

## FFWPU USA: Nine Contestants Advance to HJ Stars Final Competition

Naokimi Ushiroda  
August 10, 2022



Eight talented acts are moving on to the August 12 final round of the popular new virtual talent show, [HJ Stars](#). The live show, which had more than 1,400 views during the [semi finals](#), promotes the talent, arts and culture of the national Unificationist community and beyond.

"I felt we had an amazing first round of incredible acts," said Sunhwa Reiner during the show. Sunhwa is one of three featured judges with a professional background in the arts. "I am so inspired and moved by everything that was displayed," she said. "I'm really excited to see what happens next. I have no idea what the final results will be."

From 56 auditions, down to 19 semi-finalists in the [preliminary round](#), the competition on August 5 was fierce to make the final cut. Judges Jonathan Gullery and Sun Shim Santos, who joined Reiner in evaluating each performance, focused on several elements, including quality and skill, delivery and creativity, and hyojeong, a performer's heart and investment.

"I think there's just amazing talent out there, and there is so much energy that has gone into creating these video entries," said Gullery. "I'm very happy and excited to see so much talent," added Santos, who said every audition was valuable and enhanced the show.

The semi finals featured a great mix of humor, creativity, and, of course, talent. There were vocalists, dancers, musicians, artists, as well as one comedic skit that involved singing and dancing with a digitized hotdog. Another act, "Liverpool Lads," featured a multi-instrumental one-man band. Contestants wowed the judges with their creative flair and heartfelt performances.

"I think, in general, all art serves to move our hearts, and I certainly felt moved [by all the performances]," said Reiner. Co-hosts Resfred Arthur and Isaac Jeong emphasized that HJ Stars is ultimately a fundraising effort supporting [YAYAM](#) and its regional chapters, and the show's proceeds will provide scholarships for various workshops and events. So far, the event has raised nearly \$7,000 of its \$10,000 goal.

"Making a donation to YAYAM really goes a long way," said Jeong. "If you've seen the transformations of our youth and young adults attending workshops and similar activities, this [fundraising] can really take us far with those events."

Arthur said voting for contestants is also critical at every turn, as voting for the finalists expired at noon August 7. "Last time [in the preliminary round], the difference between making it through to this round and not making it through was less than a vote," he said. "It was only like 0.4 difference."

The nine contestants advancing to the upcoming final round hail from all across the country, with one finalist competing from the UK. The nine finalists are: Rhiannon Davies (UK), Goldyn Ave (GA), Julie Kim (FL), Jenny Hughes (UT), Yoshiha and Manny (NV + MI), Nami and Yumi (CA + NJ), Micheal Cordero, (NV), Rice Paddy Heroes (MA), and Yasuno Takeshima (VA).

The HJ Stars grand prize winner will receive \$1,000, the second place winner will receive \$500, and the third place prize is \$250.

**HJSTARS**  
**FINALISTS**

1. RHIANNON DAVIES

2. GOLDYN AVENUE

This promotional card features a dark space background with stars. At the top, the text 'HJSTARS FINALISTS' is displayed in white and yellow. Below this, a woman is shown holding a small dog. In the bottom left, a group of four young women are smiling and making peace signs. The names of the contestants are listed in white text on dark blue banners.

**HJSTARS**  
**FINALISTS**

3. JULIE KIM

4. JENNY HUGHES

**AUG 12**  
8:30PM EDT  
hjstars.com

This promotional card features a dark space background with stars. At the top, the text 'HJSTARS FINALISTS' is displayed in white and yellow. Below this, a woman is shown holding a bouquet of flowers. In the bottom left, a woman is shown playing a keyboard. The names of the contestants are listed in white text on dark blue banners. The event date and time are displayed in large yellow and white text on the right side.

**HJSTARS**  
**FINALISTS**

5. YOSHIHA & MANNY

6. NAMI & YUMI

**AUG 12**  
8:30PM EDT  
hjstars.com

This promotional card features a dark space background with stars. At the top, the text 'HJSTARS FINALISTS' is displayed in white and yellow. Below this, two young men are shown. In the bottom left, two young women are shown. The names of the contestants are listed in white text on dark blue banners. The event date and time are displayed in large yellow and white text on the right side.

**HJSTARS**  
**FINALISTS**

7. MICHEAL CORDERO

8. RICE PADDY HEROES

**AUG 12**  
8:30PM EDT  
hjstars.com

This promotional card features a dark space background with stars. At the top, the text 'HJSTARS FINALISTS' is displayed in white and yellow. Below this, a man is shown holding a microphone. In the bottom left, a group of people wearing white protective suits and masks are shown. The names of the contestants are listed in white text on dark blue banners. The event date and time are displayed in large yellow and white text on the right side.

**HJSTARS**  
**FINALISTS**

9. YASUNO TAKESHIMA

**AUG 12**  
8:30PM EDT  
hjstars.com

This promotional card features a dark space background with stars. At the top, the text 'HJSTARS FINALISTS' is displayed in white and yellow. Below this, a woman is shown. The name of the contestant is listed in white text on a dark blue banner. The event date and time are displayed in large yellow and white text on the left side.

You can watch and support the final round of HJ Stars airing August 12 at 8:30 p.m. EDT [here](#).



SINCE **孝情** 2022

# HJ STARS

**Final Round**

**Friday, August 12 at 8:30 PM EDT**

Support YAYAM



Join Us in the Live Chat

# Vote Your Favorite Contestant

You may vote for 1 contestant. Voting closes at the end of the show.



Jenny Hughes

**185214**



Yasuno Takeshima

**185215**



Nami & Yumi  
**185216**



Micheal Cordero  
**185217**





Goldyn Avenue

**185220**



Rhiannon Davies

**185222**



Rice Paddy Heroes

**185227**





Julie Kim  
**185229**



Yoshiha & Manny  
**185230**

**To vote, Text [number] to 650-600-9016**

## **Support YAYAM**

Virtual Talent Show to allow our talented youth to share their talents as well as support their talent endeavors with cash prizes.

Funds raised from this event will go towards future events and programs dedicated to building our Youth & Young Adults in North America.

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National

## HJ Stars Audition Highlights Diverse Talent



Photos courtesy of HJ Stars

“The HJ Stars audition went a lot longer than expected, because we got double the submissions than we were expecting – but it was an incredible turnout,” said Resfred Arthur, co-host of HJ Stars and the FFWPU USA Northeast secretary general. “The purpose of HJ Stars is to raise funds for YAYAM but also help cultivate and showcase talent from around the country.”

The preliminary round of the HJ Stars auditions was an immediate hit, streaming live July 22 with more than 2,000 views. The competition also raised some \$6,000 for the Youth and Young Adult Ministry ([YAYAM](#)).

“We thank everyone who donated,” said Resfred, as he presented audition highlights during an FFWPU USA Leaders’ meeting July 26. “We had 56 submissions that were all very incredible ... There was so much talent that was amazing to see.”

From choreographed dancing, singing, piano playing and guitar strumming, to heartfelt poetry and colorful artwork, the talent pool was diverse and impressive. A total of 19 candidates from across the country advanced to the semi-finals, as well as one participant from London. The Northeast alone had eight participants continue on in the competition.



“We have a glance of what’s to come with our semi-finalists,” said Resfred. “Every region is represented, and even one person from Europe, so let’s continue to support them.”

While some contestants were individual performers, others were an entire crew, such as the LA CARP Dancers. There were even couples in the mix who auditioned together, as all submissions were evaluated by three guest judges with backgrounds in the arts. “I’m so excited to see all this new talent,” said judge Jonathan Gullery, a longtime designer and pianist.

HJ Stars channels the great passion True Parents have for the arts, as they founded the renowned Little Angels ballet troupe and the Hyojeong Youth Orchestra (HJYO), among many more creative endeavors. “This is the power of art,” True Father said. “It allows people who don’t understand each other’s language to communicate. It lets people who don’t know about each other’s history understand each other’s hearts.”

The HJ Stars semi-final round is scheduled for August 5. Donations submitted in a specific region will go toward that region’s YAYAM chapter. The grand prize winner will receive \$1,000, the second place winner will receive \$500, and the third place prize is \$250.

*You can donate and tune in to HJ Stars [here](#), and watch the full preliminary round of auditions [here](#).*



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