

162 teens pour passion into performances

Five-member band among grand prize winners at teenstar challenge finale

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IT WAS a day filled with sheer excitement and awe at the Berjaya Teenstar Challenge (BTSC) 2017 grand finals.

Held at Damansara Performing Arts Centre, Empire Damansara in Petaling Jaya, the event saw a total of 162 talented finalists showcasing their talent in front of a full theatre.

Among them was a band of five members who took the spotlight and left the audience astounded with their perfect mash-up of rhythm and tune during their performances.

The group, named After Glow, practised every Sunday for three hours prior to this.

Their hard work paid off when they emerged the grand prize winner for the Band category.

After Glow leader Justin Tong Jee Yeung, 16, said, "My members and I practise regularly as we are

members of our school band.

"We clicked almost instantly because of our passion in music as it allows us to express ourselves in a unique way.

"Not only that, playing music helps us to unwind after a long day at school or during stressful exam periods."

He added, "We didn't expect to win because there were many talented bands competing, and it was also our first time participating in a competition.

"From this experience, I have learned that it isn't about winning, but making new friends, gaining experience and having fun."

Tong and his team members Nik Mohamed Shaqeel Nik Arif Reza, Ng Faye, Ang Yeut Wen and Jaseindran Ravindran, all students of SM Sri KDU, took home RM5,000 cash and prizes.

The group was part of Kenny Rogers Roasters brand team, which also came in as this year's champion team.



Berjaya Corporation Bhd group corporate communications senior general manager Judy Tan (holding trophy, right), local artiste Mohd Yunus (standing, in white), Berjaya Teenstar Challenge 2017 Band category grand-prize winner Tong (front row, in white) and his team members at the Berjaya Teenstar Challenge 2017 grand finals.

Other grand prize winners were Team Astari from Sekolah Sultan Alam Shah in the Cultural Dancing category, and Team Xcalate from Sri Emas International School in the Modern Dancing category.

Meanwhile, Solo Singing finalist Ell Havila Emilcah Jinorin from SMK Bandar Sri Damansara 2, clinched the champion award with RM2,000 cash and in kind.

Three special awards were also given in recognition of the Best Dancer, Best Creativity and Best Showmanship.

Held for the second year, BTSC was organised by Berjaya Youth to serve as a platform for talented teenagers to explore and express their passion in the field of performing arts.

From January to May, more than 3,500 students showed up for auditions during the BTSC 2017 roadshows at more than 110 secondary

schools in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Putrajaya and Negri Sembilan.

Shortlisted participants were then split into four brand teams representing Berjaya Starbucks Coffee Company (Team Starbucks), Kenny Rogers Roasters (Team KRR), B Infinite (Team B Infinite) and Berjaya University College of Hospitality (Team Berjaya UCH), the key partners of the event.

They also attended coaching workshops to hone their performing skills with local artistes Tria Aziz, Amy Wang, Mohd Yunus and Becky Lee, who were the judges for the preliminaries and grand finals.

From each team, four solo singers and six performing troupes were selected to compete in the grand finals.

Berjaya Corporation Bhd Corporate Communications senior manager Emily Tan said, "Over the years, there are many avenues to

promote academic excellence among the youth.

"To ensure they get an all-rounded development, we launched BTSC last year to allow them to express their personal identity and nurture their artistic talents.

"Since then, we have discovered so many talented youths. Their immense dedication and passion towards what they love is truly inspiring and amazing.

"We hope this competition has enabled them to gain performing skills and a valuable experience to further enrich their academic and personal lives."

Berjaya Youth, also known as B.Youth, is a youth empowerment initiative established by Berjaya Corporation Bhd that aims to enable Malaysian youths to make a difference in communities based on four key pillars – inspiration, creativity, eco and animal.