



NJDOE News

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For Immediate Release:: December 17, 2008

State Board of Education Recognizes Somerset County Vo-Tech Creative Arts Students

The State Board of Education today recognized 10 students from Somerset County Vo-Tech's creative arts program for their participation in an after-school theater production that includes adult actors with developmental disabilities.

Through the creative arts program's partnership in Midland Adult Services (MAS) Productions, the students interact with adults who have developmental disabilities. The students and adult actors stage a performance each March, with evening weekly rehearsals beginning the prior October.

"This group of students from Somerset County Vo-Tech's creative arts program exemplify that volunteer service can be fun, rewarding and educational," said State Board of Education President Josephine E. Hernandez. "The work of the creative arts students and the MAS Production actors has broadened the minds and experiences of the high school students and the developmentally disabled adults. We commend the students for their annual commitment to the MAS Productions program."

The 10 students honored at the December meeting of the State Board of Education each have participated in the program for three years. The students are: Brittany Buckmire; Amanda Conner; Alex Curran; Megan Doorly; Mya Mahankali; Julee Mahon; Sorya Nossoughi; Victoria Richards; Kristin Sarboukh; and Joseph Rae Watson.

Designed as an outreach program for Midland Adult Services' developmentally disabled adult consumers, MAS Productions helps break down social barriers between high school students and disabled people. The program can be tailored to include adults with a variety of developmental disabilities, including the inability to speak.

"Somerset County Vo-Tech's participation in MAS Productions is about so much more than simply staging a theatrical performance," said Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy. "The students and developmentally disabled adults have the opportunity to interact and learn from each other things that cannot be studied in a classroom or from a textbook."

Each month, the State Board of Education honors a student or group of students for making a significant contribution to their school or community. The honorees are selected by one of the state's 21 County Executive Superintendents.