



Helmerich School of Drama at OU Receives Regional Awards

NORMAN— Students from the Peggy Dow Helmerich School of Drama at the University of Oklahoma won numerous top honors at the recent Region 6 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in San Angelo, Texas.

Drama students received top honors in the Irene Ryan Acting competition; Design, Technology and Management; Dramaturgy; and Playwriting competitions. Several awards include special invitations to compete or train at the national festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in April. This year Emily Burke, Calley Luman and David Ball will be headed to nationals.



Pictured left to right: David Ball, Professor Alissa Mortimer, Director Tom Huston Orr, Calley Luman, Professor Christopher Sadler and Emily Burke

The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) is a national organization that exists to celebrate the educational and creative process of university and college theatre. The center promotes professional standards and provides students and faculty with opportunities to bridge the academic and professional worlds. It also honors achievements in diversity and excellence and encourages experiences in all areas of theatre.

Competing against 172 teams from across the region, Helmerich School of Drama students received top acting awards. Calley Luman with her partner David Ball won the top honors in the festival with the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship competition, which provide recognition, honor and financial assistance to outstanding student performers. Kylie Anderson won the Irene Ryan National Finalist runner-up award; Luman also won the Classical Acting Award of Excellence; Tommy Stuart received the Vocal Excellence Award; Gabrielle Reyes won the Best Irene Ryan Partner in the preliminary round; and Christine Mirzayan received the Lee Hicks Award for Best Partner in the final round of competition.

In the area of Design, Technology and Management, OU Drama students won several top awards: Emily Burke, National Stage Management Fellowship, which includes an invitation to the Kennedy Center; Elise Christiansen, SPAM Award for Excellence in Properties Design for *The Trojan Women*; Hannah Zara Simon, Student Dramaturgy Runner-up for *The Laramie Project*; Shannon Elise Davis, Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design for *Arcadia*; Matthew Wilhelm and Dylan Lackey, Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas Award for Excellence in Technology and Design; and Elise Christiansen, Allied Design and Technology Award, which comes with a trip to United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT).

For the third year, Helmerich School of Drama entered in the Playwriting category. Tayler Daniels and David Lindley, Student Directing Initiative Finalists; Michael Brigance, Commendation for his Invited Play Reading (vote); and Dylan Lackey, Excellence in Scenic Technology. Receiving recognition for their 10 Minute Plays are Logan Sloan for *Five, Six, Seven, Eight* and Kaytie Rivkin for *Ronnie and Becca*.

“With the support of OU President David L. Boren, Regent A. Max Weitzenhoffer, and Dean Mary Margaret Holt, the Helmerich School of Drama continues to enjoy an unprecedented era of excellence within the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival,” said Tom Huston Orr, School of Drama director. “Our students and faculty are

raising the bar each year for our regional competition; the Sooner legacy of excellence is well established."

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact the Helmerich School of Drama office at (405) 325-4021.