

# in the SPOTLIGHT



## Theatre advances to state with "The Miracle Worker"

For the first time in 6 years, Gautier High's Theatre Competition Team made it to the Mississippi Theatre Association state level competition with their production of "The Miracle Worker," under the direction of Mrs. and Mr. West after attending Drama Fest at USM in December.

While in Oxford, the cast and crew had to wake up at 5 a.m. sharp to start getting ready. At around 8 a.m., they performed. They had a total of 45 minutes to set the stage, act, and clear the stage. After this, each member moved on to individual productions. At the end of a long, tiring day, it was time for awards.

Tessa Cassio won Best Actress in the state for her portrayal of Annie Sullivan, Laney Birchfield received an All-Star Cast award for her role of Helen Keller, and both girls received special recognition for their fight choreography. Marleigh Eekhof placed 3rd in poster design in the individual awards. Ronnae Moore's original script "Jinx" won a few awards as well as the cast members. Eriel Odom won an All-Star Cast award for her acting, Ethan Mercer won an Outstanding Original Music award, and the entire cast and crew won an Outstanding Special Effects award.

"Everyone was really supportive of one another," stage manager Ronnae Moore stated about the response to "The Miracle Worker." "After we performed, people and other teams would congratulate us and tell us how much they enjoyed the performance."

And for four seniors, the journey was not over yet. Laney Birchfield, Ronnae Moore, Taylor Stringfellow, and Ashley Cole traveled to the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Louisville, Kentucky for college auditions.

"We were really excited and thankful that we had the opportunity to go!" Laney Birchfield commented on attending the conference.

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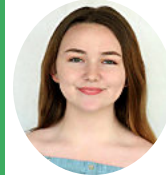


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## ask an actor

What was the most difficult part of portraying your character?



Ashley Cole

"Learning the dialect."

"Getting in and out of character."



Taylor Stringfellow



Tessa Cascio

"Understanding why my character cared so much."

"The physicality and learning the cues."



Laney Birchfield



### 1. **Good Girl**

Laney Birchfield (Helen Keller) and Tessa Cascio (Anne Sullivan) embrace each other as their characters have a breakthrough.

### 2. **Table Manners**

Taylor Stringfellow (12th), Ethan Mercer (10th), Ronnae Moore (12th), and Ashley Cole (12th) look on as Tessa Cascio (12th) attempts to teach Laney Birchfield (12th) table manners.

### 3. **Locked In**

Taylor Stringfellow helps Tessa Cascio out of a prop window after being "locked in."

### 4. **Family Meeting**

Ashley Cole, Taylor Stringfellow, and Tessa Cascio have a discussion.

### 5. **W-A-T-E-R**

Tessa Cascio teaches Laney Birchfield how to spell "water" with sign language by using a water pump.