



The English-Speaking Union

Rochester NY Chapter

Rochester Area High School Student wins 2nd place in the 35th English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition

Contact: Roger Janezic, email: Rochester@esuus.org, 585-465-9191

Rochester, NY 4/25/2018 — Elias Owens, a senior and student of Regina Darling from Penfield High School, was awarded second place overall at the English-Speaking Union's National Shakespeare Competition held on April 23, 2018. This national event, conducted at the renowned Lincoln Center, brought together 55 regional winners from across the country to perform works of Shakespeare in front of an esteemed panel of judges. Mr. Owens earned a spot in the finals with his excellent rendition of Parolles' humorous speech on virginity from *All's Well that Ends Well* as well his recital of Sonnet 29, "*When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes...*". His cold reading in the pressure-packed finals won him 2nd place.



Eli Owens performing Parolle's speech during the National Shakespeare Competition on April 23, 2018 at Lincoln Center. Photo courtesy of the English Speaking Union.

Mr. Owens competed in the national event by virtue of earning first place in the 28th annual Rochester Shakespeare Competition that was conducted in March 2018 at the University of Rochester. The local competition is conducted under the auspices of the Rochester chapter of the English Speaking Union. This is one of 55 regional events held across the country, involving some 20,000 students and 1,500 teachers. By winning the Rochester event, Mr. Owens was awarded an all-expense trip to NYC to compete in Monday's national event. This is the first time in the three-decade history of the Rochester Shakespeare Competition that its winner was one of the national finalists. In taking 2nd place in the national event, Mr. Owens was awarded a coveted spot, and full scholarship, for the prestigious American Shakespeare Center Theatre Camp, a two-week intensive theatre program held in Staunton,

Virginia for select students. Mr. Owens is planning to pursue a BFA in musical theatre from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) starting this fall.



Eli Owens (far right) in this photo of the winners at the National Shakespeare Competition taken on April 23, 2018. Photo courtesy of the English Speaking Union.



Eli Owens is kneeling in the lower left corner of the photo in this photo in NYC taken on April 22, 2018. Photo courtesy of the English Speaking Union.

The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition is a performance-based education program in which high school students nationwide read, analyze, perform, and recite Shakespeare's works in order to develop communication skills and an appreciation of the power of language and literature. Since 1983, more than 300,000 young Americans of all backgrounds have taken advantage of this opportunity to bring the timeless works of Shakespeare to life and learn to express his words with understanding, feeling, and clarity.