



The "Light Your Star" competition helps to discover new names annually.

# If stars are lit, it means there is someone who needs it

The Charity Foundation of the Topsøe, Tolstoy and Sokol families set up an unforgettable festival for talented children. The "Light Your Star" competition was held on November 29 at the Children's Art Center in Pervomaisky industrial settlement in the Shchekino district.

The competition identified three children that are going to obtain support from the Charitable Foundation of the Tolstoy, Topsøe and Sokol families. Thanks to the Foundation's support, the young talents now have an opportunity to hone their abilities in sports, arts and the sciences.

The project was launched by three prominent families: Topsøe, Tolstoy and Sokol. Shchekinoazot and the Haldor Topsøe companies have long been on good terms, and their relations extend beyond those of mere business partners. In 2013, the partners joined their efforts to help people and society. Henrik Topsøe, Dr Halder Topsøe's son and the head of Haldor Topsøe, visited the Shchekino district, and the decision was made to set up the Charity Foundation to support talented children. Later on, the Tolstoy family joined the socially important programs being implemented by the Haldor Topsøe and Shchekinoazot companies. From the very start, the Topsøe, Tolstoy and Sokol families took 11 children under their wing. The Foundation takes full care of those in their charge: from buying outfits and garments to organizing summer camps.

The following Foundation members came to greet the children and select the most talented of them at a gala concert: Ekaterina Tolstaya, the director of the Yasnaya Polyana Memorial Estate of Leo Tolstoy, Nataliya Pilyus, a State Duma Deputy and Peter Van Christensen, Director General of Haldor Topsøe.

"Next year, the Topsøe, Tolstoy and Sokol Foundation will be marking its 5-year anniversary", said Nataliya Pilyus. "One can say, the Foundation already has its history. Today, the fourth "Light Your Star" competition is starting and will be selecting children to participate in the Foundation's program. This festival of creativity and talents has become a significant cultural event in Shchekino district, and every year we get an energy boost from these children."

To get the Foundation's support, one needs to meet three requirements. First — the child must have talent and achievements. The second factor is that they must have difficult family backgrounds. And lastly, the child must win the competition. Three winners obtain the Foundation's support.

Nataliya Pilyus said that the three children that were accepted four years ago have already graduated from high school and entered university: Moscow State University, Tula State University and Moscow Medical University. Still, the Foundation continues to support them. Currently, we are discussing the idea of additional student allowances, which would provide a strong incentive for performing well during their studies.

Nataliya Pilyus believes that those under the Foundation's care grow up to be well-balanced adults. They participate in charity concerts and theatrical performances and often visit kindergartens in the Shchekino district. Thus, the young people focus not only on their career, but also actively contribute to the common good.



"I have been involved in track-and-field athletics and art for two years. I have participated in competitions in Moscow, Kaluga, Aleksin, Tula. I love sports; sports are my life! I really want to be accepted by the Foundation. I hope they can help make my dream come true: to become an Olympic Champion."

Ekaterina Tolstaya shared her views on the project and its significance: "I think it's a very important competition: it's a good starting point for the children for developing their creative talents and natural qualities, particularly for the children whose families are going through difficult times. Each year, the competition discovers new names, and there are always little stars we would really like to help in achieving their goals. But the children help us too: they spend large amounts of time at the Yasnaya Polyana Memorial Estate of Leo Tolstoy, attending our classes and contributing to the development of the estate."

Peter Van Christensen of Haldor Topsøe: "Speaking on behalf of our Director, I'm very pleased to be here today. Our company was one of the Foundation's founders. We believe that this is a very important project not only for children's creativity, but also for the development of Russian-Danish relations. I had a chance to see a concert in early November. We watched the children performing and were again surprised to see how talented they are. Today, we await the addition of more children joining our Foundation."

Thanks to the Foundation, these boys and girls have become one big, friendly family. Young Sergei Koloskov says:

"Theater has been my hobby since early childhood. I have been working on my acting skills for 6 years, and I've been practicing choreography for 7 years. I'm happy to be competing for a spot as a Foundation participant. I'd like to thank the founders. Their help gives us a chance to see the country and to see how far we can go. For example, recently I went to Sochi with Simpatya dance troupe, and we won the jury's "Golden Terpsichore cup".

And now the final concert begins. Young participants appear on the scene one after another. Of course, they are nervous because even being so young, they understand: the Foundation can give them a ticket to a life full of creativity and various opportunities for personal fulfillment. The winners were announced after the concert. They were: Ivan Sedachyov (balalaika), Dmitry Slesarev (accordion) and Dmitry Klyuev (vocal). The close-knit family of Topsøe, Tolstoy and Sokol families Foundation is now extended: there are 28 young talents in it.



The winners Dmitry Slesarev (accordion), Ivan Sedachyov (balalaika) and Dmitry Klyuev (vocal) will receive the support from the Charity Foundation of the Topsøe, Tolstoy and Sokol families.