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For Immediate Release

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**DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL PIANIST RECEIVES MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP &  
HEARD ON NATIONAL RADIO BROADCAST**

BOSTON, MA--**From the Top**, the non-profit organization best known for its NPR and PBS programs featuring America's best young classical musicians, has awarded **17-year-old pianist Clifton Williams** from Washington, D.C. with a \$10,000 Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award. He will be heard on a broadcast of *From the Top* **WETA 90.9 FM Sunday, May 3 at 6pm.**

Through the generosity of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, From the Top identifies and awards scholarships to 25 deserving young musicians each year. Chosen from a wide pool of applicants, Jack Kent Cooke Young Artists must demonstrate high levels of artistic and academic achievement and financial need. The \$10,000 award can be applied towards music lessons, college tuition, instrument purchases, competition fees, and other expenses relating to the young artist's musical development and education. The Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award will support Clifton's studies at a summer music program and enable him to purchase an electric piano.

Clifton is a junior at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, where he is ranked number one in his class. The pianist at his church, who became his first piano teacher, first introduced Clifton to music. Since 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Clifton has been accompanying multiple choirs, including the Friendship Public Charter School Choir in Washington, D.C. In 2008, Clifton won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the District of Columbia Public Schools' Piano Competition. In addition to classical music, Clifton feels equally at home with gospel and jazz music and enjoys singing. He has sung in the D.C. Honors Chorus and is highly sought after by instrumentalists and singers at the Ellington School for his piano accompaniment skills. In the future, Clifton plans to attend a four-year college and eventually receive his doctorate degree in music performance or music education.

On the March 28 broadcast, Clifton performs Prokofiev's *Suggestion Diabolique* and accompanies the Boston Children's Chorus in a gospel finale of Simon and Garfunkel's *Bridge over Troubled Water*. The show was taped before a live audience in Boston, Mass. on March 29

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**MORE ABOUT FROM THE TOP**

**From the Top** is a non-profit organization that celebrates the passion, dedication, and personal stories of the nation's outstanding young classical musicians. Through entertaining public radio and PBS television broadcasts, online media, and a national tour of live events and outreach programs, these performers inspire the pursuit of excellence, and encourage participation in the arts as an integral part of a vibrant and civil society. From the Top's training and mentorship programs prepare young musicians to connect with new audiences, serve as positive peer role models, and give back to their communities.

From the Top is made possible through grants from the **National Endowment for the Arts** and the **Jack Kent Cooke Foundation**. It is also supported through the generous contributions of individuals and foundations as well as public radio stations.

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation is a private, independent foundation based in Lansdowne, Virginia and established in 2000 by the estate of Jack Kent Cooke to help young people of exceptional promise reach their full potential through education.

For more information about the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award, including application materials and other Award recipients, please visit [www.fromthetop.org](http://www.fromthetop.org).

*From the Top* on NPR is produced in association with **WGBH Radio Boston** and **New England Conservatory of Music**, its home and education partner.

**Music. It's Powerful Stuff.**