

VSA Florida Student of the Month
March 2018

VSA Florida is proud to announce Silvio Alejandro Plata and Tony Romero as the March 2018 Students of the Month.



13-year-old Silvio, who attends W.R. Thomas Middle School in Miami and Doral Conservatory School of the Arts in Doral, was nominated by Tailleen Aria, CEO of the Conservatory, for his outstanding musicality both vocally and instrumentally. Some students are just born with the innate ability to understand music language. Such is the case for Silvio, who became blind after his first year of life due to bilateral retinoblastoma. Silvio was given an opportunity to explore the world of music with a tiny toy piano after his parents discovered his melodic gift, which has become his passion. Now as a young man, Silvio plays the xylophone in advanced band at school, plays drums at his church, plays the piano and ukulele, and to top it all off, is an extraordinary singer! Silvio is an honor roll student and in the words of his music teacher, “He is undoubtedly a *Master of Life* for all of us who have had the blessing and privilege of knowing him and sharing experiences with him.” The impact music has had on this young man’s life is immeasurable.



22-year-old Tony, who attends community art classes at the Land O’Lakes Recreation Complex in Land O’Lakes, was nominated by Nanci Dorau, a VSA Florida Teaching Artist, for the outstanding progress and development he has made in his dance and theatre performance skills. When Tony takes the stage, you cannot help but enjoy every minute of his performance! Following six months of weekly drama classes, Ms. Dorau is flabbergasted. “Tony has shown the ability to be a leader...each task assures Tony will be at the top of his game,” she writes. “Tony has shown incredible improvement in the few months I have worked with him. His ability to memorize lines landed him the role of narrator for [our recent] performance.” As a seasoned drama/theatre professional, Ms. Dorau knows talent when she sees it.

“His vocals are clearly enunciated and he has mastered the breathing techniques to speak loudly and direct his voice further.” Tony works well with the small group of students that enjoy this extracurricular activity offered by VSA Florida, always lending a helpful hand when needed. Tony is a graduate of the Pepin Transitional School of Excellence that serves students with autism and related disabilities. He is active in Special Olympics, participating in cycling, bowling, swimming and basketball. He has also volunteered in the Publix “Light the Torch for Special Olympics Campaign”.