

Talented teens take stage at Lewis Center

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They sang, danced, recited dramatic verses and strummed guitars.

On Thursday evening, the Lewis Center for Educational Research in Apple Valley held the fourth and final of this semester's talent shows dubbed "Knights of Stardom." Middle and high school students competed for bragging rights and cash prizes for the top three winners.

"I don't do this alone," said Linda Locke, one of the coordinators of the talent show and a proud mother of one of the dancers. The students presented her with flowers and thanks for her hard work. Locke has taught at the school for 14 years. She shared the accolades with the team of faculty and students who helped produce the show.

Ten individual performers, bands and dancers competed. The dance group that Locke coaches with her daughter Linzee, Melodious Step Dance Team, performed but was not eligible for competition since they were hosting the show. As with any talent show, whether nationally televised or high school, there were varying levels of talent, nerves and confidence. Every performer took the stage full of enthusiasm.

Paige Burnett, a senior who presented two dramatic readings, brought chuckles as she did an impression of Honey Boo Boo's mother before starting her first soliloquy from the movie "Stranger than Fiction."

Burnett said she enjoyed attending the school because it is small enough that you get to know everyone.

With impressive poise and a lovely voice, 16-year-old Christine Hovhanesyan sang a moving song titled "Adagio" by French singer Lara Fabien.

"I've been taking vocal lessons since sixth grade," shared Hovhanesyan, who also said she aspires to be a professional singer.

Young Humberto Landeros sang "Lucky" by Jason Mraz. One line goes, "I'll put a flower in your hair." Landeros was well prepared with a bouquet of individual flowers that he handed out between verses to audible sighs from the ladies. It was as smooth a move as any seasoned pro could have done.

Seventh-graders Julia Locke, Eleni Philippou and Kamryn Curtis of the dance group "Stampede" bubbled over before their first performance.

"We're best friends," the girls chimed in together. They expressed pride in arranging their own choreography.

The top prize winners for the night were singer Sophie Edwards in first place, thespian Burnett second and singer Annie Duran in third place. The cash prizes were \$150, \$100 and \$50 respectively.

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