

KeizerCommunity

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LEFT: McNary sophomores Tristen Williams and Nicodemus Ashlock act out a scene during a workshop by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, which visited the high school Nov. 13-17. RIGHT: Kaileela Hobby, a professional actor in New York City, leads McNary sophomores Lillian Garcia and Vanessa Acosta through a passage. BELOW: Actor David Huynh instructs a group of students.

Shakespeare Festival visits McNary

By **DEREK WILEY**
Of the Keizertimes

Kaileela Hobby and David Huynh, two professional actors in New York City, were back at McNary High School for a week of teaching and performing Shakespeare.

Working for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival school visit program, Hobby and Huynh spent Nov. 13-17 leading workshops for English and intro to theatre students.

The two workshops, Words and *Macbeth*, were meant to get students over any fears they may have of Shakespeare.

“A big reason that this tour exists is to help demystify Shakespeare because people have so many fears about it and they think it’s not something that belongs to them,” Huynh said. “We’re trying to remind people that it’s English and they don’t have to be scared of it.”

“And that they actually

understand it a lot better than they think they do,” Hobby said.

In Words, students begin the class by reading different passages in groups and then are asked what different phrases mean. By the end of the workshop, they are acting out the scenes.

“It’s incredible after one read through sometimes, they get it,” Huynh said. “They just doubt themselves because they have that ingrained fear of Shakespeare.”

Hobby and Huynh performed *Juliet’s Journey*, a 40-minute cut of *Romeo and Juliet*, where they combine to play all of the characters.

“I do a lot of educational tours and I find it the most rewarding work as an actor,” Hobby said. “I perform for audiences who are paying anywhere from \$30 to \$250 for tickets and these students don’t necessarily have the ability to do that. Sometimes

it’s their first experience at all with theatre, so that’s exciting to me to bring theatre and Shakespeare, something I’m really passionate about, to students.”

Hobby and Huynh began the three-month tour in October in rural Oregon—Vale, Burns and Culver.

They’ll spend December in Woodburn and then Portland.

Since McNary is a partnership school, Hobby and Huynh spent a full week in Keizer, even attending the drama department’s musical *The Wizard of Oz* on Thursday.



“It’s nice to get out of the city and explore the country a little bit,” Hobby said. “I love working for the Oregon

Shakespeare Festival. They take really good care of us.” “Theatre is so much about community,” Huynh added.

“It feels good to do the outreach and give back. That’s one of the big reasons why I love to do it.”

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