

W H
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SUTTON FOSTER OVATION AWARDS
RULES AND GUIDELINES

2019-2020

WHARTON CENTER
INSTITUTE FOR
ARTS & CREATIVITY
SUPPORTED BY MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Michigan State University
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ABOUT THE SUTTON FOSTER OVATION AWARDS

Wharton Center Sutton Foster Ovation Awards celebrates the achievements of Michigan high school teachers and students involved in musical theatre.

To participate, schools apply with their fall and/or spring musical. Wharton Center will send a team of expert adjudicators to attend a live performance of your musical. Adjudicators will nominate two individuals for "Best Actor" and "Best Actress" who will be invited to participate in the Ovation Awards on May 16th and 17th, 2020. Additionally, adjudicators' reviews and tabulations determine awards in technical and creative achievement, and Best Musical.

Each school will receive a professional assessment of their show, meant to support the teacher, school, and students in strengthening their production values and continue to grow their theatre program.

On May 16th and 17th, 2020, Wharton Center hosts the Sutton Foster Ovation Awards to recognize the outstanding achievements of high school musical theatre productions and students.

GOALS

1. To recognize, celebrate, honor and encourage excellence in high school students' musical theatre performances in the state of Michigan.
2. To support the work of arts educators through a constructive review process.
3. To highlight the importance of arts education in schools.
4. To foster creativity, confidence and collaboration through the arts.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

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PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

The Sutton Foster Ovation Awards program is open to public and private high schools producing musical theatre in Michigan. To be eligible for participation for the 2019-2020 season, a school should meet the following qualifications:

- High schools must be located within the state of Michigan
- **High school musical theatre productions will take place between June 25th, 2018 and April 26th, 2020.**
- Summer productions are eligible to compete and must follow all of the same guidelines as any other production.
- Musicals must be either considered a qualifying show based on the National standards (see below) or have been successfully appealed in the appeal process.
- If your show has MORE than 2 teachers/alumni in your production, you will NOT be eligible for Best Musical. (All students in Best Actress/Best Actor categories MUST be high school students.) A google form will be sent to you via email asking production related questions that will help our adjudicators properly evaluate your show. You must fill this out within one week of receiving it.

QUALIFYING SHOWS AND ROLES

The National High School Musical Theatre Awards™ has reviewed the professional standards for identifying the definition of an Approved Musical and a Qualifying Role in an Approved Musical for the purposes of our program. These standards serve as a guide to create a minimum standard and criteria for what defines a Qualifying Role in the category of Best Actor / Actress in an amateur production of an Approved Musical.

1. Definition of an Approved Musical

For the purposes of NHSMTA, an Approved Musical is one that:

- Held performances in a major New York City/Broadway theatre, professional regional, or touring theatre outside of New York City prior to being made available for licensing to the regional, amateur, or school theatre /circuit.
- Was originally conceived and produced for a core audience over eight years of age.
- Is officially available for a performance license by a high school from the licensing entity that manages such licenses on behalf of the rights holder for such musical.
- RAP officially licensed from the licensing entity that manages such licenses on behalf of the rights holder for such musical.
- Is the standard or school edition/version; the following editions/versions are not eligible: 101 Collection, Broadway Junior, G2K (Getting to Know Series), Young Performers Edition, and Young@Part. Concert versions are not permitted.

2. Definition of a Qualifying Role

For the purposes of NHSMTA, a Qualifying Role in an Approved Musical is a role in which the character has a name, provides a vehicle for the actor or actress to demonstrate the ability to deliver the exceptional performance of a solo song and the ability to interact with other leading and featured performers in scenes and / or songs.

Unless identified as an "Ensemble Cast Musical," an Approved Musical may have not more than six (6) Qualifying Roles. Such roles do not have to be evenly divided between genders.

For Approved Musicals with both a book and libretto, a Qualifying Role must, at minimum, include:

- At least one solo, featured song
- Appearances in more than one scene with spoken dialogue with other leading or featured performers
- Appearances in both or all acts

For Approved Musicals with a libretto only, a Qualifying Role must, at minimum, include:

- At least one solo, featured song
- At least one song featuring solo lines or dialogue with other leading or featured performers in the same song
- Appearances in both or all acts

3. For the purposes of the NHSMTA program, students are adjudicated in the category corresponding to their gender identification, not the gender of the role that they played. All casting or script change requests for performances in the NHSMTA program must be approved beforehand. The regional awards program must also submit proof of approval from the show's licensing organization.

APPEAL PROCESS

Wharton Center may submit an appeal to the NHSMTA for either a musical or role to be considered an Approved Musical or a Qualifying Role.

UPDATES TO THE LIST OF APPROVED MUSICALS AND QUALIFYING ROLES

Each September, in consultation with the major licensing houses, NHSMTA updates the list of Qualifying Roles and Approved Musical titles made available for high school licensing. However, because appeals are made and approved throughout the year, the list of Qualifying Roles continues to be updated. Please see the most recent list of qualifying roles on the Jimmy Awards Website. <https://www.jimmyawards.com/participation/qualifying-shows-and-roles/>

APPLICATION

To apply, please complete and return the application form, including the registration fee, no later than Monday, January 13th, 2020. We will accept the first 25 qualified applications. When the slots become filled you will be asked if you would like to be put on the waiting list. Applications must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to your production.

Any school has the right to make an archival recording of their live performances in order to be considered for the **Sutton Foster Ovation Awards** in the case that adjudicators are not available to attend. Recorded performances may not be posted on-line, nor shall the recording be sold or shared, in compliance with your licensor.

A Note on Double Casting

If a school double casts one or more roles, the school must select one set of cast members to be adjudicated. Please note on your application which performances have been selected for the adjudication panel. We will not adjudicate multiple students for the same role, unless you submit two applications. Please note this requires double the payment if you would like to have both casts adjudicated and considered for awards. Double casting for our definition means that more than one student plays a single role, in different performances. **Sharing a role in a single performance is not allowed** if the role is an eligible role for Best Actor/Best Actress. Please contact us if you have questions on this.

WAITING LIST

We accept the first 25 qualified applications. After those are filled, there are 10 spots on the waiting list. If you want to participate as part of the waiting list you will fill out an application and pay a reduced fee of \$200. The adjudication process for the waitlist is the same. Two adjudicators will evaluate your show and provide feedback. However, your school will not be eligible for any awards and your students won't participate in the Awards Show weekend. IF there is a school that drops out before the awards show, the first school on the waiting list will be offered the spot. The remainder of the fee would then be paid and your students and show would be eligible for all award categories as well as participating in the Awards show weekend.

FEES

A \$275.00 registration fee per high school production cast is required to participate. Once you submit your registration form and payment, you will receive an invoice as your receipt. Checks should be made payable to Michigan State University. Please send checks to Wharton Center Attn: Ticket Office. Credit card payments are accepted over the phone by calling Randall Fields at 517-884-3130.

AWARDS

The following awards are given out each year.

- Best Actor and Best Actress
 - All expense paid trip to NYC to compete in the Jimmy Awards
 - \$1000.00 cash award
 - Scholarship to Take It From The Top
- Best Featured Actor
- Best Featured Actress
- Best Featured Dancer
- Excellence in Musical Theatre Education - Given to a theatre teacher nominated by a student.
- Best Costume Design
- Best Set Design
- Best Choreography
- Best Direction
- Best Hair and Make-up
- Best Lighting
- Best Musical Direction
- Best Musical

ADJUDICATION

Approximately two weeks before your performance you will be contacted by your adjudicators. Please adhere to the following:

- You will communicate with them in a timely manner
- You will provide 2 complimentary tickets per adjudicator to the performance of their choice
**Note – adjudicators may see different performances*
- You will provide the adjudicators cast list and production credits
- If you have any students that are taking design or creative production roles please let us know. For example if you have a student choreographing, doing set design, etc.
- Once contacted by your adjudicators, you may, at that time, share supplementary information on your production, including the resources available to your school and theatre department, director's notes, the rationale behind artistic choices, and specific areas on which you would like feedback.
- If you have anyone in your cast that is NOT a high school student you **MUST** let us know at least 3 weeks before the performance. This includes students in lower grades, teachers, community members or alumni.

ADJUDICATOR QUALIFICATIONS

Wharton Center selects highly qualified performing arts professionals with backgrounds in music, theatre, dance, design, and related fields to serve as adjudicators. The adjudicators go through mandatory training run by Wharton Center education staff. A list of adjudicators is available at www.whartoncenter.com.

FEEDBACK

Within **four weeks** of the performance, the primary contact will receive two pages of written, detailed feedback on various elements of their high school musical.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Adjudicators will not provide oral critiques following the performance. Adjudicators will not discuss their opinions, evaluations, scores, or feedback with anyone, in any format. Please do not contact adjudicators with questions. Any inquiries should be directed to Wharton Center Institute for Arts & Creativity.

SCORING

In order to designate awards for artistic excellence, adjudicators score high school musical theatre productions on a variety of elements which include:

- Acting
- Overall Production
- Direction
- Musical Direction
- Choreography
- Lighting
- Sets
- Costumes
- Hair/Make-up

IMPORTANT DATES

January 13th, 2020 – Last day to submit an application

Rolling - Best Actor/Best Actress Nominees notified

February 24th, 2020 Materials due from Fall/Summer show nominees

April 20th, 2020 Materials due from Winter/Spring show nominees (unless you have a later performance date)

May 16th and 17th, 2020 Sutton Foster Ovation Awards at Wharton Center

May 20th, 2020 Materials due from winners to send to Nationals

TBD - 2019 National Jimmy Awards in NYC

PUBLICITY

All participating schools are asked to mention their involvement with Wharton Center Sutton Foster Ovation Awards in their show programs/playbills. This will serve as an endorsement of your school's participation in the program. Please use the following in your programs:

Insert High School Name Here is a participant in the 2019-2020 Sutton Foster Ovation Awards at Wharton Center for Performing Arts on the campus of Michigan State University. The 2019 Ovation awards will be held on May 17th, 2020. For more information and tickets please visit www.whartoncenter.com

IF YOU ARE A BEST ACTRESS/BEST ACTOR NOMINEE

The following materials will be due to Wharton Center by February 24th, 2020 from Fall/Summer show nominees or April 20th, 2020 from Winter/Spring show nominees (unless you have a later performance date).

- **Best Actres/Best Actor Nominess Packet Including:**
 - Student Application
 - Student Youth Protocol Paperwork
 - Student Media Release Form
 - Student Headshot (**high resolution jpg file, 8x10 at 300DPI**)
 - Student Theatrical Resume
 - Student Essay (one page, double spaced essay describing his/her experience while participating in his/her musical this year)
 - Student Bio (no more than 200 words, written in complete sentences and in third person format)
 - Teacher Recommendation Form
 - 45 second or 32 Measure Cut from Nominated Musical (must be a solo selection performed by the nominated actor/actress in the nominated musical, sheet music must have piano and vocal lines)
 - Full Song of the Nominee's Choice (must be a solo from another Broadway musical) (sheet music must include piano and vocal lines)
 - Three (3) production photos highlighting the Nominee in his/her nominated high school musical performance.
 - If submitted to nationals, all submissions become the property of NHSMTA and will not be returned
 - All footage and photos may be used during the course of the NHSMTA program, including, but not limited to inclusion in: press releases, marketing information, website, and The Jimmy™ Awards ceremony

NOTE TO SCHOOLS: I understand that if my nominee/s drop out of the program after April 27th, 2020 our school may be disqualified from participating in the 2021 Ovation Awards.

IF YOU ARE A BEST ACTRESS/BEST ACTOR WINNER

- You agree to get any and all requested materials/paperwork to Wharton Center by May 20th, 2020
- You agree to be available to go to NYC for eight days to attend the NHSMTA In June

TICKETS

Tickets to the Sutton Foster Ovation Awards on May 17th can be purchased through the Wharton Center box office. Recipients of creative and production awards will be offered two complimentary tickets to the Ovation Awards.