



For Release: June 4, 2025
Contact: Theresa Kennedy
716-829-1158 | 716-803-4281 (cell)
tkennedy@sheas.org

West Seneca West Takes Gold in Shea's High School Musical Awards Program, Student Headed to National High School Musical Awards

Presentation by Shea's Celebrates West Seneca Awards in Six Categories,
Provides School with \$5,000 Grant Toward Performing Arts Program

Shea's Performing Arts Center visited West Seneca West High School to celebrate and present awards to the cast and crew of West Seneca West's ***Les Misérables School Edition***.

A total of 1,511 students from 20 schools across Western New York participated in Shea's Wonder Awards – Shea's High School Musical Theatre Awards Program.

This school year, West Seneca West High School produced and performed the musical ***Les Misérables School Edition***, winning in six Shea's Wonder Awards categories including the grand prize for Outstanding Production of a Musical (Gold), which comes with a \$5,000 award toward future productions.

In addition, West Seneca West High School student Jonah Higgins participated in Shea's "Student Talent And Growth Experience" STAGE Program and won the opportunity to represent Shea's and Western New York at [The Jimmy Awards](#) - the national high school awards event which will be held in New York City on June 23, 2025.

The list of categories won by West Seneca West includes:

Outstanding Production of a Musical (Gold): West Seneca West High School

Outstanding Leading Performance (Gold):

- **Richard Schack** (“Thenardier”)
- **Faith Flattery** (“Fantine”)
- **Sydney Sterlace** (“Eponine”)
- **Jonah Higgins** (“Javert”)
- **Michael Duffy** (“Jean Valjean”)

West Seneca Central School District Superintendent Dr. Lisa Krueger, West Seneca West High School Principal Jay Brinker, and West Seneca West Music/Dram Director Keith Ersing joined Shea’s Performing Arts Center President and CEO Brian Higgins for the presentation to students.

Brian Higgins said, “Performing arts has the power to heal, unite and uplift. Shea’s is proud to lead a High School Musical Awards Program – which we call Shea’s Wonder Awards, a name that celebrates Shea’s Buffalo Theatre’s 100-year history as “The Wonder Theatre” and our mission to educate and foster an appreciation for live theatre. We applaud West Seneca Schools for recognizing the value of investing in arts education and the students for their achievement. The spotlight they’ve earned is just the beginning of a bright future.”

Presenting sponsors of Shea’s Wonder Awards program are Rachael Small, Pfalzgraf Beinhour Gear Harris Schuller LLP, Buffalo Urban League, and Erie County.

###

Additional Resources:

Video West Seneca West at Shea’s Wonder Awards: [WSenecaW.mp4](#)

Photos:

[West Seneca West Musical Cast & Company - Wide.jpeg](#)

[West Seneca West Musical Cast & Company - Close.jpeg](#)

Graphic: Shea’s Jimmy Award Nominees Jonah Higgins & Naomi Lawley: [Official Nominee 2025 Jimmy Awards.png](#)

Full List of Shea's Wonder Award Winners: [Shea's Wonder Awards 2025 Winners.docx](#)