

LIFESTYLE



Peng is a senior at Laguna Creek High School.

Senior

Continued from Page 13

years old," Peng said. "At first I really just loved the sound of it. There was a piano shop near our house in China. I loved hearing it and hitting the keys."

Peng's love for piano blossomed as she traveled from Kunming, China to the United States.

"Piano has such a wide range," Peng said. "It can do anything. It doesn't need to be accompanied by an orchestra, it can stand on its own."

Not only is Peng a budding musician, but she also has received early acceptance to Stanford University.

"Right now it's a real tough decision to try to make it in music," Peng said. "But no matter what I'm going to continue to study music even if it's not my major in college."

Although she had been playing piano for most of her life, Peng said she was surprised when she got the phone call that she had been chosen.

"I found out I won in November," Peng said. "I was eating my lunch and answered the phone. It was a really big surprise. I was really excited to be able to go this year."

But that wasn't the first time Peng had heard about the all expense paid week of classes and performances.

"I heard about it through my piano teacher Richard Cionco," Peng said. "He had done that program when he was a high school senior. I've also talked to other musicians that participated as well."

Although Peng is a classical



Peng was born in China and moved to the U.S. when she was 8 years old.

pianist, students from nine disciplines; including cinematic arts, dance, photography and theater; were chosen to travel to Miami.

"Being surrounded by like-

minded teenagers and professional artists willing to work hard and sacrifice for a career in the arts is inspiring," said William Banchs, president of NFAA.

But students are also eligible for over \$500,000 in prize money.

Peng agreed that making connections with other artists was one of the biggest draws to the program.

"I think it's going to be really aspiring to be exposed to all the other finalists in Miami," Peng said. "There are really talented musicians. It's a really great way to hear the next generation. These people will probably have a huge impact on the art world in the future."

For a complete list of finalists or to obtain more information about youngArts Week, visit www.youngarts.org.