



Student onstage abilities honored

By Kim Winnegge

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It's not every day a four-minute composition will earn you national recognition, but for three area high school students, their talent quickly shone through.

Based on audition tapes, Danny Glaser, Julia Whittle, and Brendan Frost have been honored with merit awards from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.

The three students, all former participants in Trollwood Performing Arts School, can now number themselves in the top 10 percentile of their art form.

Since all three students are high school seniors, their eyes are now on a broader horizon.

Frost, of Moorhead High School, said he plans to audition for the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA Acting Program.

"I don't know if I see it as a career, but I don't intend on ever losing touch with the arts," Frost says.

Whittle, of West Fargo High School, said she's looking into theater schools on the East Coast.

"I don't think I could see myself doing anything else," she says. "This is my niche. I can't get enough of it."

Glaser, of Fargo North High School, said there are college auditions in the works for February.

"I hope to keep performing, and maybe someday teach," Glaser says.

The application process for the NFAA Arts Recognition and Talent Search awards can be rigorous, said Vivian Orndorff, director of programs for the foundation. This year, there were 7,300 applicants.

"It's very significant to be a merit award winner," Orndorff says.

"They are the cream of the crop in their art form."

High school seniors or young college freshmen may enter in a number of different categories.

Glaser, Whittle and Frost all won merit awards in the theater division.

For the spoken-word-only category in the theater division, participants submit a videotaped audition that includes a twominute monologue from a play published before 1910 and a two-minute monologue from a play published during or after 1910.

The pieces must contrast to show the participant's versatility

For the spoken word and musical theater division, participants submit a videotape, showcasing a spoken monologue and a selection from a musical play. Each selection cannot exceed two minutes.

Lisa Farnham, Trollwood marketing coordinator, said the arts-focused mentality of the Fargo-Moorhead area is a great boost for the students.

"This really is a very artssupportive community," she says "The kids are reaping the benefits of that.

"We hear quite frequently from kids that went on to study performing arts that the training they've received in this area has put them leaps and bounds ahead of their peers. Obviously these awards just point that out." Orndorff said the fact that these three students are among the best in their age group is very significant. "You can be Sally from Podunk N.D., and your talent can shine through in this process," she says. "That's very encouraging. They're all winners." High Arts is a Tuesday column looking at what's going on in the area high school art scene.