

March 6, 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,

As co-mentors Professor Alan McEwen and I are delighted to write this statement of mentorship for **Will Davis**. Will served as the Sound Designer for the recent production of *Sueño* for the WVU School of Theatre & Dance and we nominate him for the for the **Exhibit of Mentored Student Research and Creativity**.

In the past three years, Will has showcased his abilities as a sound engineer for many productions for the School of Theatre & Dance as well as West Virginia Public Theatre (WVPT). He has demonstrated his talents as an engineer to deftly mix vocal reinforcement and orchestras to create an aural environment for the audience on several occasions. Last year, for the WVU and WVPT co-production on *A Christmas Carol*, Will exceeded all expectations when the sound console died and a completely new model of a sound console was rented to run the show. Will learned the interface and programmed the show in less than eight hours before the rehearsal.

Designing the sound for the play *Sueño* by José Rivera, Will created a soundscape for the show under the primary guidance of Professor Alan McEwen. From the first design meetings, he thoroughly analyzed the script and researched a multitude of options to present to the director as the design team began building the dreamlike world of the play. Many students would stop at providing the sound cues indicated in the script and the obligatory scene transition cues. During the design meetings, there was much discussion about the big battle scene. It was at this point that Will's dual strengths as both an artist and an engineer truly merged, leading him to push the boundaries of QLab, the industry-standard playback software. One of these functions included object audio mapping to enable 3D positioning where he could define the path of the soundtracks like surround sound in the movie theatre. Another tool he used was the randomizing effect. This provided the flexibility in the battle to provide a way to "loop" the sound by randomizing the location and frequency to immerse the audience in an aural environment unlike anything a static, called cue list could achieve.

The creativity and technical sophistication **Will Davis** brought to *Sueño* exemplifies the kind of student scholarship this exhibit was created to celebrate. I recommend him without reservation and welcome any further inquiries.

Sincerely,



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