

UHSPAC PRESENTS:

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND



Layla Soares' Experience



Going to Union High School to see the UHSPAC productions has been a tradition since I was in middle school. I've always dreamed about being on that stage and performing for everyone to see. This year, that dream came true. Being in *Once* on this Island has opened my eyes to a world beyond one that I could've ever imagined. The cast as a whole are some of the most accepting, most amazing people that I could have in my life. They not only help me to push myself when needed, but they're there for me in times of need. Being in this production has helped me meet people of all different ethnicities, races, ages and religions, and for that I am so beyond grateful. The UHSPAC has helped me improve on my singing, dancing and acting skills, but it has also taught me so much more. I've learned how to communicate with adults in the business world, how to use construction tools, and how to be a leader. I'm so thankful for Mr. Phillips, Ms. Carr, Ms. Malanga, Ms. Abbate and the rest of the staff that helped this production to be what it was. They were true leaders and exactly what students like me expect in a teacher. They not only encouraged us to do our best, but did so with the utmost grace and respect. I've learned so much in the few months that I've been a part of the UHSPAC, and I cannot wait to see what the future holds!

Denae Jonson's Experience



Joining UHSPAC has been one of my goals since I watched Peter Pan back in 2018, and saying that it's been a dream would be the understatement of the year. I kind of expected to be outcasted and ignored because I'm a freshman coming into a show with people who've been involved with the PAC since they were kids, but my experience has been anything but lonely. As soon as I logged onto our first virtual rehearsal, I felt so welcomed by both the new people and the kids who'd been working on this show for almost a year and a half. Because of UHSPAC's production of *Once on This Island*, I've made friends in all grades, from 5th to 12th, who I still interact with almost every day. I've gathered so much insight and wisdom from the seniors, and I've regained my excitement for performing after being surrounded by so many dedicated, smart, talented human beings. I've been further immersed in the wonderful world of theatre, and I've improved upon my acting, singing, and dancing skills. I've also developed other skills, like how to use power tools and how to build a table from scratch. I'm so grateful for Mr. Phillips, Ms. Carr, Ms. Abbate, Mrs. Malanga, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Esquivel, and all of the other staff who brought this incredible production to life. I am forever grateful that they took a chance on me and let me into this amazing program. Overall, I am so grateful for this experience and for all of the people I've met during it. I can't wait to be involved in more PAC productions in the future and be further involved with everything UHS has to offer.

Bianca Cordova's Experience



Coming from a catholic school I didn't have a lot of opportunities to do theatre, but at Union High School it was completely opposite. Auditioning for UHSPAC was very nerve racking and scary because I had known no one and I didn't know what to expect. I felt so overwhelmed at how welcomed I was, as a new kid and a freshmen. After a week I already felt like I was a part of this family. Everyone within this company is so caring and passionate about this art. I absolutely love being around each and every one of them. The amount that you will learn just by being apart of the PAC is more than you think. We learn about all aspects of the musical theatre world, like the technical needs that go into making a show successful. Mr.Philips, Ms.Carr, and Ms.Abbate make it very clear that they are there to help you in any way possible. I cannot thank them enough for everything they've done to put on the production of Once on This Island this year. UHSPAC is truly one community that lifts each other up and supports one another no matter what, we always have a good time together. I have no idea what i would do without them. I'm so very lucky that I still have 3 years with the PAC and can't wait to see what we accomplish together!

Kimberly Moreira's Experience



Joining the UHSPAC was one of the best decisions I could have made my freshman year! It all started with White Christmas. When I auditioned I was super nervous, but even more excited. I had hoped that I would be able to make the cast because I was already involved in Show Choir and the Musical Theatre class, where my classmates made me feel like a part of something truly special. Most of my classmates were kids that were already in the PAC and they kept telling me to go for it. So I did. I have never looked back since. I have devoted so much of my time, sweat, and tears into this company. I have formed bonds with many and I can say first hand that we are a family. After getting shut down the week before Once On This Island's opening night, I was bummed. I had just came back to school from having a cold and I was looking forward to putting on my best performance. But, everything was getting shut down. Week by week there were more restrictions and then Broadway shut down. I was devastated. However, this spring we were able to pull together a show, which I was immensely proud of and grateful for! All of us worked incredibly hard, especially the staff. It was not an easy task, but with lots of practice and determination we did it. I remember on opening night, we stood in a circle to calm our nerves. All I heard were tears of joy and sadness. We were happy that we finally got to put on a show for our community after 18 months. But, we were sad that this was the last show for the seniors. As I freshmen, I grew very close with the juniors. At the time, the pack was mainly juniors or seniors and they shared lots of wisdom with me. They taught me so many different things. They showed me what UHSPAC really is about. It is not about winning awards or being the best, it is about doing what you LOVE and doing YOUR best. In the end, the UHSPAC has always been a safe space for me. I feel like I can be who I am and I never get judged or laughed at. The UHSPAC has helped me find my true passions and discover my purpose! So thank you UHSPAC! Thank you to all of the OOTI cast and staff that made the show possible. I could not be more thankful for being a part of something so amazing! I have two more years left of highschool. Those two years will continue with me being devoted to the PAC and giving the company my all! I want freshmen my senior year to feel the amount of happiness that I felt when I walked into the theatre room! Thank you to Mr.Phillips, Ms.Carr, Ms.Abbate, Ms.Malanga, Mr.Hamilton, Mr.Esquivel, Ms.Damo, and many more for making this possible!

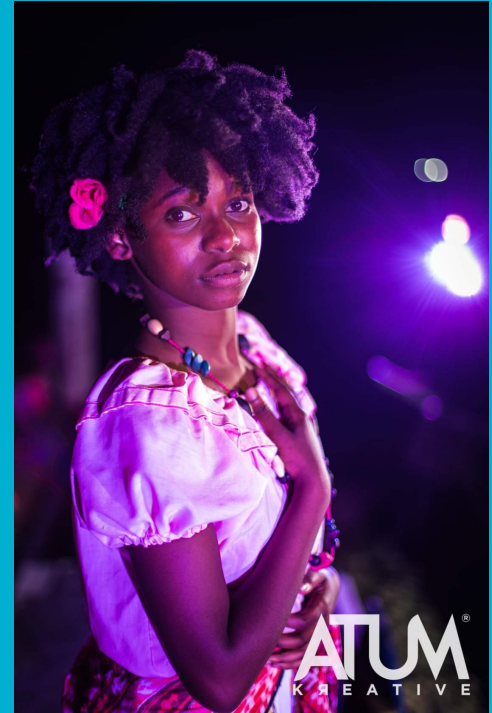
Paper Mill Playhouse Rising Star Awards

Nominations:

- Outstanding Performance by a Large Ensemble
- Outstanding Performance by a Small Ensemble
- Outstanding Performance by a Solo Actress

Honorable Mention:

- “Ti Moune’s Dance” from Once On This Island, featuring Khadija Sankoh & Company.



Sitzprobe Clips

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/xHyao3sRf3jgErGD6> - Pray

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/GC2f4JDn7e6b3JH99> - Mama Will Provide



A Look Beyond

