

Media Contact:  
Karen Hatchett, Hatchett PR  
[karen@hatchettpr.com](mailto:karen@hatchettpr.com)  
770-433-1137



## **ArtsBridge announces Student Ensemble and S.T.A.R. Council for 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Shuler Hensley Awards**

Atlanta, GA --- Today ArtsBridge Foundation announced the 120 actors and actresses who will perform in the Shuler Student Ensemble, along with 46 theatre students who will serve in the S.T.A.R. Council as production assistants, at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Georgia High School Musical Theatre Awards – The Shuler Hensley Awards. The awards show is the culmination of a year-long professional development program, and will showcase the next generation of Georgia’s musical theatre talent. Presented by the Georgia Lottery, the awards show will air on Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) over its nine-station statewide television network live from Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre on April 20, 2017 at 7 pm.

The Shuler Student Ensemble features talented young men and women who were nominated by their high school theatre directors. They will perform the opening and finale numbers at the awards show. To learn the special numbers for the show, they will receive instruction by a professional team including a director, choreographer, music director, and Tony Award winner Shuler Hensley.

"Shuler Ensemble was the most incredible performance of my high school theatre career," says Michael Dotson, Senior at Pope High School and 2016 Shuler Ensemble member. "It gave me a taste of what it's like working under the direction of real professionals in the field, surrounded by kids who are passionate about theatre. It was life changing, and I'm glad other students will get the same opportunity that I did!"

The S.T.A.R. (Students Take A Role) Council gives technical theater students a professional and educational experience in theater and television production. They are nominated by their high school theater director and must display leadership and a strong work ethic. S.T.A.R. Council students will work alongside professional designers and technicians at the awards show. Additionally, these students will have opportunities to participate in exclusive, behind-the-scenes events throughout the coming year.

"S.T.A.R. Council was the highlight of my year!" enthuses Danielle Bergman, Senior at Johns Creek High School and 2016 Shuler S.T.A.R. Council. "Through it I made enormous connections with students around Georgia who share the same love of theatre production. It was incredible to put advice from the meetings into use for the (awards show) production. S.T.A.R. Council helped me affirm my desire to pursue stage management as my future career."

The complete list of this year's Shuler Student Ensemble and S.T.A.R. Council members is online at [artsbridgega.org/programs/shuler-awards/](http://artsbridgega.org/programs/shuler-awards/)

**The Georgia High School Musical Theatre Awards - Shuler Hensley Awards** - celebrate excellence in high school musical theatre, and are modeled after Broadway's Tony Awards. They are named in honor of actor/singer and Georgia native, Shuler Hensley, winner of the prestigious Tony Award, Outer Critics

Circle Award and Drama Desk Award. The Shuler Hensley Awards are a part of the National High School Musical Theatre Awards – The Jimmy Nederlander Awards.

**ArtsBridge Foundation** is dedicated to providing quality arts education and community programs that engage, motivate, inspire, and elevate the next generation of artists and arts supporters. ArtsBridge provides arts education opportunities to students in grades K-12 through programs at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre including Field Trips, Master Classes, a Family Series, and the annual Georgia High School Musical Theatre Awards – The Shuler Hensley Awards. Since inception in 2007, ArtsBridge has served more than 300,000 students and educators from 54 Georgia counties. ArtsBridge Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. To learn more about their programs visit [artsbridgega.org](http://artsbridgega.org).

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**MEDIA:** *There are materials available to go with this release in the ArtsBridge media Dropbox here: <http://bit.ly/2n15Z8l>. To set up interviews, or for additional press materials or requests please contact Karen Hatchett at [karen@hatchettpr.com](mailto:karen@hatchettpr.com).*