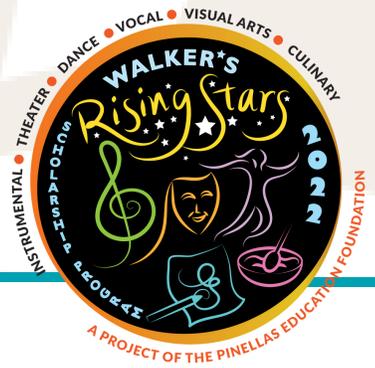




Pinellas Education Foundation

Inspired minds transform lives



What We Do

Anyone who has seen the performances and creative endeavors of a Walker's Rising Stars Scholarship Competition knows the enormous level of talent in Pinellas County Schools. The year-long initiative assists high school juniors and seniors in honing their audition and portfolio skills. Aided by expert advice along the way, they compete for college scholarships in the categories of Culinary Arts, Dance, Instrumental, Theater, Visual Arts and Vocal Performance. Since the inception of Walker's Rising Stars, more than \$800,000 in scholarships have been awarded to talented students in these disciplines.

Walker's Rising Stars has grown from being a local talent and scholarship competition to one of the most recognized arts awards programs in the country, with former winners starring in and directing Broadway shows, appearing on network television including the Tonight Show and the Grammy Awards, displaying their works in major galleries, and teaching the next generation of arts students. The Pinellas Education Foundation partners with Pinellas County Schools to produce this stellar competition. Dr. Jeffrey Walker, the program's original benefactor, remains a key partner, along with a number of corporate and community sponsors.

Walker's Rising Stars

Walker's Rising Stars has been held annually for **19** years, featuring performing arts, visual arts and most recently, culinary arts.

More than **\$800,000** in scholarships have been awarded since program's inception.

Approximately **200** Pinellas County juniors and seniors compete annually.



Shooting for the Stars

Many Walker's Rising Stars alumni have gone on to enjoy success in their chosen discipline. One of the biggest Walker's success stories is Billy Norris, a 2006 graduate of Seminole High School.

Norris won the Walker's instrumental category in both 2005 and 2006, and then earned a spot in the prestigious Gibson/Baldwin Grammy Jazz Ensembles.



Norris moved to New York City after high school to study bass guitar at the prestigious Manhattan School of Music. In 2017, he soared to new heights touring the world as the guitarist and musical director for pop star Gavin DeGraw. When not on the road, he produces music for film and TV, teaches, writes, and records in New York City, Los Angeles, Nashville and his hometown of St. Petersburg.

For more information about Walker's Rising Stars, please contact Vice President of Advancement Julie Perrelli at 727-588-4816, ext. 2113 or by email at julie.perrelli@pinellaseducation.org.