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Editorial  
**Supporting arts benefits community**

Originally posted on March 27, 2007

Christopher Caldwell, a 16-year-old "triple threat" — for his talents as a singer, dancer and actor — awed a 400-member audience when he performed a lyrical dance on the main stage of the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre in Fort Myers.

He danced this past Sunday when he received, along with 14 other people and organizations — out of more than 100 nominees — a 2007 Angels of the Arts award. The event, organized by the Alliance for the Arts, reminded us of how far we have come as an arts community and why we must continue to support the arts.

The artists, like young Christopher Caldwell, benefit and the community benefits. We have more galleries, theaters, concert halls and venues for performance than ever before.

We must make sure the arts are a top priority in the schools — for children to participate in, enjoy and become culturally literate.

If you haven't done so, go see a play, go to an art exhibit, listen to an orchestra play. You have options of where to go: formal halls or galleries, schools and parks.

Some of these cost money, but there are many free events in our community that hopefully will persuade you — if you don't think so already — that supporting the arts is critical.

We leave you with these quotes from three award recipients, courtesy of the event organizer Kathleen Moye of the Alliance for the Arts:

"Through music and the arts there are no language barriers, just the sounds and colors and ideas, which any human being can respond."

— Dr. Andrew Kurtz, Gulf Coast Symphony, Performing Artist of the Year

"I write poetry not only because it is a moral, political, and personal imperative, but also because it is the Play-Doh of language."

— Dr. James Brock, Florida Gulf Coast University professor, Literary Artist of the Year

"It's so important for everyone who can to support the arts."

— Berne Davis, who donated \$1 million to create the Sidney and Berne Davis Arts Center in the Fort Myers River District. She received the Arts Benefactor of the Year.

**Angels of the Arts 2007**

These people or organizations received Angels of the Arts awards on Sunday:

- Arts Benefactor of the Year: Berne Davis
- Literary Artist of the Year: Dr. James Brock
- Arts Teacher of the Year: Jeanne Bochette
- Young Artist of the Year: Christopher Caldwell
- New Artist of the Year: Sheila Hoen
- Visual Artist of the Year: Doug MacGregor, The News-Press
- Arts Business Sponsor of the Year: The News Press
- Arts Publication/Broadcast Series of the Year: Arts Edition Primetime
- Arts Journalist of the Year: "Wild" Bill Wood, Fox4
- Arts Volunteer of the Year (tie): Katherine Boren and Linda Sue Blue
- Performing Artist of the Year: Dr. Andrew Kurtz, Gulf Coast Symphony
- Artist: Lifetime Achievement: Jeanne Bochette
- Art Leader of the Year: Susan Bridges
- Art Organization of the Year: Tower Gallery

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