



INSPIRING FUTURE  
GENERATIONS OF SINGERS

**PRESS CONTACT:**

Linda McAlister, Executive Director  
Linda@schmidtvocalarts.org

## **Sara Shiff Wins Minnesota Schmidt Vocal Competition**

*Modified “virtual” competition model gives high school singers the opportunity to still win cash awards and potential scholarships*

**(Minneapolis, MN) May 2, 2020** – On May 2, 2020 the Schmidt Vocal Competition, in conjunction with its Minnesota cohort host, the University of Minnesota announced winners of its modified virtual singing competition for sophomore, junior, and senior high school singers. This year’s first prize winner was Sara Shiff, from Plymouth, MN who was awarded \$2,500 for her performance of "Và godendo" by G.F. Handel.

Additional winners were: Leo Dworsky, Second Place; Maggie McGowan, Third Place; Alyssa Bunnell, Chloe Cagle, Cameron Hubbard, Paige Klemenhagen, Natalie Monell, Abigail Sprague, Katylin Sweeney, Finalist; Alexandra Cook, London Hibbs, Seungu Kim, Emma Stamper, Encouragement Award; Paige Klemenhagen, Most Promising Sophomore.

Due to the closing of college and university campuses and the stay-at-home orders in place across the country, Schmidt Vocal Arts quickly pivoted in March to create a modified “virtual submission” model for its Spring 2020 Schmidt Vocal Competitions. Several signature elements traditionally associated with the Schmidt Vocal Competition were not possible in the virtual model – such as in-person, on-stage live performances, master classes led by renown members of the Schmidt Vocal Artist Network between the two rounds of competition, and connecting with fellow competitors throughout the day. However, competitors in the virtual cohort were able to showcase their talent as well as come together to hear from judges and celebrate the winners in a Facebook LIVE awards ceremony.

“We are so proud of Sara Shiff and the many other talented singers who participated in this year’s virtual Schmidt Vocal Competition,” said Linda McAlister, Executive Director of Schmidt Vocal Arts. “Many of our competitors work hard all year to compete in this prestigious competition. We wanted to ensure they still had the chance to compete, earn cash awards, and become eligible for scholarship opportunities. In times of uncertainty, experiences like this are more important than ever.”

**A Schmidt Vocal Arts**  
6 East 5th Street, Suite 406  
Covington, KY 41011

**T (513) 783-2583**  
**E info@schmidtvocalarts.org**  
**W www.schmidtvocalarts.org**





INSPIRING FUTURE  
GENERATIONS OF SINGERS

“My heart was pounding when Linda McAlister announced the winners,” remarks Sara Shiff. “When I got the call, my whole family started cheering. Although I missed being able to sing live this year, I am incredibly grateful that Schmidt Vocal Arts provided a virtual competition so we could still compete. My scholarship award will help fund my tuition at Princeton University.

Schmidt Vocal Competition plans to return to its live, in-person competition model on the campus of the University of Minnesota next Spring. For more information, visit [www.schmidtvocalarts.org](http://www.schmidtvocalarts.org).

### **About Schmidt Vocal Competition**

The Schmidt Vocal Competition has impacted the lives of thousands of young students over the past two decades, offering awards, scholarships, and educational experiences for more than 150 students annually. The Schmidt Vocal Competition is held annually in 17 locations throughout the U.S. in partnership with regional colleges and universities and is open to sophomore, junior, and senior high school singers. Competitors perform in front of a live audience in two rounds and participate in educational master classes with some of today’s most renowned professionals between the preliminary and finalist rounds.

Schmidt Competition participants have gone on to gain entrance into the world’s finest music schools and include winners of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the George London Competition, the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Competition, Classical Singer, and the National Opera Association Award. The Schmidt Vocal Competition is funded by the William E. Schmidt Foundation, which encourages aspiring young singers to pursue their passion in vocal arts and provides support and inspiration to future generations of singers.

**About Sara Shiff**– Sara Shiff, a senior at Armstrong High School, will be studying political science and vocal performance at Princeton University, and voice at Juilliard. For the past four years, she participated in the MacPhail Center for Music Prelude Program, where she’s the Leadership Team Coordinator. Sara attended the Brevard Music Center Young Artist Vocal Program, Minnesota Opera Vocal Artist Program, and sang with the Minnesota All-State Choir. She studies voice at the University of Minnesota with Dr. Wendy Zaro-Mullins. At school, Sara is the soprano section leader and featured soloist in the Chambers and Concert choirs, performs leads in the theater productions, founded and directs the school-wide Recycling Program, is a team captain of the American Cancer Society Relay for Life program, and is valedictorian of her class.

**A Schmidt Vocal Arts**  
6 East 5th Street, Suite 406  
Covington, KY 41011

**T (513) 783-2583**  
**E [info@schmidtvocalarts.org](mailto:info@schmidtvocalarts.org)**  
**W [www.schmidtvocalarts.org](http://www.schmidtvocalarts.org)**

