

AR THESPIAN VIRTUAL FESTIVAL HANDBOOK

Festival will be held virtually this year hosted by arthespians@gmail.com using the services of Eventsential, Open Water, Zoom, and other technology tools.

February 12-13, 2021

Troupe Directors:

Please read all of this information as it is updated each year. This information must be shared with students, chaperones, administrators, and parents.

Table of Contents: (click to jump to the topic)

1. [Overview/Quick Info](#)
2. [Membership Status / Student Inductee Instructions](#)
3. [Conference Registration](#)
4. [Scholarships](#)
5. [Leadership Awards](#)
6. [Honor Troupe](#)
7. [One-Act Showcase](#)
8. [State Thespian Officer Nominations](#)
9. [Leadership Seminar](#)
10. [Troupe Flag Information](#)
11. [Thespys Guidelines](#)
12. [Tech Challenge](#)
13. [Playworks](#)
14. [Conference Rules and Regulations](#)

1. OVERVIEW/QUICK INFO

A. The following information is relative to registering your troupe for the 2021 State Festival.

PLEASE READ EVERYTHING CAREFULLY AND MAKE SURE YOU
FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS AND DIRECTIONS!

B. There are only 3 Deadline dates. **December 11, 2020**, **January 8, 2021**, and **January 22, 2021**

December 11, 2020	January 8, 2021	January 22, 2021
Festival Registration State Student Officer Nominations	Thespys Registration Check Due Check now due Jan 15! Leadership Awards Scholarship Materials	Honor Troupe Applications Thespy Videos Short Films

2. MEMBERSHIP STATUS AND STUDENT INDUCTEES

This is the time of year each school needs to check on their **Membership status** or **Student Inductees**. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT! Please read carefully and follow these instructions IMMEDIATELY!

To Renew your Troupe (pay your dues)

1. Visit the home office website at www.schooltheatre.org
2. Click on the "Membership" menu item, then select "Thespian Troupe Membership" from the pull down.
3. Scroll to the bottom and click on "Renew Your Troupe"
 - **Renewal Dues:** for high schools & middle schools who already are members of Arkansas Thespians. Fees are \$129.00.
THE DEADLINE FOR TROUPE RENEWAL IS OCTOBER 1, 2020. After this date, troupes that have not paid their troupe dues become inactive and their benefits are suspended. Troupes that have not paid their renewal dues by November 15 are withdrawn from active status and must pay an additional \$95.00 reinstatement fee.
 - **IF STUDENTS ARE PARTICIPATING AT THE ARKANSAS THESPIAN FESTIVAL IN INDIVIDUAL EVENTS OR SCHOLARSHIPS, THEY MUST BE INDUCTED THESPIANS!** Induction fees into the Educational Theatre Association are \$35.00 per student.

If you have any questions, regarding the status of your troupe or inducted thespians, please call Membership at the EdTA Home Office at 513.421.3900.

3. FESTIVAL REGISTRATION

- Online registration deadline is **December 11, 2020**.
- Changes can be made until Dec. 17 with no change fee. Beginning December 18, 2020 any drops or changes will incur an additional \$25 fee for each change.
- All material must be postmarked on or before **January 8, 2021. NEW DATE! JAN 15**
- Principals must sign the appropriate forms or your troupe's registration will not be processed!
PLEASE MAKE COPIES OF EVERYTHING FOR YOUR OWN RECORDS!

1. **ONLINE REGISTRATION:** will be available starting October 15, 2020 and must be submitted by **December 11, 2020**. To register for festival please visit:

<http://arkthespianfestival.tabroom.com>

2. **PAYMENT:**

This year's rates:

\$75 per Student

\$75 per Troupe Directors (Troupe Director will receive a refund of **\$60** after festival when duties are fulfilled.)

\$20 per Chaperone

\$15 per Thespian Alumni

Send a school affiliated check to:

EDTA Arkansas
361 Southwest Dr #178
Jonesboro, AR 72401

DEADLINE JAN. 8, 2021
Now Jan 15th!

- If a school has a troupe, students may only belong to that troupe regardless if they are inducted or not.
- By completing and signing the registration form you understand that all materials (Thespys, Showcase Performances, etc.) being presented by this troupe and representing the school listed on the registration form that include foul language, offensive material, and/or obscenities must be FLAGGED for content. You further understand that your school/Troupe will not be allowed to participate in next year's event(s) should this rule be violated.

**For questions pertaining to registration, please email
ARThespianregister@gmail.com**

4. SCHOLARSHIPS

ALL APPLICATIONS, AUDITION VIDEOS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION MUST BE SUBMITTED ON OPEN WATER. Deadline is January 8, 2021.

No Submissions will be accepted after this date

Troupes may submit eight students in total:

- 5- College Scholarship Applicants- Juniors and Seniors May Apply (\$10 Fee)
- 1- Theatre For Life Scholarship Applicant- Must be Honor Thespian Nominee (No Fee)
- 2- Arkansas EdTA Scholarship Applicants- Seniors Only (No Fee)

[Click here](#) for full documentation about scholarship explanations.

For questions or more info, contact arthespianscholarships@gmail.com

STO- Student Leadership Scholarship

5. LEADERSHIP AWARDS

These award applications are due **Jan 8, 2020**. All applications are available on the State Festival page located on our website at www.arkansasthespians.org or by clicking the links below:

- **Hall of Fame Award** [click for application](#)
The *Arkansas EdTA Hall of Fame Award* was established to honor individuals who have given outstanding service to the organization and to Arkansas Thespians.
- **Gail Burns Educator of the Year Award** [click for application](#)
The *Gail Burns Educator of the Year Award* is presented to a deserving teacher who exemplifies the best qualities of a teacher within his/her building, district, and community. They should also represent the best qualities of a theatre educator.

- **Administrator of the Year Award** [click for application](#)

The Administrator of the Year Award is presented to a school administrator or team of administrators for their dedication and efforts to support educational theatre in their building, district, and community.

Applications for Leadership Awards may be emailed to kmaupin@mhbombers.com

Deadline Jan 8, 2021

6. HONOR TROUPE

Honor Troupe Form & Digital Slide Show

Through the Honor Troupe program, the Arkansas Thespian Society seeks to recognize troupes for their many achievements and endeavors during the school year. Activities must take place between the last day of this year's State Festival to the first day of next year's State Festival. The application for Honor Troupe is available on the website www.arkansasthespians.org under State Thespian Festival.

Honor Troupe award recipients will be announced during the Arkansas State Thespian Festival in February 2021. Honor Troupes will be designated as Gold, Silver, or Bronze Honor Troupes, based on the amount of points awarded to each troupe. We encourage all troupes to apply for Honor Troupe!

This year's Digital Slideshow will be limited to 2 slides per troupe so that we can more easily showcase all troupes in attendance. These slides are due the same time as the Honor Troupe application. These slides should represent your troupe, your students, and your activities but do NOT have to include everything on your Honor Troupe application.

Deadline to submit your digital slide show and honor troupe form is [January 22, 2021](#) to Amy Pumphrey at apumphre@fortsmithschools.org.

7. ONE ACT SHOWCASE

THE ONE ACT SHOWCASE consists of the Superior scored recorded one-acts by three adjudicators. It is a chance for students to perform during this time when performances must follow individual school district guidelines for social distancing and mask wearing. One troupe will be awarded the *Rick Chudemelka Chapter Select* to represent Arkansas as Chapter Select at the 2021 International Thespian Festival in Bloomington, IN, June 2021. **In order to be considered for Chapter Select you will be charged a fee of \$50. This fee will be added to your festival registration.** One troupe will be awarded as an alternate in the event the Chapter Select cannot attend ITF.

8. STATE THESPIAN OFFICER NOMINATIONS

STO (State Thespian Officer) CANDIDATE NOMINATION GUIDELINES

All participating thespian troupes select two (2) representatives to represent their troupe with the Arkansas Thespian State Student Board. One thespian from your troupe may run as an STO. Arkansas Thespians State Student Board has up to six Student Board Officer positions. Final voting will occur at state festival and the new STOs will be announced at the closing ceremonies..

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be a candidate for the Student State Board, a student must meet the following qualifications:

1. Must be an entering Sophomore or Junior in good standing with your troupe, school, EdTA, and have a 2.5 GPA or higher.
2. Must be an active thespian registered with the EdTA.

APPLICATION

All four items listed below must be received via email by the December 11, 2020 deadline in order to be considered for candidacy. The Video, Headshot, and Candidate Permission Form must be sent to arthespianssto@gmail.com by **December 11, 2020**.

1. Two minute video submission including:
 - a. Introduction of self
 - b. Description of leadership skills
 - c. Explanation of what you would bring to the table as an STO
2. One page essay including:
 - a. Why advocating for theatre is important
 - b. How you would advocate for theatre as an STO
3. Headshot
4. Completed Candidacy Consent Form

CANDIDACY PROCESS

1. Complete and submit the application by the deadline. Candidate application packet can be found under the STO tab on the state website: www.arkansasthespians.org.
2. All applications will be reviewed by the STO and their liaison in November.
3. Candidates will be notified by January 15, 2021 informing them if they have been selected as a semi-finalist candidate.
4. All semi-finalist candidates will participate in a phone interview with STO and their liaison in late December/early January.
5. Candidates will be notified before February 1, 2021 informing them if they have been selected as a final candidate.

6. All final candidates are required to be registered for festival Leadership Seminar.
7. Candidates must be present at all General Assemblies and will be used as STO interns by assisting current STO as asked during Festival.
8. Each Candidate must participate in the Leadership Seminar at Festival and be prepared to give a two-minute election speech and answer prompted questions from the STO.

ELECTIONS

1. Each Troupe Director will be emailed an online ballot. Each attending troupe will have a small window of time at festival to vote for their desired board of six officers. *Troupe Directors, please consult with your troupe and vote based on troupe consensus.*

DUTIES

The main duties of the Student Board Officers are as follows:

1. Attend State Board Meetings with the Chapter Director and Adult Board members, as requested.
Meeting sites are determined by the Chapter Director. Travel & Food expenses are incurred by the individual student.
2. Attend the summer leadership camp (date TBD), and conduct a statewide leadership day camp for AR Thespians.
3. Decide on the theme and logo for the upcoming Festival.
4. If attending International Thespian Festival, attend the week-long leadership workshop led by ITO.
5. Advocacy: Promote Arkansas Thespians and the ideas for which it stands.
6. Raise the funds necessary for the **'Nancy Brown Student Leadership Scholarship'** that is given to a student in Arkansas by the STO.
7. The Student Board Officers are responsible for creating and conducting the Leadership Seminar at the State Festival.

TERMS OF OFFICE

Terms begin on the Monday following the State Festival and run until closing ceremony at the following state festival.

9. LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The Leadership Seminar covers several topics of interest relevant to students in leadership positions including: Stress & Time Management, Psychology of Leadership, Fundraising, Team Working Skills and Officer-Member Responsibility. **THIS IS A GREAT WORKSHOP FOR NETWORKING WITH OTHER STUDENTS!**

IT IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED AND RECOMMENDED THAT TROUPE BOARD OFFICERS ATTEND. ALL STATE STUDENT OFFICER CANDIDATES ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND! EACH SCHOOL CAN SEND UP TO 5 STUDENTS. The cost is \$5 per student.

10. TROUPE FLAGS

In lieu of Troupe Flags this year, troupes are encouraged to use an image of their flags as virtual backgrounds in zoom!

11. THESPYS

THESPYS **(formerly known as Individual Events)**

Individual Event \$15

Duet Event \$20

Group Event \$25

THESPYS are designed to recognize the talents and hard work of inducted thespians. Students who meet the requirements outlined below will perform and are adjudicated in a category of their choosing in front of theatre educators and professionals. Selected participants will perform their pieces on the main stage during the Thespys ceremony. Students receiving a superior rating in an event and meet the guidelines for Thespys are eligible to participate in the National Thespys event at the International Thespian Festival in June. These guidelines can be found [here](#). Inducted thespians are allowed to enter one individual or tech event, one group event, one short film, and one tech challenge team. Non-thespians may participate on a tech challenge team, one group event, and one short film, however your group events must contain at least 51% of inducted thespians. Troupes may have up to three entries per IE category, two tech challenge teams, one playworks, one short film, one group acting, and one group musical.

2021 Virtual Festival

This year we will be using a platform called *Open Water*. All entries will be pre-recorded and submitted through Open Water. A training video will be made available for all troupes along with video recording guidelines and suggestions. Troupe directors will be responsible for submitting entries to Open Water by the deadline. Your Open Water submissions **MUST** match your Tabroom entries. Changes/substitutions after the deadline will result in a change fee being added to your tabroom account.

Adjudication will happen in two rounds.

Round 1 - All entries will be adjudicated by a panel of three judges and scored using the national Thespys rubrics, prior to the start of Festival '21. All three scores will be average to determine an entries overall rating (Superior, Excellent, Good, Fair). All entries receiving a Superior will move to round 2.

Round 2 - These entries will be adjudicated by a different panel of three judges, at the beginning of Festival '21. The top scoring entries will be featured during our Thespys Showcase which will happen prior to Awards. The second and third scoring entries will be featured in our Friday Night Spotlight. What about a tie??? The tabulation committee will handle ties on a case by case basis. If time allows, all tied performances will be featured, if time is tight a tie breaker will be initiated.

What if there are no superiors in an event? If there are no superiors, there will be no Thespy Showcase for that event.

All events will be offered with the following exceptions/guidelines:

Duet/Group events: We are recommending that troupes follow the National guidelines for duet/group events -

- *Students can separately record their parts and edit into one video (do not confuse this with a short film) or can use a platform such as Zoom
- *Circumstances may change by the due date. If local/state/national guidelines allow it, students can get together with their partner/group to record the video. Be smart, be safe, and follow the rules!

If none of the above are able to happen a troupe will have the following option:

Currently, each troupe is allowed seven entries in acting and 7 entries in musical theater (1 group, 3 duet, 3 solo/monologue). For this year, we will continue to allow 7 total entries but they can be allotted between the three options in that category. Example: 0 group, 4 duet, 3 solo/monologue OR 1 group, 1 duet, 5 solo/monologue OR 0 group, 0 duet, 7 solo/monologue. Double entry rules are still in place so a student will not be able to enter more than one performance/technical event.

!! Thespians entering monologue, duet acting and group acting must complete and email the **Individual Events Rights and Application Form**. This form can be found in the Thespy Program Guide page 27. [Click here for the Thespy Guide](#). These forms are due **FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2021**.

**ALL VIDEOS MUST BE UPLOADED BY THE TROUPE DIRECTOR ON OR BEFORE
JANUARY 22, 2021.**

THIS YEAR WE WILL BE USING A PLATFORM CALLED OPEN WATER. TRAINING IS COMING SOON!!! Due to the nature of this new way of doing Thespys, we will not be able to extend this deadline. Entries that are not received by the deadline will not receive a refund.

Short Film

Fee is \$20 per entry

January 22, 2021

2021Arkansas Thespian Festival Short Film Submission Guidelines

Each troupe should submit only one short film entry.

This year YouTube submission will be the primary place to upload videos. There is a google drive folder to share with as well. This means there are TWO places for students to upload videos to ensure that we have everyone's work as well as a backup. Please feel free to contact me at jenava.harris@csdar.org or 479-979-5440 if you have any questions.

Following the submission guidelines detailed below will ensure that the 2020 Short Film event runs smoothly and is most beneficial for all students involved. Short Film entrants will be held to the same standard of professionalism that we expect from all Arkansas Thespians. In certain cases, it may not be possible for your troupe to use the noted methods.

- File names should read as follows: "[Troupe Number] - [FilmTitle]"
- File format should be .mp4, .mov, or .avi. Please do not submit a .wmv file unless your software offers no other option. Please do not submit films with resolution higher than 1080p.
- **UPDATE per National Rules:** *Films can be no longer than five-minutes plus one minute for credits.*

- Before submitting, test your finished film on two other machines (not the one it was created on) to ensure it plays smoothly for its entire runtime.
- Use Google Drive AND Youtube to submit a digital copy. It is best to do this as early as possible before the festival begins. Deadline for submissions is **January 22, 2021**, at 5:00 PM. 1. Google Drive is free up to 15GB (if your file is this large, there is a problem with your export). Files must be SHARED (using the Can Edit setting) with thespianshortfilm@gmail.com. A link to view will not suffice. 2. YouTube upload is going to be via a channel set up for Arkansas State Thespians. You will create a channel of your own. (This is free but must be linked to a Gmail account). Once you have uploaded a video to your channel, you will share a link to your video to thespianshortfilm@gmail.com.
- If you are unable to submit your file online for any reason, please inform thespianshortfilm@gmail.com. Bring your file to the room in which the event will be held before the round begins. Use a flash drive or portable hard drive. DVDs of any kind should be an absolute last resort as compatibility can not be guaranteed. Blu-ray discs can not be accepted under any circumstance. Thank you for your attention and adherence to these guidelines. Please do not hesitate to contact Jenava Harris at 479- 979-5440 or jenava.harris@csdar.org with any questions or concerns. It should be our collective goal to conduct the event as professionally, expeditiously, and effectively as possible, so we can also have a ton of fun watching the creations of Arkansas's talented young filmmakers.

FLAGGING

Because of recent liability cases (i.e. Texas teacher losing her job because she took a class to an art museum displaying nude art) all IE selections and one-act plays containing any "questionable material" in language and/or situation must be flagged to avoid disqualification. When registering on the on-line registration system, type the title of your piece followed by FLAGGED in all caps. For Example, *Fat Pig* FLAGGED. Then complete the form to be signed by your principal noting flagged material presented conforms to your campus rules. Failure to flag "questionable material" could result in disqualification and/or probation.

If your entry is flagged, you will be emailed and asked to explain why so that we can compile a document that will be available at the information desk that can be consulted by troupe directors.

THESPY GUIDELINES & RULES

Please review the guidelines & rules!

Troupe Directors and students must read all the rules carefully. The Arkansas Thespys are intended to be a non-competitive, educational program offering Festival delegates the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on prepared theatrical material and technical designs. The goal for participating students is to find their talent, strengths, and weaknesses and to grow as theatre artists. The Individual Events culminate in the selection of a performance showcase cast of an outstanding entry from each category. These entries will present their selections during the closing ceremonies of the Festival on Saturday.

Qualifying for Arkansas Thespys

The following rules are used to qualify for Thespys at the Arkansas Thespian Festival:

Students may choose from the following NATIONAL THESPY EVENTS: *Monologue, Duet Acting, Group Acting, Solo Musical Theatre, Duet Musical Theatre, Group Musical Theatre, Costume Design, Costume Construction, Makeup Design, Theatre Marketing, Scenic Design, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Short Film, Stage Management, and Tech Challenge.*

Click [HERE](#) for the Thespys Guide

Click [HERE](#) for FAQs and filming suggestions

12. TECH CHALLENGE “BACKSTAGE SHOUTOUT”

Deadline for videos is **January 8, 2021**

In lieu of the Tech Challenge Event this year, each Troupe will have the opportunity to submit a video shoutout to represent their school's technicians and answer the question “What does it mean to be a techie at your school?” The video can be serious, funny, sappy or anywhere in-between so long as it genuinely represents your program. We are hoping for a ton of submissions so please limit the length of your video shoutouts to no longer than **30 seconds** and they must be submitted to bpumphre@fortsmithschools.org before **January 8th, 2021**. Directors, you and your students are going to have to think outside the box! Looking forward to all the submissions!!

13. PLAYWORKS 2021

Fee is \$25 per entry

Three student playwrights will be selected to have the opportunity to workshop their plays through virtual mentoring sessions with theatre professionals. Each selected play will be performed as a virtual staged reading during the Arkansas State Thespian Festival. For more information check out the [Arkansas Thespian Playworks Packet](#).

14. CONFERENCE RULES AND REGULATIONS

(PLEASE REVIEW WITH STUDENTS)

Arkansas EdTA Code of Conduct

Rev. 10/22/20

Arkansas EdTA is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all meeting participants. All participants, including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, Arkansas EdTA staff, service providers, and all others are expected to abide by this Virtual Programs Code of Conduct. This Policy applies to all Arkansas EdTA meeting-related events, including those sponsored by organizations other than Arkansas EdTA but held in conjunction with Arkansas EdTA events, on public or private platforms.

Arkansas EdTA has zero-tolerance for any form of discrimination or harassment, including but not limited to sexual harassment by participants or our staff at our meetings. If you experience harassment or hear of any incidents of unacceptable behavior, Arkansas EdTA asks that you inform Rob Spencer, Security Coordinator, (robspencer2015@gmail.com) so that we can take the appropriate action.

- **Act well your part.** Arkansas EdTA events engage participants with a wide range of beliefs and ideas about the subjects they are discussing. We encourage an open dialogue but require that participants remain courteous and respectful at all times.
- **There are no small parts.** Everyone is essential in a virtual event. Visit often, participate, and encourage others to do the same. You have answers that others are seeking, and they are just as capable of helping you.
- **Know your audience.** This is an online event, used to connect students, teachers and people passionate about the arts. Just as you would in any educational environment, refrain from posting pictures or comments with inappropriate content.
- **YES and...** This online event is meant to be a positive experience for anyone who chooses to participate. Feel free to post helpful and relevant advice or suggestions, but do not be abusive, profane, threatening, or offensive. Think before you post. Is it necessary? Is it kind? Is it true?
- **SHHHHH!** The participants themselves do the best monitoring of an online event. If you see any inappropriate or offensive content, please notify arthespians@gmail.com. We do not discuss any user's account with another user, so your report will remain anonymous, as will the actions we have taken.
- **All the world's a stage.** On the internet, you always have an audience. If you wouldn't say it to your mother, your boss, or a child, don't put it in our chat. Respect the privacy of others. Arkansas EdTA is not responsible for any consequences you experience resulting from anything you have posted during this online event. Please refrain from using any information that would lead to exposing your personal identify (last name, email address, or other personal information).
- **Copyright.** If it's not yours, get permission before you post it, or cite the necessary sources.

Unacceptable Behavior is defined as:

- Harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form.
- Verbal abuse of any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, Arkansas EdTA staff, service provider, or other meeting guest.
- Examples of verbal abuse include, but are not limited to, verbal comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, national origin, inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations, or threatening or stalking any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, Arkansas EdTA staff, service provider, or other meeting guest.
- Disruption of presentations during sessions, in the exhibit hall, or at other events organized by Arkansas EdTA throughout the virtual meeting. All participants must comply with the instructions of the moderator and any ArkansasEdTA virtual event staff.
- Presentations, postings, and messages should not contain promotional materials, special offers, job offers, product announcements, or solicitation for services. Arkansas EdTA reserves the right to remove such messages and potentially ban sources of those solicitations.
- Participants should not copy or take screen shots of Q&A or any chat room activity that takes place in the virtual space.

Arkansas EdTA reserves the right to take any action deemed necessary and appropriate, including immediate removal from the meeting without warning or refund, in response to any incident of unacceptable behavior, and Arkansas EdTA reserves the right to prohibit attendance at any future meeting, virtually or in person.

(12/3/2020- Short Film Update, 12/7/2020- Registration Payment Deadline Extension)