



Justus & the Experience Competing in Opening Act Music Competition

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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GRANITE CITY - Dean Justus is a musician from Granite City who is competing to win \$10,000 and the chance to be the opening act at a concert at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles later this year. Justus, who writes original songs, sings and plays the ukulele under the name Justus & the Experience, is [currently ranked fourth in his group](#) in the [Opening Act competition](#).

With just over nine days of voting left, you can cast a vote every day for Justus & the Experience [on the Opening Act website](#) before voting closes on the 21st.

Justus doesn't confine his musical style into any one genre, but says it mostly sounds like American folk with elements of other musical styles in different songs.

"It's going to have good lyrics, songwriting, good storytelling," Justus said. "You won't hear anything else out there like it. Nobody plays the style I do, nobody plays the uke like I do."

You can listen to some of his music on YouTube, where he can be seen [performing live in concert](#) and [playing the ukulele while riding a unicycle](#). Justus said his upcoming album is nearly complete, and should be available on music streaming platforms including Spotify in the next couple of months.

The winner of the Opening Act competition will receive the grand prize of \$10,000, and they will be the opening act at Audacy's annual Hollywood Bowl Concert - while the lineup for this year's concert has yet to be announced, last year's winner opened for Coldplay, Black Eyed Peas, Doja Cat, Kid Laroi and Shawn Mendes.

Justus said winning the competition would not only allow him to further his musical career, but it would also allow him to give back to those in need and those who have supported him most - both in music and in life.

“First thing I would do is take 10 percent of it and I’d give it to tithes, charities, offerings ... something to help somebody - I do that with every paycheck of mine,” Justus said. “The next part would be to help my Mom get into a new house.”

Justus said his mother “isn’t in the best of living situations” and is ill, so while the money wouldn’t fully be able to fully buy her a new house, it would help significantly in improving her living conditions.

“Kelly Wood, she has been such a support of mine and such a help in everything, and she does it for free for me ... so I’d like to give her back something if I do get that,” Justus said. “And obviously, I’ve got to pay myself ... I’ve got to survive and eat just like everyone else, so I would definitely take a portion of it. The last little bit - if I had anything left - would go to further my music.”

Throughout his music and in everything he does, Justus said he has one main message: “keep the love alive.”

“It’s so easy to hate the world right now - it’s so easy to be mad, it’s so easy to be down - it’s hard to keep the love alive,” Justus said. “Love is the answer to all things, and my message to everybody everything is just, “Keep the love alive.””

For more information about Justus & the Experience, follow their [Facebook page](#), and remember to [cast your vote for Justus & the Experience](#) in the Opening Act competition.