



THE CYNTHIA WOODS MITCHELL
PAVILION
SPONSORED BY HUNTSMAN

ARTS IN **ACTION** AWARDS



2026 RECIPIENTS



The mission of The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion's Arts in Action award program is to recognize, reward and encourage talent and achievement in the performing and visual arts among fifth through eighth grade students around the greater Houston area.



Axel Ratliff

Summerwood Elementary | Humble ISD
Choir

Nominated By: Marissa Anthony

Axel consistently demonstrates strong vocal ability, confidence, and stage presence, earning multiple singing and speaking solos in choir concerts and grade-level programs. Outside of school, he participates in acting and singing programs that further develop his talents and reflect his strong commitment to the arts. Axel is also a respectful, academically strong, and well-rounded student whose enthusiasm, perseverance, and love for performing make him an outstanding young artist.

Congratulations, Axel!



David Albu

Bailey Middle School | Spring ISD
Band

Nominated By: Cam Simpson

David Albu is an exceptional young musician whose dedication, leadership, and passion for the arts set him apart. As percussion section leader, he consistently demonstrates maturity, responsibility, and a commitment to excellence, earning a place in the region band for the second consecutive year and performing at the prestigious Music for All National Festival. David is constantly working to improve his craft while also supporting and encouraging his fellow musicians. His passion, perseverance, leadership, and positive influence make him an outstanding student and representative of the arts.

Congratulations, David!



Laurel Travis

Knox Junior High | Conroe ISD

Visual Art

Nominated By: Mandy Johnston

Laurel demonstrates exceptional dedication to her artwork, creativity, and artistic growth. As a recent State Platinum Junior Visual Arts award recipient, she consistently seeks opportunities to challenge herself and excel both academically and creatively. Laurel is a diligent and engaged student who contributes positively to the classroom community in ceramics and sculpture while encouraging those around her. Currently enrolled in Art for high school credit, she continues to explore and develop her talents as an outstanding young artist.

Congratulations, Laurel!



Penny Shellberg

Knox Junior High | Conroe ISD

Theatre

Nominated By: Leslie Martinez

Penny consistently demonstrates responsibility, leadership, and dedication while helping manage and support 40–50 students throughout each production. We truly could not have produced our shows without her hard work and commitment. She serves as a vital connection between the artistic and technical teams, helping ensure communication and operations run smoothly. In addition, Penny supports auditions, oversees backstage operations, and helps keep productions organized from start to finish. Her reliability, professionalism, and positive leadership have played a major role in the success of our shows.

Congratulations, Penny!



Ryan Kwon

Mitchell Intermediate | Conroe ISD

Orchestra

Nominated By: Kalista Kresta

Ryan Kwon is an exceptional young musician whose dedication, positivity, and passion for music truly set him apart. He consistently arrives each day with a smile and a willingness to learn, demonstrating an outstanding commitment to practice, growth, and artistic excellence. As a member of one of our most driven classes, Ryan continually rises to every challenge and leads by example through his perseverance, strong work ethic, and enthusiasm for music. Beyond his own personal growth, Ryan inspires those around him by sharing his love of music with classmates and encouraging his peers, making him an outstanding young artist and student leader.

Congratulations, Ryan!



Sarah Assaf

Miller Intermediate Performing and
Visual Arts| Alief ISD
Dance

Nominated By: Mariah Lavallais

Sarah consistently demonstrates kindness, maturity, and a deep level of care for those around her. Sarah's dedication to dance is evident through the hard work and commitment she shows both inside and outside of rehearsals, always striving to improve and thoughtfully applying feedback to her growth as a performer. Along with her artistic talent, Sarah maintains strong academic performance and is highly respected by both her peers and teachers for her character, leadership, and work ethic. Her incredible talent, positive presence, and well-rounded nature make her an outstanding student and role model.

Congratulations, Sarah!