



TIMES SQUARE • NEW YORK CITY

**STAYBRIDGE SUITES TIMES SQUARE AWARDS RICHMOND NATIVE JASON MARKS
HIS "BIG BROADWAY BREAK"**

Singer Makes his New York Debut at Don't Tell Mamas on July 29

NEW YORK, July 15, 2010 -- Jason Marks followed his dream and kept "Chasing Rainbows." The singer received his "[Big Broadway Break](#)" today from [Staybridge Suites · Times Square · New York City](#) and was named winner of the hotel's video contest in which contestants could sing either "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows" or "Give My Regards to Broadway." Jason, a native of Richmond, VA, will receive a six-month stay at Staybridge Suites Times Square, a \$5,000 stipend, sessions at Broadway Classroom to hone his skills and meetings with Broadway experts. He will also receive the opportunity to perform at Don't Tell Mamas in New York City on July 29, as part of Seth Rudetsky's *Broadway Chatterbox* live radio show on Sirius/XM.

More than 12,000 people cast their vote in the "Big Broadway Break" contest. Twenty-nine-year-old Jason Marks, who was the winner of both the public and judges' vote in the contest, has long dreamed of Broadway but felt it was an unattainable dream. "I'm too much of a realist," he said. "I'm not the type of person to just move to New York with no money in my pocket and no opportunity. This contest gave me the push I have needed for so long." While Jason has not yet conquered the lights of Broadway, he has made a name for himself in the Richmond performing arts community. He is currently an instructor, voice coach and office manager and musical director for several programs at SPARC (School for Performing Arts in the Richmond Community), a non-profit organization that services children ages 5-18. Jason started performing with SPARC as a teenager. He has also performed regionally in several productions and received many accolades and awards.

Jason always knew he would pursue a career in the performing arts. "It's in my blood," he said. His cousin, Michael Barriskill, appeared on Broadway in the musical *Cats* in 1989, his mother is a classically trained piano player, and his aunt trained at the Metropolitan Opera and sang in their chorus.

To help Jason get his start, Seth Rudetsky, who served as one of the three judges for the "Big Broadway Break" contest, will interview him on his July 29 *Broadway Chatterbox* Sirius/XM radio show that he does live from Don't Tell Mamas in New York. Seth will interview Jason and have him sing his winning contest entry, "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows."

"We're thrilled to be able to give Jason his start on Broadway," said Patricia Armstrong, vice president of sales and marketing, Staybridge Suites · Times Square. "He has amazing talent and we're happy to provide a home base for him as he pursues his dreams. We're sure he'll be an amazing success."

In addition, Jason will receive three Broadway Classroom sessions provided by Broadway.com that will focus on "getting his foot in the door," helping him with his resume, headshots, obtaining an Actors'

Equity Card, developing audition material and preparing for an interview with a casting director. Classes are approximately 90 minutes. Casting director Stephanie Klapper, who also served as a judge for the contest, will orchestrate a mock casting call with Jason, providing valuable feedback to prepare him for future audition opportunities. *Time Out New York* associate theater and cabaret editor Adam Feldman - the third judge - will do a one-on-one mock interview with him.

Jason will also serve as [Staybridge Suites · Times Square's](#) blogger in residence for the duration of his six-month stay, expected to start late August, and share details about his New York City experience and quest to make it on Broadway on Facebook and Twitter.

Additionally, Jason will enjoy Staybridge Suites' signature complimentary services and amenities over the course of his stay which include breakfast daily; mid-week evening receptions with complimentary beer, wine and hors d'oeuvres; 24-hour business center access; a 24-hour fitness center complete with state-of-the-art Cybex® Equipment; high speed wireless Internet in-room and throughout the hotel; in-room HBO plus 150 additional television channels; laundry facilities and local phone calls.

Located on West 40th Street at Ninth Avenue, the epicenter of Manhattan, the new 310-studio Staybridge Suites Times Square · New York City offers guests front row access to Times Square, the Theater District, Restaurant Row, museums, shopping and evening hotspots. Each room features a fully-equipped kitchen and the hotel's 24-hour convenience store, BridgeMart®, is stocked with snacks, beverages, easy-to-prepare meals, personal items and an array of New York centric food and novelty items for purchase. Guests can request grocery shopping and delivery through the concierge as well.

For more information about Staybridge Suites Times Square · New York City or to make a reservation please visit www.StayTimesSquare.com or call 1.888.617.3376. For more information about the contest, visit www.facebook.com/staybridgesuitestimesquare.

About Jason Marks

Jason Marks, a lyric baritone, is a graduate of Shenandoah University (Conservatory) where he received his BFA in Music Theatre. During his time at Shenandoah, he appeared in over 15 mainstage productions, including *Parade*, *Carnival*, *Into the Woods*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *42nd Street*, and *Children of Eden*. Regionally, he has worked with Barksdale Theatre (*Guys & Dolls*, *Mame*), Theatre IV (*The Magic Mrs. Piggie Wiggle*, *Seussical*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *The Song of Mulan*, *Annie*), Swift Creek Mill Playhouse (*Side Show*, *Once Upon A Mattress*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Das Barbecu*, *Lucky Stiff*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Run For Your Wife*, *Two Bits — The Barbershop Musical*), and Riverside Dinner Theatre in Fredericksburg, VA, as Sancho Panza in *Man of La Mancha*. He has also been a frequent guest artist for SPARC, appearing in their summer mainstage musicals, including *Cats*, *Footloose*, *Once Upon A Mattress*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *The Music Man*.

Jason has been a frequent guest vocalist with several reputable organizations, including guest soloist for the INTA (International New Thought Alliance) Convention in Washington, DC, The Virginians — the men's barbershop chorus of Virginia, and soloist with the Montgomery College Symphony Orchestra in Rockville, Maryland. For 2 years, Jason was a member of the Shenandoah Conservatory Choir, under the direction of Grammy winner, Robert Shafer. During his time with the choir, Jason performed numerous

solos for major choral works, including solos at the Kennedy Center with the Washington Chorus and National Symphony.

Jason is also the winner of numerous accolades and awards. He was named the only male finalist for the Fynsworth Alley Record Company (New York City) "Your Big Break" vocal contest, a national search for young, undiscovered theatrical talent. In Richmond, he was named a finalist for the NBC12 Super Star Vocal Contest. Jason is a 3 time NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) winner, in both classical and musical theatre vocal divisions, the winner of the 10th annual Bach/Handel Festival in Winchester, Virginia, a 2-time winner of the TV8 Rising Stars vocal competition, and was accepted into the AIMS (American Institute of Musical Studies) program to sing opera in Graz, Germany. In 2008, he won the Richmond Theater Critics Circle Award (RTCC) for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical for his portrayal of Nicely Nicely Johnson in Barksdale Theatre's *Guys & Dolls*.

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