



The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
2014 MEMO TO BUFFALO TEACHERS



To: High School Teachers in the Buffalo, NY Area
From: Education Department, The English-Speaking Union of the United States
Date: December 2013

We invite your school to celebrate the Bard's 450th birthday by participating in the **ESU National Shakespeare Competition!** In this program, high school students nationwide read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets in as many as three qualifying stages: school, community (ESU Branch) and national levels. Learn more about it online at www.esuus.org in the Programs/National Shakespeare Competition section.

For those of you who participated in the program last year, we would like to express our deep appreciation for your dedication to this program and your students. You were part of a national effort involving 15,000 students and over 1500 teachers who encouraged their students to excel at Shakespeare. We hope your school continues to participate.

If your school has not yet taken part in our Competition, we hope that you will consider offering this exciting, educational program. Your students will develop essential skills (critical thinking, close reading and public speaking) and increase their self-confidence through reading, analysis and performance of Shakespeare. You'll find your contemporary students come alive through Shakespeare's timeless works.

In order to participate in the program, your school must:

1. Register with your local Buffalo English-Speaking Union Branch (by February 14, 2014).

Complete the *School Participation Form*. Return it to Al Franco at AFranco@starpointcsd.org.

2. Review Competition materials. All the necessary materials to familiarize yourself with the Competition and encourage the participation of your students can be found in our **2013-2014 Teacher Handbook**. This handbook and other resources are available on our website at www.esuus.org. Some essentials included in it are:

- *School Competition Rules & Instructions*
- *Sample Class Schedule & Lesson Plans*
- *Connection to National Standards*
- *Student Guidelines*
- *Judging Materials*
- *Suggested Monologue and Sonnet Lists*

Note: Students' monologues cannot be more than 20 lines (verse or prose) according to the **Folger Shakespeare Library editions of the plays (Simon & Schuster (2003-2013))**.

3. Hold an in-school Shakespeare competition for your students (by March 1, 2014 at the latest).

Each student performs a monologue from one of Shakespeare's plays. Select one student to represent your school at the community (ESU Branch) competition (tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 2014).

4. Submit your school winner's information to your local ESU Buffalo Branch (by March 1, 2014).

Complete the *School Winner Entry Form*. Return it (with copies of the student's monologue and sonnet selections) to Al Franco at AFranco@starpointcsd.org.

Prize Highlights: The winner of the community (ESU Branch) competition receives an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City to compete at the National Competition at Lincoln Center. The national winner of the ESU National Shakespeare Competition receives an all-expenses-paid trip to study acting in Shakespeare's homeland, England. The teachers of the top three national winners receive full tuitions scholarships to a 2014 Shakespeare Set Free Institute (also includes transportation, accommodations and food expenses up to \$900).

Thank you for your interest in the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition. Please contact Al Franco at AFranco@starpointcsd.org with any questions about local details and deadlines. We look forward to working with you this year and sharing in another exciting year of Shakespeare. For more information on the Competition (including teacher resources), visit: http://www.esuus.org/esu/programs/shakespeare_competition/.