



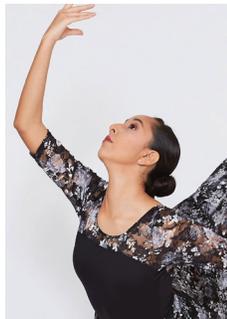
# THE TOMMY TRANCHIN AWARD

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## 2018 MEET THE 2018 RECIPIENTS OF THE TOMMY TRANCHIN AWARD!

### CRISTINA AGUAYO

Dance is **Cristina Aguayo's** singular passion. "I have learned so many things through dance," she says. "I have failed and succeeded. I have learned about dedication and commitment, and I have learned about struggle and perseverance." When Cristina was in middle school, she learned she had scoliosis. Despite the physical discomfort caused by her condition, Cristina has never wavered in her commitment to dance. A standout student at Dallas' Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Cristina had been accepted into the Joffrey School of Ballet's Summer Dance Intensive workshop for three years in a row, but for financial reasons had been unable to attend. This past summer, she was able to participate in what she told us was "a truly inspiring experience."



telling us that Israel "seems steadfast in his goals and has proven to be a great student in class." Israel's teacher also noted Israel's willingness to accept challenges. "I know that if I put in the effort and try to do what I really love," Israel told us, "I can succeed." Israel used his award for percussion lessons, which he hopes will improve his chances of being accepted into a college level music program.

### OLIVIA NORTHCUTT-WYLY

**Olivia Northcutt-Wyly** is a state-ranked debate champion who has used debate to explore her identity and advocate for herself and others with disabilities. As a teenager, Olivia learned that she had Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, a group of disorders affecting the body's connective tissues. Olivia began using a wheelchair last year, and her debate-inspired activism has already improved accessibility at her school. Olivia used her award to attend a three-week program at The University of Texas Institute of Forensics. The program's focus was on theories of power and resistance. While attending the program, Olivia developed a strong relationship with a mentor who also has mobility issues. "Debate has taught me skills that have allowed me to take control of my disability as opposed to being controlled by it," she says. "As a result, I have gained a level of independence I never thought achievable."



### ISRAEL MIRANDA



"Music is what I live for," **Israel Miranda** says, describing why he won't let partial deafness deter him from pursuing a career in music. Israel's dream is to play the drums in a rock band of his own. His piano teacher praised his determination,

## PURVI CONTRACTOR



Last year, **Purvi Contractor** used her engineering and computer programming skills to help Southwest Airlines reduce collisions between airplanes and ground support vehicles during baggage removal. Remarkably, Purvi did this while still in high school. Even more remarkably, Purvi is legally

blind. In her application essay, Purvi was frank about the challenges she faces, but she also said that these same challenges have helped her develop the grit necessary for developing new ideas, like the time she used her knowledge of braille to help her student team take an encryption assignment to a higher level. After high school, Purvi intends to pursue a degree in Aerospace Engineering and Physics. She will use her award to attend a workshop designed specifically for engineers and scientists.

## MARQUIS MCNEAL

“My name is **Marquis McNeal**. I want to be a hair stylist because my passion is to create ideas with hair.” This was the opening sentence of Marquis’ application essay. Creating ideas with hair – now, that’s an inspired phrase! Diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and abandoned by his mother at an early age, Marquis



has overcome a considerable set of challenges and was enthusiastically recommended by his teachers. The Autism Treatment Center in Dallas found Mr. Godfrey Nwankwo of the Always Barber Shop, who generously agreed to introduce Marquis to the fundamentals of hair styling. After a summer of lessons with Mr. Nwankwo, Marquis was grateful. “He was very patient and very good,” Marquis told us. “He made learning fun. It was a wonderful opportunity for me.”

## HANNAH ESTES



When **Hannah Estes** was in 9th grade, she began experiencing uncontrollable anxiety. “Terrifying thoughts and fears consumed every second of my day and night,” Hannah wrote. “Life had become an overwhelming challenge that I was unable to conquer.” Professional therapy has made it possible for Hannah to return to school, where her English teacher says she is “a strong student and a kind and compassionate person.”

One of Hannah’s favorite activities in treatment was animal therapy. “This was the spark when I realized I wanted a career working with animals,” she told us. This past summer, Hannah used her award to attend The Texas A&M University School of Veterinarian Medicine Vet-Med camp in Galveston. Despite some initial anxiety in the new setting, Hannah told us that she was able to meet and observe a number of professionals working with animals in various fields and that she “absolutely loved” the experience.

## TOMMY TRANCHIN AWARD

History  
How to Apply  
Deadline

The Tommy Tranchin Award was established to support students with physical, emotional or intellectual disabilities who have shown promise or passion in a chosen field of interest. Tommy’s family wants to recognize his creativity and his refusal to allow his disability to limit his personal growth by helping others develop their own talents. Starting in 2018, the Award was expanded to consider North Texas applicants in eighth grade through high school. **The application deadline for the 2019 Awards is March 22, 2019.** For further information, please contact Lysie Laughlin at 214-741-9898 or at [scholarships@dallasfoundation.org](mailto:scholarships@dallasfoundation.org). **If you wish to support our efforts, tax deductible contributions may be made online or by a check made out to The Dallas Foundation/Tommy Tranchin Award and sent to the address below.**

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