



INSPIRING FUTURE
GENERATIONS OF SINGERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS CONTACT:
[Rachel Roe](mailto:Rachel.Roe@schmidtarts.com), 312.618.6655

Schmidt Vocal Arts Announces Winners of its Missouri Regional Competition, Held December 13



(L-R) Isabella Morgan (3rd), Olivia Dolton (1st), Jesse Kliman (2nd)

Three Prizewinners Advance to National Competition in May

[Covington, KY, December 16, 2025]—[Schmidt Vocal Arts](https://www.schmidtarts.com) (SVA), a national organization for pre-professional classical singers, is pleased to announce the winners of its 2025-26 Missouri Regional Competition, held at the University of Missouri, Kansas City on Saturday, December 13, 2025.

First Place
Second Place
Third Place

Olivia Dolton, Liberty, MO
Jesse Kliman, Hyattsville, MD
Isabella Morgan, Kansas City, MO

Twenty-three talented high school singers from Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Iowa, Maryland, and Arizona competed for cash prizes and the opportunity to advance to Schmidt Vocal Arts' National Competition in May 2026.

Saturday's jury—soprano Beth Roberts, Professor of Voice at Montclair State University; soprano Hailey Clark, Assistant Professor of Voice at Vanderbilt University; and baritone Dr. Raymond Feener, Associate Professor of Voice and Chair of the Vocal Studies Division at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory—selected nine singers for the final round, each of whom received a \$250 award for advancing.

Three singers were selected for participation in a master class prior to the final round of competition, and four cash prizes of \$100 were given for awards of Encouragement, Most Promising Sophomore, and Broadway Bound.

FINALISTS

Olivia Dolton	Liberty High School, Liberty, MO
Alex Finch	Lee's Summit High School, Lee's Summit, MO
Annika Hess	Lee's Summit North, Lee's Summit, MO
Dominic Hughes	Staley High School, Kansas City, MO
Jesse Kliman	DeMatha Catholic High School, Hyattsville, MD
Audric Mansoor-McKedy	Goddard High School, Wichita, KS
Isabella Morgan	Staley High School, Kansas City, MO
Amelia Mueller	Webster Groves High School, St. Louis, MO
Gracie Smith	Phoenix Country Day School, Scottsdale, AZ

ADDITIONAL PRIZES

Encouragement Award	Audric Mansoor-McKedy , Goddard High School, Wichita, KS
Encouragement Award	Zoe Clarke , Sumner Academy of Arts and Science, Kansas City, KS
Most Promising Sophomore	Braelyn Castellano , Lee's Summit High School, Lee's Summit, MO
Broadway Bound	Braelyn Castellano , Lee's Summit High School, Lee's Summit, MO

The three top prizewinners now advance to the National Competition in May 2026, and received awards of \$2,500, \$2,000, and \$1,500. They are now also eligible to apply for



college scholarships from Schmidt Vocal Arts, which awards more than \$500,000 each year to its applicants to support their higher education.

Seven more [regional competitions](#), as well as one online, for high school students take place across the country throughout the 2025-26 season prior to the National Competition in May 2026 at Sarasota Opera.

All Schmidt Vocal Arts programs are funded by the **William E. Schmidt Foundation**. Since debuting in 1997, the Schmidt Vocal Competitions have touched the lives of more than 6,500 developing singers, this year awarding a total of \$650,000 in cash prizes and scholarships in pursuit of Schmidt Vocal Arts' mission to foster a passion in young artists for classical singing and create opportunities to propel them on their journey toward a career in the arts.

ABOUT SCHMIDT VOCAL ARTS

Funded by the William E. Schmidt Foundation, Schmidt Vocal Arts is committed to fostering a passion for classical singing and to creating opportunities for young singers. Led by Executive Director Linda McAlister, Schmidt Vocal Arts boasts many accomplished alumni who have gone on to pursue music degrees and enjoy successful careers in the arts. The Schmidt Vocal Competitions—the oldest of the Foundation's programs—have touched the lives of more than 5,000 developing high school and undergraduate singers, awarding a total of over \$2 million in cash awards and scholarships since its debut in 1997. Other Schmidt Vocal Arts programs include:

- Schmidt Vocal Institute, a two-week intensive summer residential program where singers learn from world-renowned artists, participate in workshops and master classes, and perform with other talented musicians;
- Schmidt Vocal Education, offering regional and online programs for singers and teachers to learn, challenge themselves, and participate in performance experiences; and
- Schmidt Vocal Scholarships, a program that provides need-based support for talented singers continuing their professional vocal education.

###

