IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 2, 2019

Ewing High School’s Troupe 4883 Excels at International Thespian Festival!

Ewing High School places priority on promoting student achievement in academics, athletics and the arts, and that was clearly on display at the International Thespian Festival held in Lincoln, Nebraska this past week.

Under the direction of teacher Christina Monaco-Caldwell and Jessica Bohnenberger, EHS students Thomas Steever, Isabel Van Wagner, Caitlyn Rodriguez, Ky’Shawn Tillery-Williams, Samaria Banks, Mackenzie Raywood, Zachary Benedetti, Brianna Roberts traveled to Lincoln and were awarded multiple accolades. The national and prestigious theatre competition offered students a chance to compete for national title honors in musical theatre, as well as audition for colleges, witness main stage productions from all over the country, and attend 2 or more workshops a day.

The following accolades were awarded through the Educational Theatre Association at the International Thespian Festival:

Superior Award - Musical Theatre Solo Category:

★ Isabel Van Wagner performing “Safer” from the musical First Date
★ Zach Benedetti performing “Runaway with Me” from the musical The Unauthorized Biography of Samantha Brown
★ Brianna Roberts performing “Daddy’s Son” from the musical Ragtime

The following EHS juniors collectively received 14 callbacks for Musical Theatre at college auditions:

★ Isabel Van Wagner: College’s include: Chicago College of Performing Arts - Roosevelt University, The New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts, New York Film Academy, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, The Young Americans College of the Performing Arts, The American Musical and Dramatic Academy, American Academy of Dramatic Arts, & Wake Forest University
★ Thomas Steever: College’s include: The Theatre of Acting Arts Conservatory
★ Brianna Roberts: College’s include: Temple University, The American Musical and Dramatic Academy, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Rockford University, Illinois Western University, Loyola University
The following student received a Perfect Superior score and was selected to be a featured performer at the Educational Theatre Association’s National Showcase:

★ Brianna Roberts performing “Daddy’s Son” from the musical Ragtime

“This was a remarkable performance by Brianna as she mesmerized the audience with her interpretation,” Monaco-Caldwell stated. “Out of 386 solo musical theatre performances competing for the National Showcase, Brianna’s solo was among 3 solos selected to be in the National Showcase on Friday, June 28th and Saturday June 29th at the Lied Center in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Finally, Brianna Roberts was cast in a supporting role in the Commission Works production, Dreamland, music and book by Chris Miller, lyrics and book by Nathan Tysen. Students in Dreamland piloted and produced the musical in one week, and culminated the ITF 2019 festival with their performance of the new musical.

“We had a wonderful experience in Nebraska,” Monaco-Caldwell commented. “Our students worked very hard and certainly showcased our outstanding theater program on an international stage.”

“We are very proud of all of our students who participated in this wonderful event,” Principal Ed Chmiel remarked. “Thank you to Ms. Monaco-Caldwell and Ms. Bohnenberger for all their work and efforts. These talented students are wonderful ambassadors of Ewing High School.”