

AU theater students advance to national finals in design competition

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For the second year in a row, Alfred University students won top awards at the regional Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) competition, held earlier this month at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. Next, they will advance to the national competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, in April. Alfred University's theater department, part of its Division of Performing Arts, was represented at the festival by 11 design/technical and acting students and three faculty members. Senior theater major Jason Shattuck of West Point, NY, won the Barbizon Award for theatrical design excellence in costumes for his design work for "The House of Blue Leaves" by John Guare, AU Theater Department's first fall production. His award was the sole regional honor given in that category. Junior Joshua First of Allegany, NY, also a theater major, won the Mehron Makeup Award for theatrical design excellence for his work on the AU production of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, the second production of the fall semester. It was also the sole regional award presented in that category. Senior Earl T. Stephens of Conesus, NY, received an honorable mention for scenic design for "The House of Blue Leaves." Stephens was one of AU's two Barbizon Award winners last year. "This is an unprecedented accomplishment by Alfred University students, indeed a rare occurrence anywhere in the country," said Stephen Crosby, professor of theater and chair of the Performing Arts Division. He said the "excellent tutelage" of Prof. Michael Dempsey contributed to the students' success. Crosby noted that AU will receive national recognition for its students' accomplishments in publications that are sent to colleges and universities throughout the country. "We had one of the largest student delegations of design and technical students among all the colleges and universities entered in the regional competition," said Crosby. "That is particularly remarkable considering our relative small size" among schools in the region that includes New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware and Washington, DC. Crosby himself had the honor of being one of two guest artists at the festival invited to perform a public reading of the regional Playwriting Award winner, "The Keys to Graceland" by Alice Scarpinato. Joining him for that performance was guest artist Dawn Wells, who played Mary Ann on the television show, "Gilligan's Island." The purpose of the Barbizon Awards for Theatrical Design Excellence is to give outstanding student designers national recognition and the opportunity to exhibit their work at the Kennedy Center. Designs are appraised on the basis of quality, effectiveness, originality, and rendering techniques. Designs may be selected for the regional festival regardless of whether the production itself is selected for the regional festival. Regional design respondents select one winner in set design, one winner in costume design, and one winner in lighting design from the regional design entries. Designs of the eight regional finalists in each category will be on display during the KCACTF national festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C., April, 2002. A national winner in set design, a national winner in costume design, a national winner in lighting design, and a national winner in make-up design will be selected from regional finalists during the national festival. National winners will receive an honorarium of \$500 and an all-expenses paid trip to New York City for seven days, where they will visit the studios of distinguished designers and the offices of Barbizon Inc., a premier theatrical supply house specializing in advanced lighting for professionals. ##### Note: Jason L. Shattuck is a graduate of James I. O'Neill High School. He is a son of Lawrence and Jill Shattuck of Bowman Loop, West Point, NY. Joshua First is a graduate of Allegany-Limestone Central School. His mother is Lisa Reynolds of East Union Street, Allegany, NY. Earl T. Stephens, son of Briant and Edna Stephens of East Swamp Road, Conesus, is a graduate of Livonia High School.