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29 GREATER NEW YORK HIGH SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE THE ROGER REES AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2018

(Thursday, April 12, 2018, New York City). The Broadway Education Alliance is pleased to announce that **The Roger Rees Awards for Excellence in Student Performance** will be held on Saturday, May 19 at Pearl Studios in Manhattan. This program is open to high schools located in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, Staten Island, Long Island, Orange and Rockland Counties, and Westchester. To be eligible, high schools must present an officially licensed production of a Broadway musical during the 2017-2018 academic year. The Roger Rees Awards has accepted 29 schools, whose students will compete for the title of Best Actor and Best Actress. Winners of the Roger Rees Award will represent the Greater New York region at The Broadway League Foundation's Jimmy® Awards (also known as the [National High School Musical Theatre Awards](#)) in June.

For the complete list of high schools participating in the 2018 Roger Rees Awards—[CLICK HERE](#).

Based on the qualifying roles in the shows being produced by the 29 schools, 121 students are currently being adjudicated by teams of professional industry performers and/or educators who are attending each of these high school productions. The top 50 students (25 men and 25 women) who receive the highest scores will be chosen to participate in a day-long performance training and talent showcase that will be held on Saturday, May 19 at Pearl Studios. The [industry professionals](#) who will serve as acting coaches include **Lanene Charters** (*Mamma Mia!*), **Robin Lewis** (*Beauty and the Beast*/Rider University), **Sean Michael McKnight** (*Curtains*/Pace University), and **Cindy Thole** (*Me and My Girl*/Fairleigh Dickenson University and Montclair State University). The music directors include **Matt Cataldi** (NYU Tisch Center for New Musicals), **Nissa Kahle** (*The Great Comet of 1812*), **Stephen Purdy** (*The 25th Annual Putnam Country Spelling Bee*/Marymount Manhattan College), and **Christine Riley** (*A Moment in Time*/Marymount Manhattan College).



Roger Rees

The Roger Rees Awards recognize the importance of theatre arts education, and celebrate the exceptional life and career-long artistic excellence of Broadway's beloved actor/director, Roger Rees. Rees received the Olivier® and Tony® Awards for his performance in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, and Tony nominations for *Indiscretions* and as co-director of *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Throughout his life, he was a committed educator and generous mentor to young artists. From his earliest days as a young actor with the Royal Shakespeare Company when he traveled to schools in the Cotswolds of England, to the master-craftsman courses at Columbia University (adjunct professor), Williams College (Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts, 2006) and Florida State University (Hoffman Chair); from community outreach he began as Artistic Director of the Bristol Old Vic to the Leap-Frog internships he pioneered as Artistic Director of Williamstown Theater Festival, Roger spent countless hours in rehearsals and classrooms coaching aspiring writers, actors and directors on character development, craft, collaboration and the vast cannon of theatrical works to be explored.

Playwright Rick Elice, Rees' partner of over 30 years, and author of "Finding Roger," said, "Rog would have liked this chance to educate and inspire young actors, to offer a guiding hand as so many were offered to him when he too was a kid with a dream." Rees passed away in July 2015 after a year-long battle with brain cancer. He was posthumously inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in November 2015.

The Broadway Education Alliance is the fiscal sponsor for **The Roger Rees Awards for Excellence in Student Performance** which are supported by Disney Theatricals, Camp Broadway LLC, Nancy Nagel Gibbs and many other industry leaders working in/around Broadway.

For more information about the program, visit www.rogerreesawards.com.

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