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Two area teens named top young artists

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By Matt Rocheleau, Globe Correspondent

Two local high school students have been selected among the country's best young artists and will travel to Florida next month for YoungArts Week.

Bobby Chen, who lives in Newton and attends Phillips Academy in Andover, and Raviv Markovitz, of Lexington who attends Lexington High School, were selected from over 4,000 17- and 18-year-old applicants nationwide and will join 141 other finalists in Miami from Jan. 11 through 16 for the program hosted by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.

Applicants to the YoungArts program have expertise ranging across nine disciplines in the visual, literary and performing arts. The categories are cinematic arts, dance, jazz, music, photography, theater, visual arts, voice and writing.

Chen is a YoungArts finalist in music, while Markovitz is a finalist in jazz. The two are the only Massachusetts residents named finalists to the program.

At the week-long program, thousands of dollars in awards will be handed out to select finalists and the young artists will attend performances, exhibitions, and master classes by world-renowned artists.

Each student has a chance to be named a gold or silver winner along with the possibility to become a Presidential Scholar in the Arts and visit the White House, with the opportunity to perform at the Kennedy Center and exhibit at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C.

Gold and silver winners and travel to New York in the spring for the In the Studio series, an additional week of workshops, collaborative performances and exhibitions. Gold winners receive \$10,000; silver winners receive \$5,000.

Awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 are also presented to those exhibiting excellence in their discipline.

"We are honored to recognize these fine young artists," President and CEO of YoungArts Christina DePaul said in a press release. "They represent the next generation of extraordinary artistic talent, and it is our hope that their experience with YoungArts will compel them to pursue their passions."

YoungArts alumni include Emmy nominated actress Vanessa Williams, three-time Tony Award nominee Raúl Esparza, star of HBO's Entourage Adrian Grenier and Warner Brothers Recording Artist Josh Groban.

For more information, visit www.youngarts.org.

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