

PA SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Competition 2026

MISSION STATEMENT

The PA Shakespeare Festival's High School Shakespeare Competition empowers participants and cultivates skill development and artistry in language, Shakespeare, and the craft of acting.

DESCRIPTION

Grounded in direct engagement with Shakespeare's text, the Competition provides multiple performance opportunities, direct evaluation of each performance by working theatre professionals, and observation of peer performances. Any high school-aged student of a public, private school, or home school is eligible to participate in the competition, registering through their school, or as individuals. The registration fee covers participation in all rounds of the competition, workshops, and the panel discussions with professional artists. Panel topics may include: choosing your text, auditioning, headshots, working in the theatre, and majoring in theatre.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

DeSales University Performing & Fine Arts scholarships will be awarded to outstanding participants. These scholarships, up to \$5,000 and are renewable for each of the four years a student would attend the University as a Theatre student. **There is a shift this year with how scholarships will be presented. DeSales University staff will reach out to students in the following days after the competition to offer scholarships. This allows the DeSales University School of Performing Arts to offer more funds to more students; even competitors who do not win an award are eligible for scholarships this year!**

Excellence in Shakesporean Performance Awards will be given, following the Showcase, in both Monologue and Duo/Trio categories. *Excellence in Shakesporean Performance Team Awards* will also be given.

Throughout the day, adjudicators will be scoring participants, based on the specified rubric. Adjudicators will also be nominating candidates to present their piece in the Showcase that are of distinctive value for all students present to observe. Participation in the Showcase does not affect final competition awards, but will aid in identifying scholarship recipients.

NOTE: High schools seniors who will have applied to, been accepted by, and received a financial aid package from DeSales University by the time of the Competition may be limited in scholarship offerings due financial aid package restrictions. (In other words, if a student is already receiving the maximum financial aid from the university, they will not be able to receive an additional scholarship through the competition.)

COST

The cost for the competition is \$25 per student participant. If you wish to bring non-competing students in your group to participate in the workshops, the cost is \$10 per student.

REGULATIONS

Material must be from William Shakespeare's plays. Schools may enter **three** Monologues and **three** Duo/Trio scenes. The same student may not be entered in both Monologues and Duo/Trio scenes. It is the responsibility of the school to select which students will present their Monologues or Duo/Trio Scenes at the PSF Shakespeare Competition. Schools may wish to hold their own preliminary screening to select participants.

EVALUATION

Each of the Monologues and Duo/Trio scenes will be presented three times, once in each of three rounds, evaluated by three separate adjudicators. Oral critiques may be given by the adjudicators in each round, written feedback will be given on your score sheets at the end of the Competition. Any contestant not participating in all three rounds will be disqualified and no Team Points will be awarded. For more information on evaluation, please see our *Guidelines for Students and Coaches*.

HOSTS AND SPONSORS

Questions? Contact Kim.Carson@pashakespeare.org

The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival hosts this event with the support of DeSales University as a part of PSF's Linny Fowler WillPower Education Programs, made possible by a generous gift from Marlene "Linny" Fowler.

Questions? Contact Kim.Carson@pashakespeare.org