

SOUTHLAND COLLEGE PREP SHOWCASES ITS IHSA WINNING PERFORMERS



RICHTON PARK, ILL.-May 12, 2014-- Southland College Prep Charter High School's Forensics and Theatre Department staged a special showcase of several of the new public charter high school's Illinois High School Association (IHSA) award winning performances recently in Freedom Hall, Park Forest.

A highlight of the evening was a staging of "The Bluest Eye," by the ten-member Group Interpretation team who brought home the new school's first IHSA trophy by placing 2nd in the State of Illinois in the IHSA finals earlier this spring. Their performance was a dramatic piece drawn from the novel of the same name by [Pulitzer Prize](#) and [Nobel Prize](#) winning author Toni Morrison.

According to Cheryl Frazier, Southland's Director of Forensics and Theatre, Morrison's novel, her first, contains a number of autobiographical elements and is set in Lorain, Ohio, where Morrison was born and lived as a child.

"The story that the Southland Group Interp team performed is told from the perspective of a nine-year-old girl, who as Morrison explains in her afterword in the book, is a statement about the damage internalized racism can do to the most vulnerable member of a community-a young girl."

The ten members of the award winning Group Interpretation team are: Morgan Brown, Janessa Colquitt, Zadok Dean III, Jarrett Exum, Moriah Hackett, Charnnia Jones, Alexis Newson, Nneka Onyeka, Erik Thomas and Aronna Wynne. Student directors were Michelle Sanders and Miya Hackett.

Seven members of the Southland Forensic team were named to the IHSA All-State Group Interpretation cast in recognition of their contribution to the overall performance of the group. They are: Morgan Brown, Janessa Colquitt, Charnnia Jones, Alexis Newson, Nneka Onyeka, Erik Thomas and Aronna Wynne.

The Performance in the Round IHSA Regional first place team staged "In the Red and Brown Water," directed by assistant coaches Lauren Wells and Andrew Malone.

The cast included: Miya Hackett, Moriah Hackett, Charnnia Jones, Janessa Colquitt, Marcell Vanarsdale, Kapri Echols, Jarrett Exum, Zadok Dean II, John Anderson and student director Chyna Sanders.

A third production of the evening was the one-act play, "No Problem," directed by Frazier. Its cast included: Deiarah Wright, William Henderson, Rayven Morrow, Malik Bibbie, Ayunna Moore, Kennedy Coleman, Coretta Franklin, Zadok Dean II, Michelle Sanders, Erik Thomas, Kennedy Furnace and Nneka Onyeka.

Southland College Prep Regional Tournament champions, Deiarah Wright and Rayven Morrow, performed "The Book of Awesome," and Malik Bibbie and Erik Thomas presented "Top Dog/ Under Dog."

Three of Southland College Prep seniors, Morgan Brown, Alexis Newson and Nneka Onyeka, are preparing to compete in the National Forensic Tournament in June for the second consecutive year.

Brown and Newson will perform in Duo Interpretation and Onyeka will compete in the Original Oratory section.

"The recognition that Southland's speech and forensics team has earned for a school that is only three and a half years old is truly remarkable. It's quite impressive that the Southland team placed second in the State in Group Interpretation and was ranked 10th out of 70 schools competing in IHSA statewide," said Dr. Blondean Davis, CEO.

"The passion and dedication of this team for the performing arts is evident and is a fine tribute to their teachers and coaches, Cheryl Frazier, Andrew Malone and Lauren Wells," she added