

February 28, 2026

Selection Committee
Mentored Student Research and Creative Activity Exhibit
College of Creative Arts & Media
West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV. 26506

Dear Members of the Committee,

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I write this statement of mentorship for **Daney Brookover** for the **Exhibit of Mentored Student Research and Creativity** in scene painting. Since beginning her BFA studies at West Virginia University in Fall 2022, Daney has stood out as one of the most exceptional undergraduate students I've encountered in my 20+ years of teaching—an exemplary collaborator, gifted designer, and highly skilled artisan.

As a sophomore, Daney artistic talent far exceeded her classmates. That fall, I asked her to design and paint the target for WVU Department of Mechanical, Materials and Aerospace Engineering and the WVU chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' [Annual Pumpkin Drop](#). Though new to theatrical painting techniques, Daney quickly excelled—demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of color mixing, project needs, and efficient execution. In the practicum course that same semester, she distinguished herself through her quick learning, initiative, and ability to complete projects independently and to a professional standard.

Impressed with her raw talent, West Virginia Public Theatre hired her as a scenic artist to work with me painting *Narnia: The Musical*. Sometimes, shows require more time than the standard workday. *Narnia* was one of those shows where we worked a few late nights and weekends. One late night, when I thanked the team, Daney replied, "It has to get done. I am here to get it done." That statement perfectly encapsulates her work ethic—steadfast, committed, and passionate. She brings that same energy to her classes, consistently showing up prepared, engaged, and curious.

As an assistant scenic designer for *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella*, her work surpassed her peers, and she naturally assumed the role of lead scenic artist on the show. Her outstanding performance led West Virginia Public Theatre to hire her as Charge Artist for their 2024 summer season, which included *Clue: On Stage* and *Steel Magnolias*. During *Clue*, I mentored a novice scenic designer and witnessed firsthand Daney's exceptional collaboration. What could have been a difficult process became a success because of her grace, humor, dedication, and leadership—qualities that also helped the new designer grow immensely.

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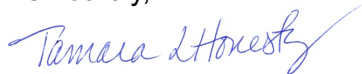
Daney's leadership was further evident in her work on *9 to 5: The Musical*. While many shop leaders were away attending USITT in Columbus, Daney took the initiative to create detailed packets for each scenic unit—complete with written step-by-step instructions, color notes, and technique guides—for the less experienced students and the scene shop supervisor. She even met with the team before leaving to ensure clarity. Thanks to her foresight, the production stayed on schedule during her absence. Her ability to design achievable techniques for varying skill levels while maintaining professional standards is remarkable, not to mention, her peers adore working with her.

Most recently, Daney has been a scenic artist on *Amour*, the fall musical I designed. The set features scrim units and a hanging skyline rendered in a vibrant pen-and-ink watercolor style. When the initial color mixes by her peers lacked vibrancy, Daney immediately identified the issue and communicated her observations with precision and artistry. She articulated to me, the designer, what she saw in terms the layers of colors in the shadows that she thought would achieve the desired effect. Daney expertly translated the subtleties of the paint elevations' layers of colors into reality. Her nuanced understanding of layered color and her ability to articulate her vision clearly fostered trust and collaboration between designer and artist—a skill rarely seen in an undergraduate. Her awareness of how scenic design and paint interact with all the design areas demonstrates a professional-level depth of understanding.

In Spring 2025, Daney enrolled in her first formal scene painting course. Based on her exceptional production work, I encouraged her to complete the graduate-level projects instead of the undergraduate ones—and she exceeded every expectation. To be honest, she blew everyone out of the water with the quality and complexity of her projects which were all completed on time! Her translucency project was particularly ambitious: she chose a neon sign that appeared in daylight when front-lit and transformed into a glowing sunset night scene when backlit. At the final exam, when we illuminated it, the entire class gasped and broke into spontaneous applause. It was one of those moments as an educator where I thought, could I have been as successful at this project (either as an undergraduate student or now with 30+ years of experience)?

I strongly recommend **Daney Brookover** for this showcase and award. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Sincerely,



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