



May 28, 2025

Forty top high school singers chosen for 2025 Songbook Academy

Broadway star Nikki Renée Daniels to serve as mentor and featured performer

CARMEL, Ind. – Forty of the nation’s most talented high school vocalists, representing 13 states and 31 cities, including 12 from Indiana, have been chosen to participate in the 2025 season of The Songbook Academy®. This annual weeklong summer intensive immerses young performers in America’s musical heritage and helps them develop as artists under the guidance of Broadway stars, entertainment professionals, and music educators. This year’s exceptional group of vocalists will be joined by an exciting lineup of special guests including Broadway star **Nikki Renée Daniels** and **Michael Feinstein**, founder of the Great American Songbook Foundation and five-time GRAMMY nominee.

The Songbook Academy, now in its 16th year, is the flagship education program of the Great American Songbook Foundation. The 2025 Songbook Academy will take place July 12-19 at **Allied Solutions Center for the Performing Arts** in Carmel, Indiana. The program includes workshops, masterclasses, and performance opportunities that help participants hone their vocal and stage skills, particularly in song interpretation, while building friendships and professional connections that last a lifetime.

Songbook Academy Week features public performance events at the **Payne & Mencias Palladium** concert hall for both live audiences and livestream viewers worldwide, offering opportunities to witness the rising stars of tomorrow alongside today’s top performers.

Tickets for two of the public performances are already on sale:

- **[Songbook Showcase](#) – Thursday, July 17 at 7 p.m.**
All 40 participants will perform a solo on the Payne & Mencias Palladium stage. The evening also includes special performances by Michael Feinstein and guest mentor Nikki Renée Daniels. Daniels has appeared in 12 Broadway productions, including *Once Upon a Mattress* (Lady Larken), *The Book of Mormon* (Nabulungi), *Les Misérables* (Fantine), and the Tony Award winning revivals of *Company* (Jenny) and *The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess* (Clara); portrayed Angelica Schuyler in *Hamilton* at the CIBC Theater in Chicago; and has film and television credits including *The Other Woman*, *Billions*, *The Equalizer*, *Chappelle’s Show*, *Madam Secretary*, and *The Sound of Music: Live*. As a concert soloist, she has performed with leading orchestras around the world and has appeared as a soloist at Carnegie Hall.
- **[The Songbook Academy in Concert](#) – Saturday, July 19 at 7 p.m.**
Feinstein emcees as all 40 singers perform choral numbers, small group ensembles and featured solos, celebrating their growth over the week and paying tribute to iconic composers and lyricists of the Great American Songbook.

Ticket Information:

Tickets for the Songbook Showcase are pay-what-you-can with a \$5 minimum for in-person attendees and no minimum for livestream viewers. The Songbook Academy in Concert offers in-person tickets starting at just \$25 with pay-what-you-can livestream access at no minimum. Tickets are available now at TheSongbook.org, by phone at (317) 843-3800 or toll-free at (877) 909-2787.

2025 Songbook Academy Participants

The [2025 Songbook Academy National Screening Panel](#) featured an extraordinary lineup of Broadway performers, jazz vocalists, music directors, and acclaimed educators, including Shereen Ahmed, Steven Cuevas, Jessie Hooker-Bailey, Melinda Rodriguez, A.J. Shively, and Catherine A. Walker, who reviewed this year's applications and selected the following 40 performers to attend this year's program.

Indiana Participants

Sadie Cohen, Carmel, Indiana, Carmel High School
Noelle Duncan, Kokomo, Indiana, Kokomo High School
Aarthi Eswaran, Carmel, Indiana, Carmel High School
Grady Griffin, Carmel, Indiana, Carmel High School
Isaiah Henderson, Carmel, Indiana, Carmel High School
Claire Kauffman, Zionsville, Indiana, Zionsville Community High School
Soren McLaughlin, Noblesville, Indiana, Noblesville High School
Krishaa Motycka, Carmel, Indiana, Carmel High School
Mia Rettig, Indianapolis, Indiana, Park Tudor School
Phoebe Sidebottom, Zionsville, Indiana, Zionsville Community High School
Thomas Whitten, Noblesville, Indiana, Whitten Homeschool
Journee Woodley, Westfield, Indiana, Westfield High School

National Participants

Helena Badiali, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, Central Bucks High School East
Ava Baker, New Albany, Ohio, New Albany High School
Lucy Bollier, Los Angeles, California, Calabasas High School
Martha Glenn Bowers, High Point, North Carolina, Penn-Griffin School for the Arts
Tiffany Chamberlain, Hatfield, Pennsylvania, Pennridge High School
Morgan Grace Champ, Salt Lake City, Utah, Skyline High School
Emily Grace Chavez, Los Angeles, California, Van Nuys High School
Georgia Dadekian, Burbank, California, John Burroughs High School
Jane Delahoussaye, Sugar Land, Texas, Logos Preparatory Academy
Madeleine Delbridge, Pasadena, California, Polytechnic School
Eliza Griffey, Sewanee, Tennessee, Saint Andrews-Sewanee School
Madeline Hogan, Winter Garden, Florida, Montverde Academy
Mia Kadar, Dublin, Ohio, Dublin Coffman High School
Ali Kosteck, Frankfort, Illinois, Lincoln-Way East High School
Zac Kowal, Palmetto Bay, Florida, Miami Palmetto Senior High School
Ethan Mathias, Ada, Michigan, Michigan International Prep School
Kayleigh McCarter, Houston, Texas, Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts
Carly Rose Mulay, Portage, Michigan, Portage Central High School
Adrienne Nicastro, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, Lower Moreland High School
Rika Nishikawa, Chicago, Illinois, Homeschool
Sophia O'Toole, Medfield, Massachusetts, Medfield High School
Dilan Patton, Los Angeles, California, Van Nuys High School
Connor Ruckman, Los Angeles, California, Van Nuys High School
William Daniel Russell, Westwood, Massachusetts, Westwood High School
Ikepo Soyinka, Braintree, Massachusetts, CATS Academy Boston
Kellyssa Rose Vincent, West Palm Beach, Florida, Oxbridge Academy
Jacob Volker, Nashville, Tennessee, Nashville School of the Arts
Maddox Wood, Webb City, Missouri, Webb City High School

These young vocalists will join the larger Songbook Academy community, which includes alumni who have released music and performed from Broadway to concert hall stages around the world. They include Nina White (2016), nominated for a 2025 Helen Hayes Award for her performance in the Kennedy Center's production of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*; Sage Bava (2012), recently named one of seven elite newcomers keeping the spirit of jazz alive by the L.A. Times; Cinderella Ksebati (2017), performer and educator announced as an awardee of the Arab America Foundation's 2025 "30 Under 30" initiative; April Varner (2015), 2023 Winner of the International Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Vocal Competition and NYC-based jazz vocalist joining Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox on tour in July 2025; Anaïs Reno (2018), releasing her new album in May 2025 and appearing at the 2025 Edinburgh Jazz Festival; and Ava Nicole Frances (2020-22), Season 22 Finalist on *American Idol*.

The Songbook Academy receives generous support from the Efroymson Family Fund, Traditions Senior Communities, the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Salon 01 and the City of Carmel.

The Songbook Academy in Concert performance is part of Allied Solutions Center for the Performing Arts' 2025-2026 *Center Presents* Season, sponsored by Allied Solutions, and its BHI Senior Living Songbook Series.

About the Great American Songbook Foundation

The mission of the Great American Songbook Foundation, founded in 2007 by five-time Grammy® Award nominee Michael Feinstein, is to inspire and educate by celebrating the foundational era of American popular music. Headquartered at Allied Solutions Center for the Performing Arts in Carmel, Indiana, the Foundation advances this rich legacy by curating physical artifacts of its creators, performers and publishers in the Songbook Library & Archives; operating a multimedia exhibit gallery; overseeing the Songbook Hall of Fame; offering programs for the public and research opportunities for scholars and artists; and providing educational opportunities for student musicians, including the annual Songbook Academy® summer intensive. The Foundation is a Cultural Affiliate of the Los Angeles-based Grammy Museum®. More information is available at TheSongbook.org.

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