

Regional theater competition nets awards, propels MCC student careers

By **mynews** - March 2, 2017



Dakota Erickson will represent Mesa Community College at the Region VIII Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival National Conference in April. (Courtesy of MCC)

Mesa Community College was host to over 2,000 attendees at this year's **Region VIII Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF)**, Feb. 14-18.

More than 100 MCC theater and film arts and music students competed alongside 1,300 additional participants from Region VIII colleges.

The festival recognized and celebrated the finest and most diverse work produced by university and college theater programs in KCACTF Region VIII states: Arizona, Central and Southern California, Hawaii, Southern Nevada and Utah. A record 71 colleges and universities participated in this year's festival,

eight competing for the first time.

Dakota Erickson won the sound design competition for his design for "Good 'N' Plenty," and will represent MCC at the KCACTF National Conference in Washington, D.C. in April.

Two MCC theater students placed second in Allied Crafts for their work on MCC's production of "All in the Timing," **Dolores Mendoza** for her props design and set dressings and **Angela Salazar** for set design. Salazar was one of 20 selected for a one-on-one interview with the stage manager judge for her work on MCC's production of "Good 'N' Plenty."

Raijene Ayme Rodriguez, Erickson and **Andrew Blahak** performed in the Devised Theatre Performance.

The talent of MCC Theatre and Film Arts Department students was acknowledged with an invitation to perform a scene from the MCC fall 2016 production of "Good 'N' Plenty" during the festival's Evening of Invited Scenes.

In addition, during the festival actors from the MCC theater and music programs auditioned for acting conservatories and professional theater companies.

Two MCC teams — **Mendoza and Kamesha Starkey**; and **Diane Grief and Kinsey Poetter** — were semi-finalists in the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship Competition.

MCC students also received recognition in several Musical Theatre Initiative Cabaret categories:

- Singers: **Rio Chavez, Katie Hudnall, Brianna McClure** and **Mario Yniguez**.
- Dancers: **Danielle Grief, Katie Hudnall, Josh Jensen, Brianna McClure** and **Rachel Stilchen**.
- Official Festival Accompanist: **Jenn Crandall, MCC staff**.

MCC's "All in the Timing" set design students **Laurence Lilagan, Salazar** and **Mendoza** won the Don Childs Memorial Scholarship Award for demonstrated collaboration and exceptional talent in theater design. Each received a scholarship to the Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas.

MCC Performing Arts coordinators Christopher Tubilewicz and Alex Keen coordinated the 240 events during the five-day event, which was hosted primarily in the college's two major performance facilities — the MCC Theatre and the Performing Arts Center — and the college's state-of-the-art recording studio.

Cirque do Soleil conducted 43 technical and design theater workshops in lighting, sound, makeup, costuming, projection, rigging, automation and stage management during the festival.

Competing MCC students are coached by college faculty and staff who specialize in their field: Kevin Dressler, performance faculty; Kara Thomson, scenic design faculty; Adriana Diaz, costume design faculty; Chris Tubilewicz, technical director/production manager; Stephanie Salem, assistant technical director/scene shop supervisor; Jeff Parulski, lighting and sound supervisor; Cathy Hauan, music faculty; Jennifer Crandall, accompanist; and Alex Keen, technical director/production manager.

The community is invited to view the work of these inspiring artists and others at upcoming performances on campus this spring. Visit mesacc.edu/arts to find a performance or event best suiting your passions, interests and schedule.

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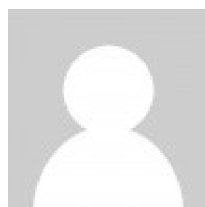
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