

Opera House leader earns Freddie G Fellowship

Terry Hale traveled to NYC as part of the experience

By Jennifer Colton

Go! Magazine

Elgin Opera House Executive Director Terry Hale recently spent a week in New York City as one of six theater instructors chosen for the Freddie G Fellowship.

Named for Freddie ("G") Gershon, co-chairman of Music Theatre International, the fellowship focuses on giving theater educators an opportunity to work with Broadway professionals one-on-one. The fellowship included seeing Broadway musicals "Beetlejuice" and "Between the Lines," a workshop on the development of "Beetlejuice JR," tours and networking opportunities, July 14-17.

"It's four days being engaged in the Broadway theater world," Hale said. "It's really exciting to be able to make connections. Living in a rural community, we don't have the opportunities to connect with other professionals like a metropolitan company might have."

This year's fellows also attended a master class lead by Jeff Calhoun, a multi-award-winning director and choreographer.

"That's a highlight of the trip for me, to get to work with Jeff," Hale said. "It's

an honor to be recognized by this group because they really understand the work it takes to make a program like this."

Educators in the annual Freddie G Fellowship are chosen from among those who attend Junior Theater Festivals in Atlanta, Georgia, and Sacramento, California.

Hale was one of six educators announced for the fellowship, along with Dana Alvarez of Cape Coral, Florida; Megan Kelly Bates of Dallas, Texas; Krissy Brown of Springfield, Ohio; Michelle Campbell of Elk Grove, California; and Chad Haney of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The group received the fellowship in 2020, but the trip was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hale also thanked those who wrote letters of recommendation for him to receive the fellowship, including students and parents in the Opera House Youth Actors troupe. Heidi Van Kirk, parent of an OHYA participant, was one of those who nominated Hale.

"Winning this fellowship recognizes the work Terry has done with the Opera House Youth Actors," she said. "In



Terry Hale/Contributed Photo

Terry Hale participates in a discussion about his program at the Elgin Opera House as part of the Freddie G Fellowship in New York City.

evaluating him, they looked not only at this experience but at recommendations from parents and students and observed the professionalism and spirit of working together exhibited by his Youth Actors under his leadership and example."

As part of the fellowship, the Elgin Opera House received a \$5,000 grant, which was used to remodel a space for a dance and rehearsal studio.

Learn more about the Freddie G Fellowship at www.mtishows.com/news.



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