

L&C Dual-Credit Student from CM Wins You Have a Voice! Competition

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GODFREY – Lewis and Clark Community College and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society brought the annual You Have a Voice! humanities speech competition back to the Ann Whitney Olin Theatre on March 30. For the first time, the winner was a dual-credit student from Civic Memorial High School.

Senior Toni Reynolds, daughter of Kim and Scott Reynolds of Bethalto, earned first place with her speech entitled, “What Can One Learn from the Most Painful Moments?”

Reynolds, whose finish earned her \$100, was pleased with her win.

“Being a high school senior going up against college students – I really was just here for the experience,” she said. “Winning it was more of a shock than anything.”

L&C Speech Professor and PTK Advisor Elizabeth Grant was glad to host a live, in-person event.

“Two-thousand-twenty-two was a great year of competition,” she said. “Not only was it great to be off of Zoom for our event, but it attracted TED-level presenters.”

Reynolds’ Civic Memorial speech teacher and L&C adjunct faculty member Brett Kalker works to bridge the gap between high school and college in an effort to make the transition for his students more successful and the You Have a Voice! Humanities Speech Competition is a part of that.

“I am so proud of my students,” he said. “They did such an amazing job. This contest has been a great opportunity for them to find their voice on a bigger stage than just a classroom.”

Second place (\$75) went to L&C Student Trustee Sam Copeland. Copeland, who spoke candidly about his eating disorder, was also the contest’s first returning speaker. He initially participated in 2019 as the college’s first dual-credit speaker. Third place (\$50) went to Joe Whiteside, with his “Womb to Tomb (We Don’t Really Care)” speech.

The competition included another Civic Memorial dual-credit student, Gannon Meyer, as well as L&C students Bethany Lybarger and Jeri Bonine-Burton.

Reynolds will attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the fall, where she plans to study bioengineering, with a possible minor degree in musical theater or the arts.

For more information about You Have a Voice!, PTK, or the L&C speech department, contact Elizabeth Grant at eegrant@lc.edu.

For more information on L&C’s High School Partnership program, contact Yvette McLemore at ymclemor@lc.edu.