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## PAAAS Students Win at Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey Competition

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January 21, 2019



*Ilus Large group photo, left to right:(front) Makari Slaughter, Zoe Sylvester, Evelyn Melgar, Kiiyah Gorham, Dana Damacela, Jadriel Beniquez;(2nd row) Juliana Herrera, Dayanara Lopez, Laura Sanabria, Charlene Hills, Elijah Doré; (3rd row) Brianna Richards, Jamal Guye, Danielle McGowan*

**PLAINFIELD, NJ –** Students from Plainfield Academy for the Arts and Advanced Studies, or PAAAS, were winners in four categories at the statewide secondary school

theatre festival and competition sponsored by the Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey (STANJ), in conjunction with the New Jersey's Annual Governor's Awards in Arts Education. The program was held at Montclair State University earlier this month.

Sixteen PAAAS students - 12 enrolled in Theater Studio, and four enrolled in Vocal Music - competed in several categories that included Shakespeare, Drama, and Musical Theatre.

Danielle McGowan won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the **Shakespeare** category with her performance in both Shakespearean sonnet and soliloquy. Jamal Guye won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in **Dramatic Monologues**, Brianna Richards won 4<sup>th</sup> place in **Dramatic Monologues**, and Jadriel Beniquez, Dana Damacela, Elijah Doré, Juliana Herrera, Charlene Hills, Brandon Johnson, Laura Sanabria, along with Guye and McGowan, won 6<sup>th</sup> place in the **Best Scene** category.

Most of the competition categories featured both preliminary and final rounds. In Dramatic Monologues, Guye and Richards clinched finalist spots after placing in the top two in their respective preliminary round rooms. Then in the final round, featuring 12 young actors, Guye placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and Richards placed 4<sup>th</sup>. For the Shakespearean category, there was only one round and McGowan placed 1<sup>st</sup> over 30 other students. For the large scene category, PAAAS placed 6<sup>th</sup> out of 20 scenes. Kiiyah Gorham was a finalist for **Musical Solo** category.

“We would like to congratulate all of these young artists for the hard work they put into the competition. Their hard work yielded some noteworthy results,” said Othell J. Miller, PAAAS Theater Instructor.

The students' next performance will be in the PAAAS Black History Month program on Wednesday, February 20 at 6:30 p.m.; they will also perform in the PAAAS Vocal Music Concert in May, and the annual theater production in June.

For more information, please call 908-731-4333 or email [gmontealegre@plainfield.k12.nj.us](mailto:gmontealegre@plainfield.k12.nj.us).

Large group photo, left to right:

- (front) Makari Slaughter, Zoe Sylvester, Evelyn Melgar, Kiiyah Gorham, Dana Damacela, Jadriel Beniquez
- (2nd row) Juliana Herrera, Dayanara Lopez, Laura Sanabria, Charlene Hills, Elijah Doré;
- (3rd row) Brianna Richards, Jamal Guye, Danielle McGowan

