



## ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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### **And the Nominees are...**

Nominations Are Announced for the Highly Anticipated 14th Annual  
5th Avenue Awards Honoring High School Musical Theater

**June 6, 2016 at McCaw Hall**

*Proudly presented by Wells Fargo*

*with additional support from Alaska Airlines and The Boeing Company*

(Tuesday, May 17, 2016, SEATTLE, WA) — **The 5th Avenue Theatre** is thrilled to announce the nominees for the 14th annual **5th Avenue Awards Honoring High School Musical Theater**, the highly anticipated award show proudly sponsored by Wells Fargo with additional support from Alaska Airlines and The Boeing Company. The 5th Avenue Awards allow musical theater students from across Washington State to meet, celebrate and honor the exceptional musical theater productions presented during the 2015/16 school year. This Tony Award-style annual ceremony was created by 5th Avenue Theatre Producing Artistic Director Bill Berry in 2003 to offer theater students the kind of support and recognition that accomplished high school athletes have received for decades. This year, due to The 5th's thrilling production of *Lerner & Loewe's Paint Your Wagon* on stage at our historic theater, The 5th Avenue Awards will take place at **McCaw Hall** on **June 6, 2016**.

Each year, schools from across Washington State submit their musicals for consideration by The 5th Avenue Awards Committee. A panel of acclaimed theater professionals selected by the committee visits high school productions from urban districts to rural communities across the State, as far away as Spokane, Sequim, Clarkston and Vancouver. Evaluators return in May to deliberate the nominations before the live ceremony on June 6, 2016.

This eagerly awaited event features performances from the most talented students in the region. McCaw Hall seats 2,963 and provides students the opportunity to perform for a full house in a magnificent professional venue. Celebrity guests and business leaders from the Seattle arts community will present awards to recipients throughout the evening.

For the 2015/16 high school theater season, 164 nominations, 161 honorable mentions and 30 special honors were announced. The 21 categories include awards for "Outstanding

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Actor” and “Outstanding Actress” and a variety of creative, design and offstage awards.

Special honors are awarded for extraordinary student achievements and schools whose productions create an educational impact beyond the stage. The 5th also continues the tradition of honoring outstanding educators with special recognition. The recipients of the award for “Outstanding Actor” and “Outstanding Actress” will go on to represent Washington State at the national level for the National High School Musical Theater Awards (known as the “Jimmy” Awards) in New York City.

The mission of The 5th Avenue Awards is to celebrate the work, talent and commitment that students, parents and faculty devote to their high school's annual musical productions. Over the years, multiple schools have reported back to The 5th Avenue that their involvement in this awards program has significantly helped their individual efforts to secure funding, improve curriculum, and increase student participation.

Many 5th Avenue Award participants have gone on to have fruitful careers both on stage and behind the scenes. Numerous past participants of the 5th Avenue Awards have notable careers as actors, directors, designers and theater administrators. Several participants have had careers outside of Seattle and have enjoyed national acclaim. Stefano Langone was a Top 10 contestant on the hit television show *American Idol*; Ryah Nixon appeared in the national tour of *9 to 5: The Musical*; Diana Huey received a Helen Hayes Award for her performance in *Miss Saigon*; and Brandon Ivie has a blossoming Broadway career. Additional past participants have included Seattle stars and 5th Avenue favorites Jared Michael Brown, Justine Huertas, Frederick Hagreen, Gabe Corey, Sarah Rose Davis, Kirsten deLoehr Helland, and Cayman Ilika, among many others.

The 5th could not maintain and continue a program as extensive as this one without the generous support of Wells Fargo, the long-standing sponsor of The 5th Avenue Awards for the past 12 years. Wells Fargo invested \$3.5 million in nonprofits and schools across Washington and team members logged 31,000 volunteer hours in 2015. Wells Fargo has 3,700 team members in Washington who serve customers through a network of 234 banking, mortgage and investment offices and 229 ATMs in 83 communities across the state.

The 5th would also like to thank Alaska Airlines, whose support makes it possible to send the recipients of the “Outstanding Actor” and “Outstanding Actress” awards to New York to participate in the National High School Musical Theater Awards following the awards ceremony at McCaw Hall.

“Supporting our youth in our hometown is truly a delight and honor for us to engage in,” said Ann Ardizzone, VP of Supply Chain Management at Alaska Airlines and 5th Avenue Board Member. “We wish them the very best of luck in New York and know they will do great.”

Alaska Airlines is the sixth-largest U.S. airline based on passenger traffic and is one of the most popular U.S. West Coast air carriers. Headquartered in Seattle, Alaska carries more

passengers between the state of Alaska and the lower 48 than any other airline. Alaska Airlines invested \$12M in over 600 non-profits and community organizations in 2015 and its employees volunteered 47,000 hours in 2015.

For a full list of our nominees, visit The 5th Avenue Theatre blog at [www.5thavenuetheatre.org/blog](http://www.5thavenuetheatre.org/blog)

The 5th Avenue Awards Ceremony will be broadcast in its entirety as a live webcast on Facebook. Please visit [www.facebook.com/5thAvenueEdu](https://www.facebook.com/5thAvenueEdu) to watch.

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