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HOSTOS STUDENTS TO COMPETE AT THEATER FESTIVAL IN PHILADELPHIA

From January 13 to 17, 2009, a group of Hostos Community College students will compete at the Region 2 Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF), which is to be held at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Each year during January and February, a total of eight regional festivals take place throughout the country. These annual festivals honor excellence in overall theater production and recognize the accomplishments of individual student artists through awards and scholarships in playwriting, acting, criticism, directing, and design.

Under the direction of Prof. Angel Morales of the Humanities Department, Hostos students will perform a scene from *In the Blood* by Pulitzer Prize winner Suzan-Lori Parks. This play is the story of



Hester, a homeless mother of five who lives with her kids on the tough streets of the inner city. Her oldest child is attempting to teach Hester to read and write, but so far “A” is the only letter she knows. Hester’s children are played by adult actors who double as five other people in her life: her ex-boyfriend, her social worker, her doctor, her best friend, and her minister. While the kids fill Hester’s life with joy – bringing lovingly comical moments into the harsh world of poverty – the adults with whom she comes into contact only hold her back. *In the Blood* is a social commentary on the grim reality faced by many individuals in the United States.



Hostos students while performing a scene from *In the Blood*.

The cast is headed by professional actress Richarda Abrams, with students William Lugo, Alexander Wright, Angel Mercado, Ruwhiy Muhammad, and Yissely Ortiz in supporting roles. “Our troupe will be competing against participants from NYU, Rutgers, Adelphi, Kean, and Kutztown, among other colleges and universities,” said Prof. Morales.

The KCACTF, which has been held annually for the past 35 years, is sponsored by the Kennedy Center's Education Department. Its goals include encouraging, recognizing, and celebrating the finest and most diverse work produced in university and college theater programs in the United States. In addition, the Kennedy Center focuses on providing opportunities for participants to develop their theater skills and professional readiness.

These festivals provide opportunities to performers to see one another's work and to exchange ideas. They also include workshops and seminars on such topics as playwriting, auditioning, voice, movement, stage combat, theater for children, scene painting, scenery construction, et al. There are sessions for beginning theater artists as well as experienced faculty members.

For more information about the KCACTF, visit <http://www.kcactf2.org/history.html#festivals>.