



TEXAS THESPIANS MONTHLY

January 2024



Happy New Year!

www.texasthespians.org



TEXAS THESPIANS ADVOCACY NETWORK

Texas Thespians Premier Communities for Theatre Education 2023-2024 Award Recipients



Providing Excellence in Theatre Education



Forney ISD
Inspiring Students Through Innovative Education



UIL OAP Doesn't Define Your Potential and Ability

In an environment such as theatre for many UIL participating schools, this next season is the most stressful of the year. If you have no idea what I'm talking about, it's One Act Play season.

High School One Act Play is a UIL (University Interscholastic League) event during the second semester of the school year. This event is a competition where schools of similar sizes compete against each other. During this contest, schools each put on an 18 - 40 minute show. They have 7 minutes to set and strike the stage. A panel of one or three judges then adjudicates these shows.

The levels of competition are Zone/District, Bi-District, Area, Region, and State. Each level allows the show to advance to the next level. Only three schools are chosen to advance until the Regional meet, where only two schools are chosen. Those two schools then advance to the State meet, the highest level to get to in UIL. At this meet, instead of advancing, the top three schools at the state get recognized as Champion, First Runner-up, and Second Runner-up. My school, Midland High School, Troupe 3376, was awarded State Champion for the 6A State Meet in 2023 for our production of *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*.

When you get to a level such as a state, you must keep your mental and bodily health in mind. The One Act season can be an exceptionally mentally taxing experience, and many get burnt out during this time. Just remember to keep your schoolwork as a priority at all times. You are a STUDENT, Thespian. The student part comes first before anything else. If you are feeling down about your role in your own school's One Act or are bummed that your school didn't advance, then remember: There are still plenty of opportunities for yourself to shine in your Troupe and make your Troupe shine. These opportunities include a Junior Varsity show or a Student-Directed play.



STO Blane Wheelless
Midland High School
Troupe 3376

Whenever my school does not make it far in the One Act season, we put on a Student-Directed play. These plays allow students who may have yet to make it into the initial one-act cast another chance to shine in these plays. They also let students who want to test the waters in a directing field and help enhance their college resume.

A Junior Varsity One Act Play show is another way to allow students to learn and grow outside of the Varsity One Act Cast. This show has requirements similar to the UIL OAP competition, except instead of advancing, it allows for a learning experience for aspiring actors who may need more time to be ready for the Varsity Cast.

Even though I only recounted a couple of opportunities, there are still countless more ways to prove yourself within your troupe. Just because an adjudicator didn't advance your show, does not mean your show was bad or that your acting ability wasn't good enough. Pretty much every One Act Play show is a high-quality show, it's just a hard competition with very limited wiggle room for mistakes that, sometimes, are not anyone's fault. If you can't remember anything from this blog, remember this: your OAP results are not the end of the world - it's the start of a new one with even more education.

TEXAS THESPIANS EDUCATOR CONFERENCE

#TTEC2024 included Collaboration Stations, Goosechase challenges, after-dinner activities, a script swap, multiple giveaways, and design events.

I'M A TEACHER, WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?



Texas Thespians Educator Conference was
FILLED with opportunities for learning,
collaborating, networking, awards, and prizes!

TTEC 2025 - JANUARY 30TH - FEBRUARY 1ST

TEXAS THESPIANS LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2024



Rianna Graydon
Theatre Director
Calhoun High School



Julio Morales
Theatre Director
Sharpstown High School



Brandon Tijerina
Director of Theatre
Dallas ISD



Glenn Price
Anna High School



Beth Auble
Industrial High School



Melissa Eyles
Theatre Director
Port Neches-Groves
High School



Kendra Willeby
Theatre Director
Foster High School

**Know an outstanding educator?
Follow the link to nominate for 2025**

[LINK](#)



TEXAS THESPIANS
EDUCATOR COLLECTIVE

Congratulations!

CONFERENCE 2024 AWARDS

Prompt: A Midsummer Night's Dream



Best Overall Award - Costume Design
Candace Harris, Hannah Kelly, Emily-Ann Moriarty Phillips, Lynsey Hale



This Only Has to Make It Through the Run Award

**Heather Jernigan,
Raven Lawes,
Jennifer Brockette,
Nadirah Shakir-Ramseur**



Nailed It Award
Jose DeHoyos, Kelly Nance
Casey Watson-Gardiner, Mary Dupree



CONFERENCE 2024 AWARDS

Prompt: One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest



Best Overall Award - Set Design

Jason Angco-Barrera, Mary Dupree, Casey Watson-Garder, Kelly Nance



Nailed It Award - Set Design

Scott Timms, Caitlyn Sparkman,
Katie Henson, Jesyka Zeigler



This Only Has to Make It Through the Run Award - Set Design

Mary Grim, Hans Grim, Sarah Hughes,
Luke Hunt, Nelly Light

Honorable Mentions



**Design events
will be back for
2025.
Make plans now
to participate!**

Theatre Scholar Distinction Awards



Texas Thespians is pleased to recognize theatre students who demonstrate high academic success in overall coursework through the Texas Theatre Scholar Distinction Award program.

To be designated a Texas Theatre Scholar, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Currently enrolled in the school and is a member in good standing with the campus theatre department or similar program.
- Has actively participated in theatrical activities/programs during that school year.
- Has earned a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or its local equivalent for all academic coursework, as determined upon completion of tenth grade or any official grading period thereafter. Students with a 3.5 cumulative GPA become Vice President's List Scholars, and students with a 4.0 GPA are awarded the President's List Scholar distinction.
- Has fulfilled any additional local criteria required by the theatre program or similar campus requirements.
- Exhibits behavior and good moral character, which brings honor to the program, school, and community.
- The Texas Theatre Scholar form is available from December 1, 2023, to February 1, 2024.

To honor our Texas Theatre Scholars, the student shall:

1. Complete the Scholars Forms and upload the required documentation.
2. Please use the checklist provided on the website to help ensure all required documents are submitted. (See Checklist Icon)
3. This is a free event! No funds are needed to participate.

Details

Nominations must be submitted by the student from **December 1 - February 1.** Before the deadline of February 1, students must not only enter their desire to be recognized as a Texas Theatre Scholar but also submit a verification of GPA form ([LINK](#)) signed by the school counselor or principal. A committee will review applicants' submissions before awarding Scholar status. **Recipients will be notified by email after February 1, 2024,** and awarded the distinction of Texas Theatre Scholar.

Awards:

- Texas Thespians Scholar digital certificate
- Press Release for campus/district use
- Letter to campus principal and district superintendent

Please note this is an award, not a scholarship, or other offer of monetary value.

<https://www.texasthespians.org/scholars.html>

DemocracyWorks

Grapevine

Winner 2023

By Lily Meyer

How have your theatre education experiences helped prepare you to actively participate in our democracy?

Our democracy requires tact and patience in order to develop and survive as a worthwhile member of society. This, I have found, is quite similar to how a theatre company operates. Seeing as I have six years of involvement in theatre productions and companies, the experiences I have gathered throughout my time in them have proven worthwhile in my preparation for entering the world as an independent and stable citizen. Utilizing tact and rationalization, electing those with level heads and resolve, and possessing the courage to expand on the skills I have learned all contribute to the member of society that I am and one day hope to be.



Theatre is not an entity to be taken lightly. The stress, frustrations, and irritations that come with performing and participating in a constantly evolving and expanding art form can be harsh if you are not accustomed to it. Even though the environment can be tough, it is also incredibly challenging and provides a catalyst from which you can excel in ways unknown to even yourself. That being said, however, those challenges come with significant consequences. I have been focused on technical theatre throughout my involvement with the art, and I have learned throughout that time that caution and restraint are the only ways to approach serious and oftentimes potentially dangerous situations; for example: there have been many times when the people in my company made rash or unwise decisions, myself included, which ultimately led to the downfall of a project or a negative outcome within the production. These setbacks and failures only serve to better your understanding of the processes needed to approach situations responsibly and intelligently, and to do so safely and with the adequate caution required.



Lily Meyer is a Senior at Lamar Consolidated High School and a member of Mustang Playhouse Theatre Company, Troupe 2806.

I am a perfectionist. As such, things such as compromise, restraint, and a lack of control can be incredibly difficult for me. Theatre forces you into an environment catered to those who excel where I tend to fail. Due to this, the advocacy for unheard voices within a theatre company is extremely important to me. Understanding how to elect officers who will advocate for your concerns and have the resolve to maintain the promises they presented whilst campaigning is one of the most useful skills you can gain while being part of a theatre company. You learn whom you can rely on, observe their resolve and follow through, and have a hands-on example of noticing a change in a person when confronted with the responsibilities handed to them. This translates incredibly well to the workplace and wider society as you can see how people fit for the positions they want strive to get there and tackle the requirements needed to earn their place. These ideals have also allowed me to grow, bettering my interactive and social skills, and establishing a basis for compromise and collaboration.

Participating in a theatre company requires cooperation just as much as anything in life does, and when it comes to working with others to execute a specific vision, the ability to communicate what is needed and how to ultimately achieve that goal on a smaller scale provides so much support towards proper communication skills and interpersonal interactions later in life. Theatre companies place you amidst peers who are just as hardworking, intelligent, passionate, and inventive as yourself, and learning how to combine those talents and abilities into a cohesive product as a team is a wonderful exercise in human collaboration and ingenuity.

I have had the honor of working with some of the most astounding people I have ever known, and I believe that their support and hard work have changed the way I exist in the world and around others to the benefit of everything I do.

Theatre is not an easy environment to exist in, and neither is society. But, given the grace of outstanding people, a willing work ethic, and an open-minded perspective, growth, maturity, and understanding blossom in the face of adversity and turmoil. My experiences in theatre have contributed more to my understanding of the world than quite a lot else, and I feel prepared to tackle the responsibilities of society as backed by what I have learned through theatre.

“Due to the connection I have with the wonderful artistry in my community, I wish to advocate for it and better inform the general public about the art and beauty that theatre programs can produce; furthermore, by accomplishing this, I hope to bolster the public’s opinion and willingness of participating and supporting their local theatre programs, allowing the students and people in them to contribute to their passions and the great art of theatre.” L.M.



PlayWorks Winners

Grapevine

20
23



A Little More Normal

by RYAN INGRAM

The journey of Lillian, a young, queer, writer, as she experiences the difficulties of writing stories that break the mold. As Lillian faces criticism and disgust throughout her life, we see her lose confidence in the worth of her original ideas. She achieves success, but only by altering her work to be more palatable. However, she eventually finds that perhaps all she needs is the right audience.

The Human Issue

by BELLA REALE

Ciera and Evander are contemplating whether or not they should end human existence. Their job in the scheme of the universe is to oversee humanity, and while the two get into the occasional argument, they've always ended on the same side- Until Ciera insists that the Earth should be wiped clean for the sake of "changing things up". In the liminal space between the world and the universe, Ciera pitches this idea to human-loving Evander through a hypothetical human named Ronald, and when she's finished with her point, Evander constructs Ronald and brings him into the room to give his two cents on humanity. After another argument between Ciera and Evander and an existential crisis from Ronald, Evander snaps his fingers and starts Ronald over... Again and again. Once they've reached their third run with Ronald, Ciera tells Evander to start him over at a darker point in his life. When Ronald comes to, he gives his opinion of humanity which- albeit less cheerful- secures the existence of people on Earth for a good few hundred more years.



Want to read these works?

Visit: texasthespians.org/gen_works

TECH TIPS

BY: MEL EDWARDS

*Foam
Capitals*



Coating Foam:

While there are commercial coats out there, a cheap and easy method is cheesecloth and PVA glue. Pour glue into a small container. Add water to make it more brushable and tint it using a few drops of paint. Brush glue on to foam lay a piece of cheesecloth over it, and brush more glue on it. Let dry.

Why cheesecloth?

Cheesecloth holds the foam together should it encounter a sharp object. Keeping the piece attached gives you a better handle on repairs. The vinyl in the glue helps prevent dents and hardens just making it more durable for transport. Latex paint is thick enough to cover most of the texture and is not noticeable from a distance.

Tips for Success

- Capitals, regardless of the material it's made from, should have ½" gap around the pylon. ½" gives you enough room for wraps and sliding architectural trim under the capital.
- Take multiple pictures with a measuring tape in the frame of your capital. Put these measurements in your contest book just in case a contest manager wants to measure your pieces. It can save time in an already stressful environment.
- Clear Gorilla Glue is best for gluing foam pieces together. ALWAYS use water on the material surface to activate the glue. Keep a spray bottle on hand NEVER add water to the glue bottle itself.
- Pink foam is only available in 2" thickness at Home Depot. Blue foam up to 1" is available at any big box store.
- Search for flexible molding and urethane millwork if you are interested in dressing up your capitals with fancy trim.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND A PDF [CLICK HERE](#)



TEXAS
THESPIANS™

TEACHERS

OF THE MONTH

JANUARY 2024



TEACHER OF THE MONTH

JANUARY 2024



XAVIER FELIX

Troupe 10846



**MONTWOOD
HIGH SCHOOL
EL PASO, TX**

"Mr. Felix has gone above and beyond since becoming a director at Montwood. He is the one who brought the idea of becoming a Thespians troupe as well as an Honor Troupe.

Mr. Felix strives to teach students the necessary skills by helping them in other subjects they may struggle with, like Spanish and Math. He teaches positive competition mindsets and allows our acting students to expand through film, technical design, theatre history, and speech and debate opportunities. Mr. Felix loves theatre and teaching theatre to other passionate students who love theatre. He brings endless opportunities for every student, catering to each individual to make them understand their uniqueness. "

-FROM A STUDENT

TEACHER OF THE MONTH

JANUARY 2024



SARIEA HANEY

Troupe 10044



**ROCK HILL
HIGH SCHOOL
FRISCO, TX**

"Mrs. Haney inspires me every day to be the best version of myself. She pushes me to work hard and challenges me in ways no one else has. A specific, impactful memory was a letter Mrs. Haney wrote me during my first year in UIL OAP. In her letter, she acknowledged that she could see how far I had come in theatre over the past few months and admired my ability to balance multiple extracurriculars. At this time in my life, I was struggling personally, so to get a letter like that meant a lot to me. It showed me that she saw the effort I was putting in and made me feel like what I was doing was worth it. Mrs. Haney makes people feel seen."

-FROM A STUDENT



THESPIAN

OF THE MONTH

JANUARY 2024



THESPIAN OF THE MONTH

January 2024



JULIA ELLISOR

Troupe 3352



"Julia is a strong leader in our theatre department. Our first meeting was when she was in 8th grade. She introduced herself and made me aware that one day, she would be our troupe President; 4 years later, she did just that. Julia puts everyone above herself as a leader. She listens to everyone's wants and needs and comes to me to work on solutions to problems within the department. She is such a positive influence on all she meets. "

-FROM DIRECTOR

**CLEAR CREEK
HIGH SCHOOL
LEAGUE CITY, TX**

One-Act Play

FEBRUARY 10, 2024

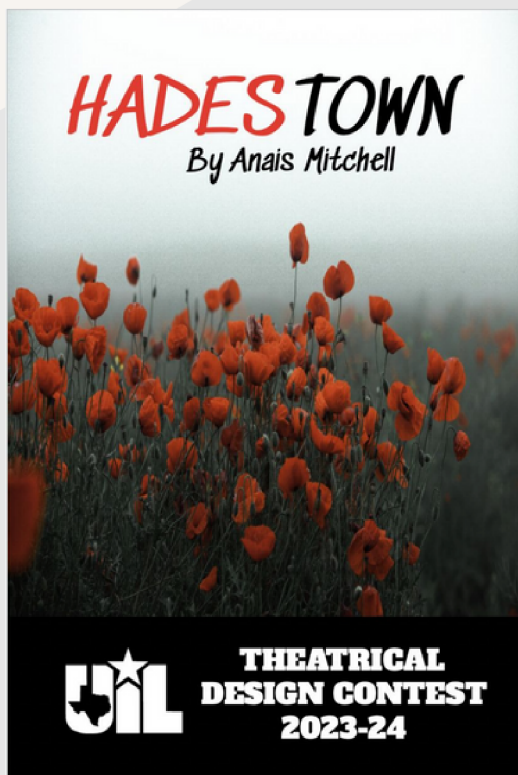
DEADLINE FOR REGISTERING YOUR PLAY
TITLE IN THE UIL ONLINE ENTRY SYSTEM

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YOUR FIRST CONTEST**

DEADLINE FOR CONTESTANT ENTRY, PLAY
AND SET INFORMATION AND ADDITIONAL
DIRECTORS TO BE ENTERED VIA THE UIL
ONLINE ENTRY SYSTEM

<https://www.uil texas.org/theatre/high-school-one-act>

Theatrical Design



**SUBMISSION PORTAL
OPENS:**

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

FEBRUARY 17, 11:59 PM

Submission Template

Select the icon to access the digital
submission guide

**CALL FOR ADJUDICATORS!
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HELPING
ADJUDICATE THE CONTEST, PLEASE CONTACT**

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RIGGING

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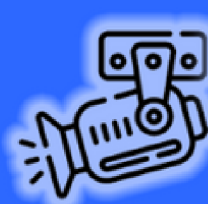
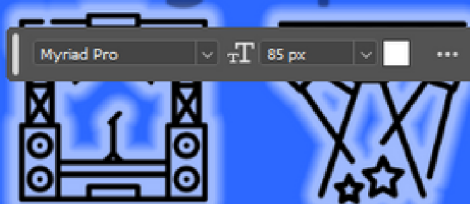
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Carla.Schumann@texasthespians.org

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