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THESPIANS™

AN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION AFFILIATE

*January & February, 2020*

# NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!



*Welcome to the new year!*

Welcome back to our monthly newsletter, Iowa Thespians! For this issue, our new 2020 STO are here to share some tips and tricks to start off your year right!

# Planning ahead...

*New year, new you!* Well... maybe not totally new, but that's alright. Making small goals is essential to making long term improvement. How can you make realistic goals this year for you and your troupe? Good goals are attainable, but not too easy to pull off. They take work, but are not impossible. Being specific about your goals is also important because it keeps you working towards a strict, pointed end product. Are your goals SMART?

Make goals for yourself and your troupe. Maybe it has always been a goal of yours to audition for a show outside of your school, do the sound design for your school's musical, or get your grades up for the next semester. Start with small goals in order to make bigger strides in the future. Think about ways that your troupe can expand and get better. Maybe your troupe could have monthly bonding events or you want more students from your school to join theatre! Speak to your troupe director about your ideas before moving forward.

Last year, if you attended the 2019 Iowa Leadership Day, you had the opportunity to learn about SMART goals. Use this acronym to decide if your goals are specific and attainable:

**S**pecific - Is it clear what you are trying to achieve?

**M**easurable - Can you see the impact of your goal?

**A**chievable - Is this goal realistic?

**R**elevant - Does this goal actually seem to be worthwhile?

**T**ime-bound - How much time will you allow yourself to complete this goal?

I hope that this information was helpful to you! Happy goal-making, and please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions at all!

-Erica Heiselman, STO Secretary

# It's always audition season...

*Advice for awesome auditions!* Have you ever considered auditioning for a community theatre show? Maybe you want to expand your resume, have something to do over the summer, or you're just obsessed with performing! If any of these apply to you, you should look into auditioning for community theatre productions. If you're new to community theatre, this process may seem very intimidating, but these tips and tricks may help you out!

- 1) Prepare a resume: Make a resume containing your contact information, height, eye color, hair color, and vocal range. Be sure to list any shows you've been a part of (including the role and production center). At the bottom list any dance experience, vocal lessons, acting classes, and special skills you have.
- 2) Bring a headshot: A headshot is a great way to make sure the casting directors remember you well. Use a current photo of you from the bust up with good lighting and a plain background.
- 3) Dress well: Wear a casual but nice outfit. Make sure it is something you can dance or move in. If you have a specific character you are auditioning for, do not come "in costume", but rather, try to match that character's aesthetic. The most important thing is that you wear something that makes you feel confident and like yourself.
- 4) Familiarize yourself with the show: Do not audition for a show that you know nothing about. Make sure to read the script or a summary of the script if you do not have access to the actual script. Familiarize yourself with the characters and be sure you know how to pronounce each of their names. In an audition for *The Music Man*, I was asked to read for Marian. On my side, I was supposed to say "Amaryllis", but I didn't know how to pronounce it, so I had to ask the director how. Yikes. I learned to always do my research because of that experience!
- 5) Exude confidence: Walk into the room with a smile on your face. This shows the casting directors that you want to be there, and that you would be pleasurable to work with. Give yourself a few seconds to "get set" before you introduce yourself and give your audition. Say "thank you" with a smile as you exit the room.

Remember that you have nothing to lose and everything to gain by this experience. You rock, thespians! Keep lighting up the stage and the world! Break a leg in all of your auditions!

-Madeline Murphy, STO Special Projects

# Taking advantage of the opportunities available

*Coming from a school with a large theatre department,* I have had many opportunities on and off stage. Up until this year, I had not taken advantage of these opportunities. Many schools are involved in Speech Competition, Show Choir, a Musical, a Play, etc. I have always stuck to the usual, performing. Whether or not I am the smallest ensemble role or a lead, I wanted to be onstage. After discovering the different technical elements that go into a show, I realized how much effort goes into a production. The construction and painting of a set, the lighting and sound design, the hunt for costumes and props, and the publicity it takes to put on a show is absolutely miraculous. Students should take advantage of these different opportunities to expand their horizons and discover what else is out there besides what they are used to doing. So find something new and don't be afraid of what the outcome will be, because even if you fail, it is the experience you will get from it.

Along with finding a new element of theatre such as a new crew, it is also crucial to look at your position in a production. Rather than sticking to a stage manager, maybe try a new position such as a follow spot operator or even auditioning to be in the show. Again, whatever opportunities your troupe has offer, both on and off stage, are there for a reason. They are there for you to grow as an artist, to expand your knowledge in the auditorium, or even to try something new (knowing you might not succeed). Take these leaps of faith because you never know if it will turn out to be where you belong in a performance.

In honor of Theatre in our Schools month, get more involved and take advantage of these new opportunities. This month dedicated to theatre, was intended to develop more skills such as problem solving, creativity, and confidence. By engaging in something new, you will gain problem solving skills because it is more than likely you don't know what you are doing so you will have to struggle for a bit. You will also be more creative because it is a whole new outlook on theatre. Finally, you will be more confident in the knowledge you have in all aspects. So, try something new because your school has the opportunities it does for you! Happy Theatre in our Schools Month!

-Maria Markus, STO Junior Thespians

# Finding time between activities

*Hello Iowa Thespians, and welcome to February!* This month, I am going to be writing my newsletter about managing time between activities. Between school, show choir, the musical/play, and more, it is hard trying to manage everything. Sometimes the time just slips away and before you realize that you got nothing done. Personally, I get the most stressed about finding time for homework, because no matter what, school comes first. If you don't have your grades in check, you cannot participate in all of the extracurriculars you love! So, my first priority when I sit down to work is to get all of my homework done, and having a planner is super helpful! I know exactly what I should be doing for each class, and I can check things off as I go. I love listening to music as I work, but music can get distracting, so I would recommend finding a podcast to play in the background. After I get all of my homework done, I'll take a break (depending on what time it is) to go on my phone, watch videos, go talk to my mom, etc. before I move onto STO things, memorizing lines/songs, or updating my calendar with rehearsals.

The most difficult aspect is finding the time between activities! On the nights that I have late night rehearsals, or work, I use every chance I get in school to do my homework. If you have a study hall period, or any sort of break in a class, instead of going on your phone, knock out an assignment! Some may take longer than others but having a start on it will decrease the stress of getting it done later.

Also, ask the people you trust for help! Your teachers, counselors, and school officials are here to help you! If you do not have a trusted adult at school, go to family members! The biggest help of all when it comes to feeling overwhelmed with work is knowing that you have people to help you.

-Hannah Wilson, STO Membership

## *How to Publicize For Your Troupe!*

You've got the show ready. Every line is memorized, every light cue perfected, costumes tailored, and direction given. The accumulation of months of hard work has brought you to this point, but without promotion what have you got? Publicity is one of the most crucial roles in theater. I'm going to give you some tricks and tips to successfully promote your troupe's events, and shows.

- 1) Put together a publicity crew and leadership team. Many of you already have publicity crews for your shows,, but it is crucially important to have roles specifically dedicated to publicity. Additionally, it may be helpful to establish an outreach or communications committee within your troupe. This will make it easier to organize your publicity and collaborate with others and promote your events .
- 2) Establish a diversified social media presence. At my school, one of the primary jobs of our communications committee is to run our troupe’s social media platforms. In the advanced technological age, it is important to utilize the tools that social media provides. Social media is the easiest and quickest way to reach the most amount of people. It is important to be active on all of the major social media platforms including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Snapchat. This will ensure you will reach different desired demographics including students, parents, community members, senior citizens, etc.
- 3) Traditional media. While social media is crucially important, that doesn’t mean traditional media methods are not. Make sure to talk to your local newspaper, and give them an appealing description of your shows and events as well as a great aesthetically pleasing picture. You could also reach out to your local radio station and try to schedule an on-air performance, interview, or advertisement.
- 4) Online Ticket Sales. Selling tickets online is very important, and something that many schools do not do. When promoting on social media, it is so much easier for people to just click on a link to buy tickets. There are many ways you could sell tickets online whether it be creating your own website, going through a third-party company, or making a google form, but it is surely an easy and accessible way to sell tickets.
- 5) Get into the community. Make sure to get into your community when advertising. When putting posters up, make sure to cover as much ground as possible, it’s important to go around town to local businesses, and community spaces. Getting out into your community could be anything from your troupe walking in a local parade, putting on a food drive, cleaning up a highway, or reading to kids at the library. When you give to support other community activities, more and more people are likely to support you.
- 6) Partner with other school clubs. Just as with the last one, when you partner and support other activities, clubs, and organizations within your school, it promotes fellowship and culture of supporting one another. For example, for our fall play, we asked the Family Consumer Science department to make cookies, and other goodies to sell at our show. This was a successful collaboration and a great fundraiser for both of our respective programs.
- 7) Finally, be your own advertisement. Everyone who is involved in your shows and events has an obligation to be a promoter for your troupe. This means talking to

friends, family, members, and neighbors. It could also mean creating merchandise so that the support of your theater program can be your walking promotions.

All in all, it is extremely important to market your shows and get people to your fundraisers and events. I hope you learned something new and helpful. Good Luck, and happy publicizing!!

Barrett Edwards, Communications STO

*Upcoming Shows...* Come see Thespian productions this month from all across Iowa!

<b>March 1</b>	Red Oak HS	2 PM	Fame the Musical
<b>March 5</b>	Grinnell HS	7 PM	The Addams Family
<b>March 6</b>	Davenport Assumption HS	7 PM	Freaky Friday
	Grinnell HS	7 PM	The Addams Family
	Knoxville HS	7 PM	TBA
	Nevada HS	7 PM	OKLAHOMA!
	Oskaloosa HS	7 PM	James and the Giant Peach
<b>March 7</b>	Davenport Assumption HS	7 PM	Freaky Friday
	Grinnell HS	7 PM	The Addams Family
	Knoxville HS	7 PM	TBA
	Nevada HS	7 PM	OKLAHOMA!
	Oskaloosa HS		James and the Giant Peach
<b>March 8</b>	Davenport Assumption HS	2 PM	Freaky Friday
	Knoxville HS	2 PM	TBA
	Nevada HS	1:30 PM	OKLAHOMA!
<b>March 13</b>	Atlantic HS	7:30 PM	TBA
	Union HS (La Porte City)	7 PM	TBA
<b>March 14</b>	Atlantic HS	7 PM	TBA
	Union HS (La Porte City)	7 PM	TBA
<b>March 15</b>	Atlantic HS	1 PM	TBA
<b>March 27</b>	Central Community School (Elkader)	7:30 PM	TBA
	Hudson HS	7 PM	TBA

	North Scott HS	7 PM	Thoroughly Modern Millie
	West Central Valley HS	7 PM	TBA
<b>March 28</b>	Central Community School (Elkader)	7:30 PM	TBA
	Exira-EHK HS (Elk Horn)	7 PM	TBA
	Hudson HS	7 PM	TBA
	North Scott HS	7 PM	Thoroughly Modern Millie
	West Central Valley HS	7 PM	TBA
<b>March 29</b>	Central Community School (Elkader)	2 PM	TBA
	Exira-EHK HS (Elk Horn)	2 PM	TBA
	Hudson HS	2 PM	TBA
	North Scott HS	2 PM	Thoroughly Modern Millie

*The significance of theatre* and all of the performing arts in our schools is massive! It is vital for students to have the opportunity to express themselves through the fine arts. Activities that teach creativity are important to students to balance out school life. As for theatre, there are so many aspects to be involved in. Theater includes performing on stage, moving sets, doing make up, directing technical aspects of a show, designing, and so much more.

There are countless other reasons to get involved in or to start a theatre program in a school. One of these is that students learn life skills through theatre! Self-confidence, organization, problem solving, communication skills, and trust are just a few skills that are taught through theatre. These skills are crucial in the “real world” and are just as important as learning about cells or parabolas. Many of the skills mentioned are needed throughout other aspects of school life as well.

Not only are students opened up to countless skills, but it also gives students the opportunity to have a creative outlet. Creative expression can grow confidence, help people find themselves, and help articulate and express their feelings. Lastly, numerous studies show that theatre education improves academic performance. Drama students outperform other students in standardized tests, attendance, reading, etc.

Personally, I would not be where I am today if I hadn’t joined theatre (I wouldn’t be writing this as an STO)! Theatre has been a crucial part of my life since I began taking part in it when I was nine years old. I was always the shy kid, but these countless experiences that I have taken part in through theatre have opened me up, helped me make friends, created many opportunities, and allowed me to share my passion with others! Theatre has been an

enormous creative outlet and has helped me blossom from a quiet kid to an outgoing person. I have seen first-hand how theatre can impact lives, including my own! it is crucial in schools and should be viewed

Interested in learning more about the importance of theatre in our schools? Here are a few websites that go more into depth of the significance that theatre plays on students' lives:

- [American Alliance for Theatre & Education](#)
- [Educational Theatre Foundation](#)
- [The Scots College](#)
- [Rhodes School](#)

-Luis Avalos, STO Advocacy

*Hello Iowa Thespians!* Your State Thesopian Officers are delighted to welcome you back to the monthly newsletter with the January/February issue. We have so many exciting things going on with the Iowa Thesopian Chapter Board, and are thrilled to share them with you!

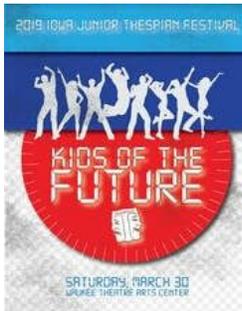


In January, the STO met in Coralville to discuss their goals for the coming year and how to best support you, the Iowa Thespians! They got a LOT accomplished and we are very excited to share what we have in store for you later on this year. In the weeks following, we had many video conference calls, sharing our thoughts and opening up to discussion.

If you are interested in being a State Thespian Officer for 2021, please visit:  
<http://www.iowathespians.org/studentboard.html>

-Casey Scott, STO Chair

*Tell us about your shows!* We have a new form where anyone can send us information and posters for their troupe's productions. Find it at <https://tinyurl.com/iashowform> or posted to our Twitter and Instagram. Of course, you can still Direct Message us on social media about your shows or for any other information you need!



*Reminder!* Junior Thespian Festival Will take place at Waukee Theatre Arts Center on March 28th! Be there or be square...

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