

First Annual BLUMEY AWARDS Honor Excellence in High School Theater

by Linda Ann Watt May 31 <http://www.broadwayworld.com/charlotte/article/First-Annual-BLUMEY-AWARDS-Honor-Excellence-in-High-School-Theater-20120531>



I had the pleasure of seeing the First Annual Blumey Awards—Excellence in High School Theater held at the Belk Theater last week. Like any great genesis, from the Tony Awards to the Oscars,.. the First Annual Blumey Awards burst onto the stage with incredible talent and will be here for many years to come. It was created to honor outstanding student achievement in musical theater from high schools in Charlotte and the surrounding areas. Presented by Wells Fargo, The black-tie awards ceremony was the inspiration of [Tom Gabbard](#), President of Blumenthal Performing Arts. Gabbard explains, “I went to New York to see the Jimmy Awards [National High School Musical Theater Awards] named after my friend, [James Nederlander](#). I left the awards thinking, there are so many talented youth in Charlotte, I would like to model an awards ceremony after the Jimmy Awards to recognize our talented students.”

Twenty high schools participated in this event. The ceremony was flawless thanks to

Master of Ceremonies, Maureen O’Boyle, co-anchor of WBTB news and the show’s script, written by Ralph Beck, Educational Director of Blumenthal Performing Arts, who also, co-directed the program with Michelle Youngs, Education Programs Manager, Blumenthal Performing Arts. Beck reflects on the event, “I could not be more pleased with the program. I’m excited for the opportunity the kids had. The ceremony turned out so well. The kids and everyone enjoyed the show.”



Kudos go to the very talented students who entertained under Music Director/Conductor, David Dabbon and Choreographer, Sarah Zielinski with numbers including "The Telephone Hour" from BYE BYE BIRDIE, "Skid Row" from LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS and "America" from WEST SIDE STORY. The students’ talent and enthusiasm was very apparent. The numbers were Broadway quality.



The winners included Best Set Construction and Best Lighting Execution—South Point High School for JEKYLL & HYDE, Best Costume Creation—Cuthbertson High School for BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, Best Student Orchestra—Hickory Ridge High School for URINETOWN, Best Choreography Execution—Northwest School of the Arts for WEST SIDE STORY, Best Ensemble/Chorus—Charlotte Latin School for JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT, Best Overall Direction—South Mecklenburg High School for BYE BYE BIRDIE, Best Featured Performer, Robert Briner as A-rab in WEST SIDE STORY—Northwest School of the Arts, Best Supporting Actor, Matt Verner as Voice of Audrey II in

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS—Jay [M. Robinson](#) High School, Best Supporting Actress, Emma VanDeVelde, as Anita in WEST SIDE STORY—Charlotte Christian School, Best Actor, Kyle Conroy, as Seymour in LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS—Jay [M. Robinson](#) High School, Best Actress, Taylor Neal, as Belle in BEAUTY AND THE BEAST—Cuthbertson High School and Wells Fargo Best Musical for JEKYLL & HYDE—South Point High School.

Conroy and Neal will represent the Charlotte region on June 25th at the National High School Musical Theater Awards at the Minksoff Theatre on Broadway.

Everyone needs help to shine, and these students have had the support and talent of their incredible teachers. I met Cuthbertson High School, Drama Teacher, Joy Hamilton while I was teaching acting in an Enrichment Arts Program there. I saw two productions she directed, both were Broadway quality. Hamilton, who had two wins for Cuthbertson High School with Best Costume Creation and Best Actress, is a teacher who inspires her students with her caring heart and very special talent.



During the ceremony, Don and Mary Doctor, The Doctor Family Foundation presented two \$10,000 annually renewable scholarships to senior students, Bethany Kinect from Charlotte Christian School and Lexie Wolfe from Northwest School of the Arts.

[Page 2 »](#)

[Click Here to Visit the Charlotte Home Page for More Stories!](#)

© 2013 Copyright [Wisdom Digital Media](#). All Rights reserved.