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CTAC's Art Education in Schools Program

2026 Scholarship Winners Announced

"Art is what teaches us about history. It is how we see the world, and our place in it. Without it, human kind has no reference of where we stand."

- **Taysia M. Fincher - Senior, Marlow High School**

For the past eleven years, Chisholm Trail Arts Council's "Art Education in Schools" program has offered scholarships to seniors who are striving to pursue a future associated with the arts. This year, CTAC's recipients for the 2026 Visual and Performing Art Scholarships are Taysia Fincher, Senior at Marlow High School and Yorra DeGreef, Senior at Duncan High School.

Taysia will pursue an art degree in graphic design at Southwestern Oklahoma State University where she plans to develop her skills in both graphic design and painting. She wants to use her skills to help in developing community improvement. In celebration of CTAC's upcoming 50th anniversary, Taysia was asked where she would like to, or hope to, see the arts in her community after fifty years - she responded, " In fifty years I hope that the art in my community continues to flourish, I hope that my efforts to share it have succeeded and I hope to have made a change in this world with it."

Taysia's awards and honors include: Three-time State Qualifier in Speech and Debate; Four-time Regional Qualifier in Speech and Debate. She has been a member of the Marlow Outlaw Speech Team and Advanced Drama. In her community she has served by helping to create several murals along with her classmates around the town of Marlow such as the mural featured on the side of the Kwik Lube Auto-motive Shop.

Our other scholarship recipient is Yorra DeGreef. Yorra will pursue a degree in the music field and will be attending either Oklahoma Baptist University or Southwestern Oklahoma State University where she will have the options to pursue a concentration in composition, performance, or conducting. When asked where she would like to see her art community in fifty years, Yorra responded, "I hope to see myself still performing in 50 years, if not performing then conducting and helping young musicians to grow and follow their dream."

Yorra's awards and honors include: Honor Society by way of excellent grades; "Marcher of the Year" Award for two consecutive years; OKMEA All-State Band qualifier in 2024-2025; Four-time All-Region Honor Band qualifier; and has taken solos and ensembles to the state level. She has been a member of the Duncan High School Band for marching, concert, and Jazz for all four years; Student Council for one year; Student Advisory Council; and Duncan High School's internship program. In her community, Yorra happily helps out her friends and family whenever needed and

also has volunteered for the Safe Center Gala. She has assisted with catering for large events along with her swim team and band members for various organizations. She is currently working within the Student Council for this year's HALO fundraiser to donate funds to someone in need in the local community.

"Art is important to our culture because it allows us to communicate with one another without the use of words. There are some instances where words and speech are not enough and art allows us to put every emotion, thought, and idea that we have in it. It allows us to express our soul, and without art, we would lose that form of expression"

- **Yorra DeGreef - Senior, Duncan High School**

Chisholm Trail Arts Council is a nonprofit organization that "promotes and inspires the Arts in Southwest Oklahoma. CTAC receives support from the Oklahoma Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts, and McCasland Foundation, as well as from local businesses, donors, and members.