2018

Campus Superstar

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Last March, Michael Warren, a recent graduate of the music education program at the Mary Pappert School of Music, became the first Duquesne University student to win the Campus Superstar competition and the $5,000 award that goes along with it. One of ten finalists, he competed alongside students from local universities including:

- Carnegie Mellon University
- University of Pittsburgh
- Seton Hill University.

 Held on Sunday, March 26, 2017 and sponsored by the Edward and Rose Berman Hillel Jewish University Center of Pittsburgh, the annual “American Idol-like” competition is a professionally-produced musical spectacular, where performers are accompanied by a full band, with all of the “glitz” that one would expect from a concert or Broadway show.

Auditions were held at each of the participating schools in late November and early December, with more than 100 students attempting to make the final round. Warren was one of four Duquesne students selected to move on to the semi-final round in February, alongside Mary Pappert School of Music students Carly Koza and Kate Kratzenberg and McAnulty...
School of Liberal Arts student Angela Griffo. Both Koza and Warren advanced to compete in the final round.

Since its inception in 2007, Campus Superstar has seen a total of five Duquesne students make the final round, including

- Warren and Koza (2017)
- Music therapy major, Pietra DelPizzo (2013)
- Psychology and education major, Andrea Festa (2008)
- Performance major, Rob Kurth (2007)

Kurth took 2nd runner up and would later become a faculty member at the Mary Pappert School of Music before moving to Washington, D.C. to sing with the United States Navy Band and Sea Chanters.

Warren, a Pittsburgh native and graduate of the Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts School, chose Whitney Houston’s *The Greatest Love of All* to perform at the semi-final round, a very meaningful song to him. Given the success he had with it for the semi-final round, he reprised it as his competition piece at the final round, ultimately landing the win.

In the wake of Warren’s success, several faculty members have reached out to congratulate Michael.

“The Mary Pappert School of Music voice area applauds the success of Michael,” said Brent Weber, Voice Area Coordinator. “We continue to mentor young artists like Michael in operatic, musical theater, and jazz repertoire within the degree paths of performance, education, therapy, and technology. Congratulations, Michael! We look forward to your continued success.”

Seth Beckman, Dean of the Mary Pappert School of Music, noted that, “Michael Warren is an extremely gifted musician. He excels in a variety of musical styles and his performances demonstrate a clear passion for connecting with his varied audiences. We are so very proud of Michael.”

Warren, himself, expressed his thanks to several faculty members. “I’m so thankful to my teachers and mentors Kelley DeFade, Patty Donohue Burns, and Guenko Guechev, as well as my former teacher, the late Maureen Budway, and all the other members of the voice area. Without their wisdom and guidance, I never would have had an opportunity like this. Being a student at Duquesne has opened so many doors for me, and I can’t thank everyone there enough!”

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