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# Los Altos Town Crier

www.latc.com

Wednesday, February 27, 2008

Community news for Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View since 1947

Vol. 62 No. 9 • 50 cents

## SCHOOLS



COURTESY OF LIZ LACAUSE

Los Altos Hills resident and Gunn High School senior Kenric Tam was honored at a week-long event for national music scholars.

## LAH student participates in nationwide arts program

By Traci Newell  
Town Crier Staff Writer

Los Altos Hills resident and Gunn High School senior Kenric Tam attended youngARTS Week in Miami, Fla., an opportunity he said allowed him to forge relationships with other musicians that he expects to last a long time.

At the youngARTS Week, Tam received \$5,000 for winning the Silver Medal Award. The recognition will bring him to the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York City to perform in May.

Tam, a classical pianist, was one of 142 young artists selected from among 8,000 applicants to participate in the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts program. Tam was one of the 20 winners in instrumental music.

A panel of professional artists blindly selected Tam for the honor. The up-and-coming artists were flown to Miami, where they participated in an all-expenses-paid week of master classes, showcases and performances.

"I had a lot of fun," Tam said. "I made a lot of friends who were musicians from around the country."

Tam spent the week working with other classical musicians and attended a masters class with Peter Takács, professor of piano at Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio.

"We talked to him about various musical issues," Tam said. "He shared general ways to improve our playing."

Tam said his time collaborating with other student musicians afforded him the chance to build relationships with people who

might be colleagues in the future.

"It was a really relaxed atmosphere," Tam said. "It was non-competitive, and we were very supportive of each other all the time."

The youngARTS experience was the subject of a 2007 Academy Award-nominated documentary, "Rehearsing a Dream," which aired nationwide on HBO last fall. The showcase has a history of launching professional careers. Former attendees include 2007 Tony Award-nominated Broadway star Raoul Esparza, actress Vanessa Williams, visual artist Doug Aitken, Broadway/modern dancer Desmond Richardson and novelist Allegra Goodman.

As part of the program, participants were eligible for more than \$500,000 in prize money.

"One of the things that the participants always say about their Miami experience is that the money they win is less important than the comradeship and communal understanding that they discover among their peers," said William H. Banchs, former president of NFAA. "Being surrounded by like-minded teenagers and professional artists willing to work hard and sacrifice for a career in the arts is inspiring and stimulating, as is the chance to share their work in a collaborative environment."

Tam and other youngARTS award recipients are eligible for selection as U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts. The youngARTS program is a partner of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, the U.S. Department of Education and the Presidential Scholars Program.

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