

Two Locals Among VH1 Honorees

By Roger Catlin

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Two of the five finalists for the national 2010 "Do Something Awards" honoring "the best young world-changers, 25 and under" on VH1 Monday are local activists.

As finalists, Jessica Posner and Micaela Connery, both 23, have earned \$10,000 for their organizations. If they win the "Do Something Awards" Monday in Hollywood, they'll get \$100,000.



Connery, left, began her Unified Theater program integrating young people with developmental disabilities with those who don't have them, began at Conard High School in West Hartford when she was 15. Since then, the program has grown to nearly a dozen schools in Southern New England. She has plans to install it into 325 schools by 2015.

Posner, right, began a free school for girls in Kibera, the largest slum in Africa, located in Nairobi, Kenya, as a way to install hope and alternatives for the young woman there. Her nonprofit organization, Shining Hope for Communities, developed a way to combat cycles of extreme poverty and gender inequality there.



Also up for the award, voted on by online viewers, are Jacqueline Murekatete, 25, of New York, who began a genocide awareness center; Mark Rembert, 25, of Wilmington, Ohio, who began a sustainable job program in his hometown; and Wilfredo Perez Jr., 23, of Providence, who began a public health program in Haiti.

Travie McCoy, Lifehouse and Natasha Bedingfield perform at the event, hosted by Jane Lynch, the Emmy-nominated actress from "Glee," and carried live on VH1 at 9 p.m.

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