fair and Vision Productions, Inc. presented the 9th Annual Galaxy of Stars® Talent Search two day competition at Fonner Park, the Semi-Finals on Saturday, August 31st and the Finals on Sunday, September 1st. 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-three performances by contestants from thirty-two cities across Nebraska competed on the Bristol Windows Stage in the Semi-Finals. All Semi-Finalist Contestants received a Galaxy of Stars® Medal. Twenty-one of the Highest Scoring performances advanced to the Finals with contestants competing for over \$9,000.00 in prizes, cash, trophies and recording sessions.

FINALISTS

The Top Five Highest Scoring Performances in each Age Division and six 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*; **Feet of Fury** (*Abigail Rosenthal, Emily Cejka, Jillian Cejka, Kyanne Conway, Lindsay Ellison and Vennah Hajek*), Dance, *Lincoln*; **Morayah Cupp**, Vocal, *Champion*; **MaKenzie Mellem**, Vocal, *Battle Creek*; **Tayce Bleich**, Vocal, *Battle Creek*. **SHOOTING STARS** - **Carlie Bauer**, Vocal, *Minden*; **Katie Shonka**, Vocal/Guitar, *Bellwood*; **Matt Davis**, Banjo, *Alma*; **Chelsea Arnold**, Vocal, *Crete*; **Alex Hollmann**, Vocal/Piano, *Verdigre*. **NOVAS** – **Organix Crew** (*Carlos Tapia and Karina Alvarez*), Dance, *Lexington*; **Debby Wagner**, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*; **Johnna Jane Thayer**, Vocal, *North Platte*; **Adam Crocker**, Vocal, *Indianola*; **Amber Rutt**, Vocal, *Lincoln*; **Jesse Hake**, Vocal/Guitar, *Grand Island*; **Taylor Dirks**, Vocal, *Deshler*; **Stacy Armijo**, Vocal, *McCook*; **Justin Hanshew**, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*; **Ken Hoge**, Vocal, *Hubbell*; **Austin Edwards**, Vocal/Guitar, *Lincoln*.

NEBRASKA STATE FAIR AWARDS AND WINNERS

Cash Awards were presented by the Nebraska State Fair, Vision Productions, Inc. and Steve McCoy - State Farm Agent, Arapahoe, and Mc Cell, US Cellular Agent, McCook. 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, and Denny Martin Music Studio, Nashville, TN.

Above and Beyond Awards were presented to individuals, businesses or organizations that have gone "Above and Beyond" to support and encourage Nebraska talent: **Todd Kramer** - *Arthur*; **Terri Krolkowski** – *Lincoln*, **Justin Hanshew** - *Scottsbluff*; and **B.J. Montague** - *Lincoln*.

"Dream, Believe, and Achieve" Award was presented to **Josh Mackey** - *Ogallala*, 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: **Justin Hanshew**, Nova, Vocal - *Scottsbluff*
- SHINING STAR** (Highest Scoring Contestant in Star Quality, “The Shine Factor”)
\$100.00 & Trophy: **Justin Hanshew**, Nova, Vocal - *Scottsbluff*
- SUPERSTAR** (Voted Overall Best Performance by All Contestants)
\$100.00 & Trophy: **MaKenzie Mellem**, Comet, Vocal, *Crofton*
- PEOPLES CHOICE** (Voted Overall Best Performance by Audience)
\$100.00 & Trophy: **Arielle Kerkman**, Nova, Vocal, *Grand Island*

Age Division Awards:

COMETS (12 & Under)

- 1st Place** \$200.00 Cash & Trophy: **Feet of Fury** (*Abigail Rosenthal, Emily Cejka, Jillian Cejka, Kyanne Conway, Lindsay Ellison and Vennah Hajek*), Dance, *Lincoln*
- 2nd Place** \$100.00 Cash & Trophy: **MaKenzie Mellem**, Vocal, *Crofton*
- 3rd Place** \$ 50.00 Cash & Trophy: **McKenzie Steiner**, Vocal, *Lincoln*

SHOOTING STARS (13 to 18):

- 1st Place** \$200.00 Cash & Trophy: **Matt Davis**, Banjo, *Alma*
- 2nd Place** \$100.00 Cash & Trophy: **Chelsea Arnold**, Vocal, *Crete*
- 3rd Place** \$ 50.00 Cash & Trophy: **Carlie Bauer**, Vocal, *Minden*

NOVAS (19 & Over)

- 1st Place** \$200.00 Cash & Trophy: **Justin Hanshew**, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*
- 2nd Place** \$100.00 Cash & Trophy: **Stacy Armijo**, Vocal, *McCook*
- 3rd Place** \$ 50.00 Cash & Trophy: **Debby Wagner**, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*

Overall Vocal or Instrumental Awards (Highest Scoring Individuals or Groups – All Age Divisions):

Presented by Ware House Productions - Omaha

- 1st Place** Recording Session 4 Hours/\$600.00 Value: **Justin Hanshew**, Nova, Vocal, *Scottsbluff*
- 2nd Place** Recording Session 2 Hours/\$300.00 Value: **Stacy Armijo**, Nova, Vocal, *McCook*

Overall Vocal (Highest Scoring Individual or Group - All Age Divisions):

Presented by Denny Martin Music - Nashville

- 1st Place** Studio Recording Package \$2,000.00 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.

Top Three Original Songs Awards:

1st Place: \$200.00 Cash and Trophy. 4 Hours/\$600.00 Value Recording Session Presented by Ware House Productions, Omaha, and \$2,000.00 Studio Recording Package Presented by Denny Martin Music, Nashville:

“Fire N’ Ice” **Jesse Hake, *Grand Island***

2nd Place: \$100.00 Cash and Trophy. 2 Hours/\$300.00 Value Recording Session Presented by Ware House Productions, Omaha:

“Rise Above And Beyond” **Shelby Stevens, *McCook***

3rd Place: \$50.00 Cash & Trophy.

“Acoustic Peace” **Larry Owens, *Lincoln***

All Songwriters of the Top Fifteen Original Songs received a Galaxy of Stars® Medal.

For additional information go to the official Galaxy of Stars® website at www.galaxyofstarstalentsearch.com and visit the Nebraska State Fair at www.statefair.org.

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