

Southland College Prep Junior in August Wilson Monologue National Competition on Broadway

Richton Park, IL- May 7, 2013-- Morgan Brown, a Southland College Prep Charter High School junior from Matteson, Illinois, performed on Broadway this weekend.

Brown, 16, of Matteson, Illinois, represented the Chicago metro area in the national finals of the Fifth Annual August Wilson Monologue competition held at the August Wilson Theatre in New York City.

Students from Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Pittsburgh and Seattle performed short monologues of their choosing from one of ten plays written by the late, legendary American playwright in Wilson's namesake theatre on Broadway.

"The Annual August Wilson Monologue Competition exposes a new generation of creative minds to the life's work and artistic legacy of this seminal American playwright," said Cheryl Frazier, Southland College Prep's Director of Speech and Theatre, who accompanied Brown to the competition together with her student's parents and a delegation of friends and relatives.

"This competition, which gives students an opportunity to learn about playwright August Wilson, also offers them a chance to share his message that African- American history is American history," explained Frazier.

"Morgan Brown, her teacher Cheryl Frazier and other members of the Speech and Theatre team, are to be congratulated. Competing on Broadway in a national tournament is a significant accomplishment for Southland, a three-year-old college prep public charter high school where the performing arts are held in high regard," said Dr. Blondean Davis, Southland's CEO.

The late August Wilson earned the [Pulitzer Prize](#) for Drama twice and several of his productions received the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for best play. The American playwright is recognized for his large body of work that depicts the comic and tragic aspects of African-American experience in the 20th century.

Ten of Wilson's plays, referred to as his "Century Cycle," are set in a different decade of the 20th century and aim to sketch the Black experience during those years and raise consciousness through theater

During a whirlwind weekend, Brown and the other August Wilson National Monologue finalists from across the U.S. had an opportunity to interact with well-known Wilsonian veterans and special musical guests who performed, served as judges or were guests. Among this year's celebrities who served as a judge was Pauletta Washington, Denzel Washington's wife.

Brown, together with her fellow finalists attended a Broadway show, "Motown the Musical," and had the opportunity to work closely with two of Wilson's closest collaborators: Director Kenny Leon and dramaturg Todd Kreidler and explore popular Manhattan attractions before making their own Broadway stage debuts.

Earlier this year, Brown, a member of Southland's National Honor Society who aspires to be an attorney, took first place in the Chicago Metro August Wilson Monologue Competition competing in a field of several hundred speech and theatre high school students.

She earned a \$500 prize, a partial scholarship to University of Illinois Chicago and the all- expenses paid opportunity to compete in the national finals on Broadway.

Brown, a graduate of Matteson Elementary School in District 162, together with another Southland College Prep junior, Alexis Newson, earned the new school's first Illinois High School Association (IHSA) championship when they took top honors in the Dramatic Duet Acting performance section. She also qualified to attend the National Forensic League National Tournament in Birmingham Alabama in June.