

## Young Pianist Gagliano wins MostArts competition grand prize

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A 13-year-old from Washington, D.C. took home Grand Prize honors in Alfred University's (AU) Young Pianist Competition, which highlighted the weeklong (July 5-11) MostArts Festival 2015.

Avery Gagliano received a \$10,000 cash award after judges selected her over seven other finalists in the competition open to high school students ages 12-18. Gagliano also received an additional \$500 prize as winner of the Audience Favorite Award for her Thursday night performance of the "Mozart Concerto No. 20."

The \$2,500 second prize was awarded to Victor Xie, a 17-year-old from Palo Alto, CA. He also received an additional \$500 for his Friday evening performance as the Audience Favorite.

Third place and \$1,500 went to Charlie Liu, 14, from Princeton, NJ.

Vanessa Haynes, 18, from Oak Ridge, NY, was awarded a Special Merit citation and \$500 for her "Beethoven Sonata" performance during the solo recital program. Other Merit Awards went to 16-year-old Ting Yan Fung, from Interlochen, MI; Elisabeth Tsai, 16, of Montgomery, AL; 15-year-old Michel Lu from Missouri; and returning to the MostArts Festival for the second year, 16-year-old Roger Shen from Illinois.

The awards were made during a gala performance Saturday evening capping off the week's activities. Jurors for the Young Pianist Competition included Steinway artists/pianists Angelin Chang, German-born pianist Andreas Klein, and American pianist Anthony Pattin.

The evening began with Guest Conductor Yuval Zaliouk on the podium leading the Festival Orchestra in the overture to the "Thieving Magpie" by Rossini. Then Grammy Award-winning Chang graced the Miller Theater stage with a performance of the "Piano Concerto No. 1" by Franz Liszt. The final work was "Symphony No. 40" by Mozart under the direction of Lisa Lantz, MostArts founder/coordinator and chairperson of the AU Division of Performing Arts, professor of music, and conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra.

Gagliano is a Jack Kent Cook Scholarship recipient at Levine Music and a Young Scholar of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation. Born in Washington, D.C., she began piano lessons at age 5 and violin as a secondary

instrument at 8. At 9, she had her orchestral debut with the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra at Strathmore Concert Hall and performed at Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. The following year, Gagliano was invited to perform on National Public Radio's "From The Top" and was featured in the PBS documentary "Arts and the Mind."

Gagliano was selected as one of 13 Young Artists (ages 12 to 15) to compete at the 2015 Cleveland International Piano Competition. She was invited to perform in master classes at the 2015 Southeastern Piano Festival and the 2015 Oxford Philomusica Piano Festival. Among her honors are first prize at the International Young Artist Piano Competition in Washington, D.C. and Grand Prix at the Chopin International Piano Competition in Hartford, CT in 2014.

Additional highlights for her include first prize in all divisions of Levine Music's Marlin - Engel Piano Competition, the Marlin-Engel Instrumental Competition, the Cogen Piano Concerto Competition, the DCPS Piano Competition, the Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association (NVMTA) Piano Competition, and the NVMTA Chamber Competition.

Outside of music, Gagliano enjoys reading, math, swimming, ballet, and watching movies.