



# Fontana Unified School District

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Theatre Students from Fontana Unified's Kaiser High Earn Honors at State Festival with Shakespeare Performance

**FONTANA, CA** – Henry J. Kaiser High School theatre students qualified for the prestigious California Educational Theatre Association's (CETA) State Festival and walked away with several awards for their production of William Shakespeare's "Cymbeline" on Jan. 13.

Kaiser's fall play first stunned judges at the Regional CETA Festival in December, resulting in a first place win out of 16 schools and a spot in the State Festival. This is Kaiser High School's 13th year competing and their first top win at the regional level.

"This win is huge; it is a big thing to overcome and reach above what we thought was possible. The young artists worked so hard to bring Shakespeare's words to life in his least performed play," Kaiser High School Director of Theatre Wendi Johnson said. "For the students, this is recognition that their work as a team to take care of each other and make each other look good has paid off. This is so valuable in their lives beyond high school when they see that when they put effort and belief in something there is a result."

Kaiser High's theatre program hauled in several accolades at the CETA State Festival, including a scholarship to attend the Stand Up for the Arts event in Sacramento on April 30. Individually, Kaiser High student Jami Jamison took first overall in acting for her role of Imogen and Billy Bolhman won the Phil Reed Movement Award for his role at Cloten. Jamison, Kenney Plummer and David Huyan were also presented with Top Adjudicator Awards, while Leah Young and Paula Contreras won Directors Awards with superior ratings.

Every year, schools from across Southern California have their theatre productions judged by adjudicators who visit each school to watch the plays, write observations and rank the schools' excellence. Judges take into account the entire theatre experience, from the moment attendees enter the lobby until the final curtain, critiquing acting, directing and technique.

The State Festival included four first-place winners from December, with each school representing the Inland Empire, Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties.

For the State Festival performance, the judging intensity increased as schools took their shows on the road.

Students were graded on how they loaded in their set pieces to Fullerton Union High School to setup – including lights and sound equipment – how they performed the show and took down the set, as well as

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the overall atmosphere during their four-hour portion. This included the two-hour performance with a 15-minute intermission.

The “Cymbeline” performance was completely student-run with 36 students total, consisting of 25 actors and 11 backstage techs. This means students learned to mic-up actors and turn on and off the mics when the actors spoke, learned to setup the lights, created the detailed set, costumes and applied makeup and hair.

Since first entering in the CETA Festivals in 2012, Kaiser has gone on to earn multiple accolades, including second place last year and third place the year before – only missing first place by a few points each time.

“This is a tremendous accomplishment for Kaiser High School theatre students, and we are so proud of all their amazing work and perseverance to reach this point,” Superintendent Miki R. Inbody said. “This production was especially outstanding and we cannot wait to see what the theatre department will deliver next.”

#### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSD\_CYMBELINE1:** Henry J. Kaiser High School’s theatre program qualified for the prestigious California Education Theatre Association’s (CETA) State Festival and won several awards for its production of William Shakespeare’s “Cymbeline” on Jan. 13.

**FUSD\_CYMBELINE2:** Jami Jamison (center) took first overall in acting at the California Education Theatre Association’s (CETA) State Festival for her role of Imogen in the Henry J. Kaiser High’s production of “Cymbeline” on Jan. 13.

**FUSD\_CYMBELINE3:** Henry J. Kaiser High’s theatre program’s production of William Shakespeare’s “Cymbeline” took first place in the California Education Theatre Association’s (CETA) Regional Festival to qualify for the prestigious State Festival on Jan. 13.

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