Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO)

ACT-SO provides a forum through which youth of African descent demonstrate academic, artistic and scientific prowess and expertise, thereby gaining the same recognition often only reserved for entertainers and athletes.

ACT-SO is rooted in the firm conviction that all students can succeed and compete at the same or superior levels as their counterparts in classrooms, boardrooms and laboratories across this nation and abroad.

ACT-SO is a year-long youth achievement program that begins in August of each year in local communities nationwide. In more than 200 local communities throughout the U.S., ACT-SO adult volunteers recruit students and mentors. Students work with mentors from August to April to develop their projects and performances for the local competition.

ACT-SO continues to promote growth, excellence and innovation to position ACT-SO competitors as “Leaders for Tomorrow and Beyond.” Over the past 40 years, over 300,000 have participated in the program. ACT-SO sustains approximately 200 programs nationally.

The Orange County Branch NAACP held the local ACT-SO competition on Saturday, April 27, 2019 at Jones high school where there were 32 competitors and 5 gold medalists in the areas of: Dance-Modern; Instrumental-Classical; Instrumental-Contemporary; Painting; and Vocal-Classical from five different Orange County Public Schools. These winners will compete, July 2019, in the National ACT-SO Competition in Detroit, MI. We salute and support these students in their quest to win gold in Detroit!
Katrina Asson is in 12th Grade at Maynard Evans High School. Katrina is from St. Lucia. Katrina and has developed her art skills through participation in a five-year art program. She is currently President of the National Art Honor Society. Katrina regularly helps children who do not know much about art, expand their artistic viewpoint beyond their local environment. She will be attending Seminole State College and plans to form a woman’s group where all women are able to express trials and tribulations in a judgment-free zone. A place where woman can observe their faith, share their thoughts and incorporate art.

Natasha Chisholm is an 11th grade Junior at Cypress Creek High School. Born to two immigrant parents, her father is from Montego Bay, Jamaica and her mother is from Kenya, Africa. Natasha has always demonstrated an interest in learning, leadership and making a positive impact on her community. She has played the piano for 10 years and has always enjoyed piano by creating different music compositions for her and her classmates to perform. Natasha is enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Cypress Creek High School and is currently the Secretary of the IB Student Organization, she is a member of the National Honor Society, the Indian Student Association, the High School Democratic Association and the Debate team. She is a volunteer at the local Library, assists with the Music Club at and elementary school and she volunteers at Teen Court to learn more about the legal field. She aspires to be a Supreme Court Justice.
Gold Winner
Dance: Modern

**Ahrianna Kitson** is a 17 year old student at Orange County Virtual School. She has been dancing since she was three years old and enjoys being able to share her gifts and talents with others. Ahrianna has been heavily involved in her community academically and through the art of dance. Ahrianna makes straight A’s, and has taken classes at Orange Technical College, maintains a job, and competes competitively at Fantashique Dance School. She enjoys helping children with dance and tumbling in her community. Ahrianna recently won the Disney Dreamer and Doer contest.

Gold Winner
Music: Instrumental-Classical

**Ahmad Pinkston** is a Senior at Jones High School. He was born in Lakeland, Fl and was raised in Orlando, Fl. Ahmad has been affiliated with music ever since he was a child and continues to expand his horizons pertaining to the craft. He has served in multiple capacities including being a Worship Leader and as Head Musician of Worship in his past years. He has played piano since he was 5 years and has had many opportunities to play, one of which was at the Orlando Art Museum. Ahmad has cultivated his gift in order to inspire people to enjoy music as much as he enjoys it and he hopes that more people will be inspired to get into the music field.

Gold Winner
Music: Vocal-Classical

**Anyae Reed** is 18 years old will graduate from Winter Park High School with Honors in Tri-M, Thespians, and English. She is the Co-chair of outreach at her school's Award-winning chorus department and has been an officer since her sophomore year. She was nominated for two Applause awards in 2017 for her portrayals of Alice in Titanic the musical and Rusty in Footloose the musical, for “Outstanding Leading Actress In A Musical”. Anyae also received an award for Classical vocal performance at the Florida “National Association of teachers of singing” competition in 2018. Anyae was a member of the Dr. Phillips performing Arts center premiere performance group; “Doc’s and Della’s” and she is currently a Teen Ambassador for the Center. This Fall she is proud to be attending Texas State University as one of 12 students in a top ten BFA program for Musical Theatre in order to pursue her goal of becoming a triple threat and perform on Broadway.