



ENTERTAINMENT

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## 'An amazing celebration for the 305,' as two Miami grads win Tony Awards

BY CARLOS FRÍAS

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Two graduates of the Miami arts high school that the Florida Legislature threatened to defund this spring won Tony Awards Sunday night at Radio City Musical Hall for their work on Broadway.

Miami's Alex Lacamoire, a New World School of the Arts alumnus who won a Tony for helping create the music to last year's smash hit "Hamilton," won his third Tony Award for best orchestration for "Dear Evan Hansen," which went on to win best new musical.

Michael Aronov, a fellow New World graduate, won the Tony Award for best featured actor in a play for his portrayal of a tough, cocky negotiator in "Oslo," which won for best new play. And Boca Raton native Rachel Bay Jones won her first Tony for best featured actress in "Dear Evan Hansen," which won six awards.

"Last night was an amazing celebration for the 305 and for New World School of the Arts," Lacamoire wrote the Miami Herald on Monday. "For Michael Aronov and I to win in the same year shows how magnificent it was to grow up with an arts education in Miami."



Michael Aronov, winner of the award for Best Featured Actor in a Play for "Oslo," poses in the press room during the 2017 Tony Awards at 3 West Club on June 11, 2017 in New York City.

Jemal Countess - Getty Images

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### **READ MORE: How this Miami musician overcame hearing loss to help create the music to 'Hamilton'**

This spring, Tallahassee lawmakers cut \$150,000 of funding, or about a 23 percent budget cut, from the downtown Miami arts school after first threatening to revoke its \$650,000 state grant entirely. The lawmakers said the school failed to provide a legally required report about how the state grants would be spent.

A public outcry followed to save funding for the school whose graduates have gone on to create award-winning films and Broadway hits, including this year's Oscar-winning film "Moonlight," based on New World graduate Tarell Alvin McCraney's play about growing up in Liberty City.



## How hearing loss affects 'Hamilton' music director Alex Lacamoire

Miami's Alex Lacamoire overcame hearing loss to help write music to the Tony Award-winning 'Hamilton,' one of the biggest hits in Broadway history.

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Lacamoire has said it was his education at New World that helped hone his talent. He was born with hearing loss and was nearly sent to a deaf school as a child before a combination of speech therapy and a love of music helped him work past his disability.

"It's about overcoming a disability to the point where you don't feel it's a disability anymore," he told the Herald last year.

**READ MORE: After outcry, lawmakers scrap plans to fully slash grant aid to 'Moonlight' alumni's school**

Sunday's was Lacamoire's third Tony in three nominations, and each of the works he orchestrated went on to win best musical. He won his first best orchestration award for "In the Heights" in 2008. He also has won two Grammy awards for the cast albums of "Hamilton" and "In the Heights."

This back-to-back win for "Hamilton" and "Dear Evan Hansen" was particularly special, he said.

"I loved working on 'Hansen,'" he said. "I'm so lucky to be part of such groundbreaking shows two years in a row."

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Rachel Bay Jones, a Boca Raton native, accepts the award for best performance by an actress in a featured role in a musical for "Dear Evan Hansen." **Michael Zorn** - Michael Zorn/Invision/AP

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