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Schmidt Vocal Arts Announces Winners of its 2026 Online High School Regional Competitions



*Group A (top, L-R): James Williams, Frank Moreno, Isaac Ahn
Group B (L-R): Armando Cabrera-Ontiveros, Olivia Stevens, Taylor-Marie Robinson*

Six Prizewinners Advance to National Competition in May

[Covington, KY, April 24, 2026]—[Schmidt Vocal Arts](https://www.schmidt.com) (SVA), a national organization for pre-professional classical singers, is pleased to announce the winners of its two 2025-26 online “Regional” Competitions.

GROUP A

First Place
Second Place
Third Place

James Williams, Pearland, TX
Frank Moreno, Houston, TX
Isaac Ahn, Fort Lee, NJ

GROUP B

First Place
Second Place
Third Place

Armando Cabrera-Ontiveros, Pearland, TX
Olivia Stevens, Newark, DE
Taylor-Marie Robinson, Greenville, SC

In all, 70 talented high school singers from 23 states across the country competed for cash prizes and the opportunity to advance to Schmidt Vocal Arts' Fifth Annual National Competition in May 2026. Applicants were divided into two 35-member groups.

The three top prizewinners from each group received awards of \$2,500, \$2,000, and \$1,500, and advance to the National Competition in Sarasota, FL. They are now also eligible to apply for college scholarships—and other programs—through Schmidt Vocal Arts, which awards more than \$500,000 each year to its applicants to support their higher education.

Group A's jury— mezzo-soprano Mary Stucky, Professor Emerita of Voice at the College-Conservatory of Music of the University of Cincinnati; soprano Dr. Autumn West, Associate Professor of Voice at Oklahoma City University; and baritone Dr. Andrew Ryker, Lecturer of Voice at Georgia State University—selected ten singers for the final round, each of whom received a \$250 award for advancing.

Four cash prizes of \$100 were awarded for Encouragement and Most Promising Sophomore.

GROUP A FINALISTS

Isaac Ahn	Hackley School, Fort Lee, NJ
Molly Bartholomew	Palm Harbor University High School, Palm Harbor, FL
Katherine Berdovskiy	Davis Senior High School, Davis, CA
Quynh Dau	Round Rock High School, Round Rock, TX
Alexandra Lynch	Rye Country Day School, Greenwich, CT
Frank Moreno	West Fork High School, Houston, TX
Callie Chae Pyken	Los Angeles County High School of the Arts, San Marino, CA
Hana Reel	The Woodlands High School, The Woodlands, TX
Carlos Rodriguez	New World Schools of The Arts, Miami, FL
James Williams	Shadow Creek High School, Pearland, TX



ADDITIONAL PRIZES

Encouragement Award	Gus Crouch , Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
Encouragement Award	Rosalie Koren , The Park School of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD
Encouragement Award	Aidan Molaison , St. Martin's Episcopal School, Luling, LA
Most Promising Sophomore	Hana Reel , The Woodlands High School, The Woodlands, TX

Group B's jury—soprano Dr. LaToya Lain, Voice Faculty at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; baritone Christòpheren Nomura, Vocal Arts Faculty at Manhattan School of Music; and countertenor Dr. William Sauerland, Associate Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at Purdue University, in Ft. Wayne, IN—selected ten singers for the final round, each of whom received a \$250 award for advancing.

Four cash prizes of \$100 were awarded for Encouragement and Most Promising Sophomore.

GROUP B FINALISTS

Armando Cabrera-Ontiveros	Pearland High School, Pearland, TX
Emma Coleman	Plano West Senior High School, Plano, TX
Zachary Hart	Sprayberry High School, Marietta, GA
Jaiden Hsu	North Shore Country Day School, Northfield, IL
Claire Johanson	Beaverton High School, Portland, OR
Ava Mitchie	Homeschooled-Abeka Academy, Albuquerque, NM
Alex Rivera	West Fork High School, Porter, TX
Taylor-Marie Robinson	Fine Arts Center, Greenville, SC
Olivia Stevens	Mount Sophia Academy, Newark, DE
Lavinia Watkins	Orange County School of the Arts, Laguna Beach, CA

ADDITIONAL PRIZES

Encouragement Award	Jaiden Hsu , North Shore Country Day School, Northfield, IL
Encouragement Award	Landen Kessler , Santa Fe High School, Santa Fe, NM
Encouragement Award	Caden Peng , Langley High School, McLean, VA
Most Promising Sophomore	Svara Shroff , The Bryn Mawr School, Ellicott City, MD



Two more [regional competitions](#) for high school students take place across the country throughout the 2025-26 season prior to the National Competition in May 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.

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