Student actors return from scholarship auditions

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Staff writer

Ohlone acting students Idrees Najibi and John Vargas returned to Ohlone from scholarship auditions in Denver last month, where they got the opportunity to showcase their talents and meet other performers. "It was a great experience. I learned so much from the whole process and have grown as an actor. I feel very blessed and privileged to have been given this opportunity," said Najibi.

Najibi, 24, and Vargas, 23, performed in the Irene Ryan Scholarship Auditions at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival in Denver from Feb. 15 through 20.

According to its website, the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival "encourages, recognizes, and celebrates the finest and most diverse work produced in university and college theater programs." The actors were nominated after their performances in the Ohlone production of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" the fall.

They were accompanied by their acting coach Michael Navarra Smith and scene partners Stacey Lynn and Amir Hasan. Each chose two scenes and one monologue to perform in front of an audience of judges.

Their scenes included the titles "Doubt" by John Patrick Shanley and "The Pillowman" by Martin McDonagh. "The need for strong, dynamic and contrasting scenes that showcased my acting was the main criteria when looking for scenes," Najibi said.

He added, "My partner (Bell) would take on the role as a guide and mentor as she has more theater experience than I do, so I would look to her for advice."

Bell has previously competed in the Irene Ryan competition both as a nominee and as a part of a group. The actors rehearsed over a period of three months at the Smith Center.

"The whole process, from rehearsals to the auditions, was a great collaboration and trust," Hasan said.

The group also attended workshops and seminars at the festival with actors and playwrights from all over the country.

Neither of the actors made it to the next round of competition this year, but said the opportunity still was invaluable. "I didn't let the results dampen my spirits. I learned so much and feel I have grown as an actor," Najibi said.

"I LEARNED SO MUCH AND FEEL I HAVE GROWN AS AN ACTOR - IDREES NAJIBI"

Video editor describes career working on reality TV shows

LAURA GONZALEZ / MONITOR

Video editor Peter Gamba, who has worked on "The Real Housewives of New York" on Bravo, and other reality TV shows, shows a clip during a lecture at the TV Studios on the Fremont campus on Friday.

In 1999, "The Big Show" located in Chicago, Illinois. From 1993, working in reality TV, Zax works for "The Real Housewives of New York." The show is aired Saturdays from 4 to 9 p.m. on more than 150 Top 40 radio stations nationwide, including WQAD in Peoria, Illinois.

Meanwhile, the company's availability on the Internet has made fans out of listeners as far away as Israel, Mexico and Australia. The show also regularly receives emails and fan letters from U.S. military personnel stationed in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The show's host, the former Monday through Saturday from 3 to 7 a.m. on 99.7 The Fox (WBEX) in Charlotte, North Carolina, is available on the iHeart Radio app.

More information about the show is available on the show's website at www.thebigshow.com.

FORMAT CHANGES: On March 1, Cumulus Media dropped the country music format known as NASH-FM on KSJO in San Jose. The company decided not to exercise its option to buy the station and as a result, returned the 92.3 FM frequency to its owner. Universal Media Access, which began airing a South Asian format, NASH-FM never really put a dent into chief rival KRTY's ratings.

Speaking of Cumulus, KSAN/49 Program Director Jim Richards has left the building, sparking rumors that KFQD could flip to a country music format or begin a simulcast of sports talker KBRR 680. I'll keep you posted if events warrant.

TUNE-IN ALERT: Popular recording artists Shawn Hook and Fifth Harmony will be special guests this Saturday evening on Most Requested Live with Romeo. The show is aired Saturdays from 4 to 9 p.m. on more than 150 Top 40 radio stations nationwide, including WQAD in Peoria, Illinois, which is available through the iHeart Radio app.

More information about this week's show is available at the show's website: www.morestakedlive.com.

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