

The 2018 Blind Idol Semi-final Competition Hosted by Insightful Visionaries Taps 5 of America's Best

The spotlight was on Durham, NC for the 2018 4th Annual Blind Idol Singing Competition held on June 16, at the historic Carolina Theatre.

DURHAM, NC, UNITED STATES, June 25, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 2018 National Blind Idol Singing Competition Semi-finals was hosted for the 2nd year by [Insightful Visionaries](#), for A Brighter Path Programs, that celebrates the musical talents of Americans who are legally blind. A broad range of assistive technology advances were on display in the new Visions Resource Lounge. "We are very excited about the 2018 rollout for Visions Resource Lounge", said Steve Murphy, Visions Resource Director. "We've provided access for the Blind community to a wide range of assistive technology and resources available all in one location", said Murphy. Insightful Visionaries is a non-profit organization whose mission is to facilitate the independence of the blind and visually impaired community. The organization hosts events, activities, workshops and resources to assist the blind/visually impaired with maintaining an independent lifestyle and participation in the mainstream community.



Emcees & 2018 Blind Idol Finalists

The 2018 Blind Idol Semi-finals show was produced by McMillian Entertainment Consulting (MEC), with the vision of [Carolyn Marshall Covington](#), Founder of Insightful Visionaries. Carolyn Covington is an active member of the Blind and Visually Impaired Community. America's best of the best talent, came from near and far. The show was once again compared by attendees, to the quality of other national talent competitions, including the likes of American Idol. This year's theme, Mardi Gras Carolina Style, kicked off the evening with a rousing opening procession. The sounds of "When the Saints Go Marching In", were led through the Carolina Theatre's Fletcher Hall by popular horn players, George Knott on Tuba and Peter Lamb on Sax, followed by stellar performances from the Drum Prophet and Wellness Ambassador, Eugene Taylor and Praise dancer, Nia Mills.

One of the most notable of the evening's events, was the personal video shared by Elizabeth Doran, President and CEO of The NC Theatres, with words of encouragement to the 9 hopeful contestants from Film & TV Producer, Nigel Lythgoe. The former producer of "Pop Idol" and "American Idol" is the creator and executive producer of, and a regular judge on, "So You Think You Can Dance". Elizabeth Doran is acknowledged for her focus on education, audience development, diversity and inclusion, has attracted millions of dollars of funding to support programs which break down barriers by merging the arts into schools, universities, prisons,

underserved and new-immigrant neighborhoods, and businesses.

Elizabeth Doran and ABC11 Eyewitness News Anchor, Andrea Blanford, came on board early in the planning stages, to serve as the two Emcees. It was their chemistry and the show lineup the would lend energy and excitement to the program from the opening Mardi Gras-themed procession to the announcement of the 5 winners. The three judges who were tasked to select the top five semi-finalists, included, radio and media personality, Callie Douglas, Retired Fire Captain, advocate for the Wounded Veterans, and musician, Andy Woodall, talk show host of The Sports Shop with Reese & KMac, Erroll Reese. Five finalists will go on to compete in the live finale, held Saturday, August 11th, at the Hanesbrands Theater in downtown Winston-Salem, NC. The winner receives a prize package that includes \$2,000 cash, recording studio time and head shots. This year, prizes also include \$2000 cash donated by the Claire Culbreth Music Fund, in memory of Claire Culbreth, who competed in the 2017 Blind Idol Competition. Insightful Visionaries also arranged for a 1-year subscription to AIRA, assistive technology.

Among the exciting lineup of guest performers was Charity Hampton, 2016 Blind Idol Winner from Rural Hall, NC, who performed in at the Amateur Night at the Apollo series in April and The 2017 winner, Jordan Scheffer, of Asheville, NC, who is scheduled for a June appearance in the Apollo Series. The 9 contestants traveled to Durham with one purpose in mind, to win a shot at the Grand Prize. They hailed from Florida, Texas, Kentucky and North Carolina. Performances kept the audience on their feet with an abundance of ovations and applause. The 2018 featured artist was NOVACAIN, a.k.a. "The Blind Rapper", and National recording artist from the Braille Music tour. Braille Music is a movement based around clean hip hop that inspires people to break through stereotypes and overcome adversity.

Insightful Visionaries, founded by Carolyn Marshall Covington, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to facilitate the independence of the blind and visually impaired community. The organization host events, activities, workshops and resources to assist the blind and visually impaired community with maintaining an independent lifestyle and participation in the mainstream community.

In 2000, Carolyn Covington was diagnosed with a devastating degenerative eye disease called Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). For over 30 years prior, she had been busy building a successful enterprise in the beauty industry. Persons with RP have no night vision and very limited sight in dimly lit places. Their peripheral vision is greatly restricted, and eventually, may become completely blind. Carolyn was determined to push forward. In time, her new challenges were revealed as opportunities to share her experiences for the benefit of others. It would inspire her to create Insightful Visionaries.

From inception, Insightful Visionaries has been on a mission to provide the blind/visually impaired community with a broad range of resources that are convenient, accessible, and enhance their lifestyle. Through donations and community support, Carolyn's vision for the 4-Senses Wellness Center will offer a wide variety of comprehensive programs, including CBD pain relief products, weight loss products and nutrition programs. These comprehensive programs will all represent 4-senses' unique approach to inclusive, healthier, and more functional living.

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