

# Theatre students at KCACTF 2016

Hello everyone! I wanted to update you on the fantastic news that came out of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) this 2016 season!

For those of you who don't know, KCACTF is a yearly festival Edgewood College Theatre participates in every January. Twelve lucky students are chosen from our department each year to represent Edgewood College at a regional theatre conference that competes against Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin Colleges. Through state, regional, and national festivals, KCACTF participants celebrate the creative process, see one another's work, and share experiences and insights within the community of theater artists. The KCACTF honors excellence of overall production and offers student artist's individual recognition through awards and scholarships in playwriting, acting, criticism, directing, and design.

In January of each year, our regional festival showcases the finest of each region's entered productions and offers a variety of activities, including workshops, symposia, and regional-level award programs. Since its inception, KCACTF has given more than 400,000 college theater students the opportunity to improve their dramatic skills, have the work critiqued and receive national recognition for excellence. More than 16 million theatergoers have attended approximately 10,000 festival productions nationwide.

Last year Stacey Garbarski won the *Irene Ryan Dramatist Guild Award for Excellence in a Performance from a New Play or Musical*; which marked the first time an Edgewood College student has been recognized with such an honor. This year Edgewood College sent twelve deserving students to the festival to compete and learn with 1,500 other theatre students. Leigha Sander, Stacey Garbarski, Shelly Sarauer, Clarice Lafayette, and Sara Wojtak competed in the nationally recognized Irene Ryan Acting Competition. These five women rehearsed for months on their scenes and monologue work. Although they didn't place this year, I am extremely proud of their work. Emily Swanson was cast in a New Play Festival at KCACTF. Swanson beat out 100 other girls for the part and gave a captivating performance. BJ Ford competed in the tech olympics where he applied the skills he learned in the classroom to the challenges at festival. Tessa Lake did hand drawings on a regional props poster. And finally, Mark Kennedy swept the competition by winning two prestigious awards for his work on WOODS OF WEAVER specialty props.



Mark Kennedy will represent Edgewood College as an intern with The Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas on an all-expense paid trip. Mark's work on WOODS OF WEAVER was detailed from the beginning. His designs on Weaver started in spring of 2015 and in fall of 2015 we went forward with our plans to create three specialized props for the production. Mark spent numerous hours perfecting his masterpieces and then went on to place the same care in his presentation for KCACTF.

#### **Awards won:**

- *Society of Properties Artisan Managers 2016 Award for Craft Excellence at ACTF Region III*
- *The Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas Award - 1-week internship in Las Vegas, room, and housing covered*

Chris Dunham and I have spent hours preparing our students for this year's festival. I served as the festival group organizer, acting coach, and presentation coach. Chris Dunham was our tech expert and Mark's mentor for the build of the props.

- Audrey Lauren Wax