



My name is Nevaeh Braucks and I am an Honors student and Presidential Scholar pursuing a Bachelor of Arts as a Theatre Generalist at Minnesota State University, Mankato. I am currently the Theatre Student Body Representative, and my estimated graduation date is May 2023. I look forward to making a difference on the lives of those around me through art and education, and I am excited to build relationships with all types of people and open the minds of an audience to new ideas and stories.

DIRECTORY



THEATRE

See my resume, headshots, production photos, and more here.



HONORS

I am a member of the Honors program at MSU Mankato- see my portfolio here.



ABOUT ME

Learn more about me and my journey here.



Honors Program

"Honors students are committed to developing in several competency areas such as leadership, research, and intercultural engagement. The program provides class experiences designed to support competency development and a variety of co-curricular activities to enrich their growth. Students demonstrate their emerging competencies through electronic portfolios in which they document their activities and engage in meaningful reflection about their learning. The Honors Program challenges students to move outside of their comfort zones and to think critically about the world and their personal contributions to the communities in which they live." *-from Honors Webpage*

Displayed in this portfolio is my demonstration of our key competencies of leadership, research, and intercultural engagement supported by artifacts and reflection.

[Why Honors? 375](#)

[Why Honors? 475](#)



"Upon graduation, students will utilize personal leadership values and strengths in a team



"Upon graduation, students will access and utilize credible information to answer research



"Upon graduation, students will learn more about their own culture and develop an understanding of



Leadership Synthesis Essay

Since I was very young, I have always been told I am a natural leader amongst my peers. In elementary school, I was called bossy more often than my parents would have liked, as my attempts to be successful and help others do the same were occasionally brash and tactless. As my social skills developed and my skill sets expanded, I continued to gravitate toward leadership roles. I developed my skills informally until I joined the Honors program and took an [Honors Mentorship](#) class. In this class, we spent a lot of time evaluating our strengths and the impact of former mentors, as well as different styles of mentorship. It culminated in writing my formal mentorship philosophy. Having done much research on mentorship and spending time developing my philosophy in different contexts made me feel much more prepared for more formal leadership experiences.

When I've taken strengths evaluations, many of my top strengths land in the "influencing" category. This means I have an aptitude for working directly with people, so I should not have been so surprised to discover how much I love teaching and mentorship. I've now had multiple opportunities to develop skills in these areas, especially with my work with [World Classrooms](#) and [Drama Kids](#). During the summer of 2021, I was essentially a traveling camp counselor for middle and high schoolers on school trips to Washington DC with a company called World Classrooms. Some of my favorite parts of leadership are interpersonal connections. Spending 24 hours a day for a whole week with each of my school groups, I developed strong relationships with students, parents, and teachers while working, and became an even more flexible and patient servant leader. With Drama Kids, I teach hour-long classes to elementary and middle schoolers throughout the school year, as well as some week-long camps in the summer. These hours are much less taxing than World Classrooms was but working with young children is a very different challenge than the adolescents I've gotten used to. Before assuming this position, nearly all my leadership and mentorship philosophy had been developed by working with peers and people much closer to my age. Adjusting my philosophy to suit the needs of children was daunting at first but proved to be much easier to adapt than expected. I am a very energetic and enthusiastic leader who loves to engage everyone, and I love meeting new people and watching new relationships form in my classes. Leading a large group, especially in [Drama Kids](#) and with [World Classrooms](#), has significantly increased my ability to get and keep individuals engaged, even in chaotic settings. This is especially important in theatre, travel, and education- all career prospects that are exciting to me in the near future.

Leadership is not a solo endeavor. In both positions, I've been lucky enough to have someone directly beside me as a co-lead or assistant teacher. In the past, I have tended to try to take on too much, physically and emotionally, in my desire to raise other people up. Working alongside leadership partners has made me much more aware of my strengths and weaknesses, allowed me to learn and grow with them, as well as reflect upon my [Mentorship Philosophy](#) in practice. One of my biggest challenges as a leader is how emotions and exhaustion can play into leadership, especially when working long hours while running summer camps with [Drama Kids](#) or [World Classrooms](#). My patience tends to run thinner as frustrations add up, as I am only human. However, through these frustrations, I learned how to communicate with my partners about these sorts of things, taking on responsibilities for others when they needed the same. These jobs have helped me realize how critical that support system is and how to best use it.

Aside from the aforementioned experiences, I've held many other leadership positions throughout my college experience. I've been a formal mentor to three students in the theatre department, worked as a mentor and counselor with Educational Talent Search at Minnesota State University, Mankato, and served as Production Stage Manager for Next Fall (dir. Eric Parrish and the MSU 2022 Fall Dance Concert and Student Dance Showcase. I was also honored to serve as the 2022 Undergraduate Student Theatre representative. There have been and will continue to be many more, but these specific experiences have been instrumental in developing my overall leadership philosophy. In my eyes, leaders exist to help others achieve their goals. My [HighFive](#) results support this greatly, as Coach and Problem Solver are my top strengths, and I believe those are what my style boils down to. I find great joy in supporting other people's journeys through leadership and developing my style along the way. There is no specific destination for leadership, and the journey through leadership can benefit the leader just as much as the people they happen to lead, be the setting formal or informal. The Honors program has empowered me to continue my development process post-grad, no matter the career path in which I end up.

RSC Synthesis

Research, Scholarly, Creative Activity

Before coming to college and joining the Honors program, research always seemed very daunting to me. Throughout high school and early college, research was always presented to me in an extremely academic fashion with difficult citations, charts, diagrams, and frequently contradicting viewpoints. Because it was presented in this way, I quickly became overwhelmed by the many books and computer tabs, and sticky notes. However, throughout my college experience, my research skills have developed tenfold, and my process is much less overwhelming now. While I've certainly developed my skills as a more traditional academic researcher, I've spent much more of my time learning how to synthesize visual, oral, and textual research in the context of creative activity.

The most traditional research experience I've had was taking [Honors Human Relations in a Multicultural Society](#) during my freshman year of college. The final project for this class was to interview an immigrant to the United States about their experience with race in the United States. Working with a primary source of an interviewee was very interesting and inspired my research greatly, as well as altered my viewpoint on how research for directing and playwriting can and should be handled as well. Since theatre is made up of stories about people, real or imagined, they are all grounded in universal truths that are relatable to much of humanity. Interviewing someone who has experienced something firsthand as inspirational research would be invaluable for someone writing a play or directing a show about something they haven't experienced themselves. The skills I learned from this interview process in developing protocol and allowing my future research to be inspired by the interviewee are ones I expect to continue using in the future. Following my interview for the [Human Relations paper](#), I found lots of supplementary evidence to support the claims made by my interviewee. I became very comfortable with Google Scholar and academic search engines like library databases to find peer-reviewed sources. I also learned to enjoy the search and let the materials I found guide my next discoveries.

With a major like theatre, however, not all research can be as effectively done through strictly academic and peer-reviewed sources, and research inspiration can come from anywhere! Theatrical research begins with script analysis, researching historical context, costumes, symbolism, and the playwright. Depending on the project, the themes and context can be very familiar and modern requiring less academic research in favor of calling more on the lived experiences of the team. When I designed the set for MSU's 2023 touring children's theatre production of [Not All Heroes Wear Capes](#), written and directed by RJ Magee, much of my research was visual or based on lived experience. While designing this project, I was heavily inspired by comic book pop art from artists like Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol, as well as everyday items. For modern everyday items like desks, I was able to just find desks that were similar to what I was envisioning and base my design around that, but for my stylistic inspiration, I looked to the Museum of Modern Art's search engine and the Roy Lichtenstein foundation catalog. Both of these sites show photographic reproductions of original works that I used to guide my artistic process, along with the script.

On the other hand, when I directed a scene from the David Ives translation of [A Flea in Her Ear](#) by George Feydeau in my [Advanced Directing](#) class, it required much more formal research. This play takes place in the Belle Époque era in France, which has an entirely different feel than modern America in speech, dress, and mannerisms. Additionally, it is a farce—a highly dramatic comedy that requires a stylized physical approach to help emphasize the humor. As such, I began with script analysis, then delved into research of the era and farce, integrating peer-reviewed sources, visual and audio sources, Google finds, as well as lived experiences of myself and the actors. A director must be able to communicate their concept and research to their design team and actors. My [directing book](#) for this project shows a portion of my supplemental research and script analysis, as well as everything else that goes into a directing scene like scenic, props, and technical needs, schedules, rehearsal reports, ground plans, blocking notation, personal rehearsal notes, and a reflection on my work as a director and my directing style.

As someone who loves learning, I do research constantly. Whether it be more formal for a project or more leisure-based on a whim using Google, I've become confident in identifying solid research and using it to support or change my ideas about the world. In a society where information is more readily available than ever before, it has become even more important to know how to do effective research. Recognizing what is true in what is well-supported by evidence is critical to the continual growth of our society, and I expect to continue applying the critical thinking skills developed in my collegiate research experiences for years to come.



Intercultural Engagement Synthesis Essay

One of my favorite things in the world is hearing and telling stories. This should not come as a surprise to anyone who knows me as I am an extrovert who majored in theatre, but I think that this openness and willingness to share stories is one of the most important skills one needs become a global citizen. Being a global citizen and engaging interculturally is the best way to get a more diverse, interesting, and complete vision of the world around me- and to do that, I first needed to have an open mind. Before entering college and joining the Honors program, my image of global citizenship and intercultural engagement was that I had to study abroad or become best friends with someone from another culture who would take me under their wing and teach me everything about their life, but now I know it's so much simpler. It's the willingness to learn about others empathetically, do your best to acknowledge and work through your biases, and make an effort to continue growing and sharing that knowledge with others.

While I have always thought myself to be an open minded and empathetic person to people whose lives I didn't quite understand, I don't have much experience engaging with people from different backgrounds, and I didn't begin making conscious steps to engage interculturally until my freshman year of college. It began while taking [Human Relations in a Multicultural Society](#), during my freshman year of college, we took the [Harvard Implicit Biases tests](#). These tests consist of word and picture associations that test your speed and accuracy in correctly matching associations. I took tests on race, gender and career relationships, and disability. It's critical to be aware of any implicit biases so you can work to view life more objectively and diversely so you can continue to grow in a positive and inclusive direction. While taking these tests, I was so nervous that I was going to have very heavy biases due to where I was raised. I grew up in Central Minnesota, where Islamophobia is unfortunately ever present, and graduated from a high school that was far from diverse culturally. According to this evaluation, my fear was unnecessary, as all the cultural biases I tested for came back "negative", but this fear made me realize how badly I want to be good to people with different backgrounds from me. From there, I started seeking information about underserved communities and having difficult conversations with close friends in an effort to grow together.

One of the biggest challenges with intercultural engagement is doing so respectfully and ethically. The best way that I have learned to do this is to be an enthusiastic listener. I worked on this skill the most while volunteering with Aktion Club Theatre, a disability theatre in the Mankato area. This experience empowered me to be even more unapologetically myself, taught me to get really comfortable with making mistakes, refreshed and redefined my relationship with theatre, and generally brought me so much joy. Meeting new and kind people always lifts my mood, and even though it can be daunting knowing you might fail in your attempt to connect with someone, I am so much more confident and aware of the ways I communicate now. Already I've been able to apply these skills to my life as I lead my peers and youths as the undergraduate student representative and a [Drama Kids](#) teacher.

Intercultural engagement is something that I know I will work on for the rest of my life. In both my self-examinations of the [implicit biases](#) and with Aktion Club, it became crystal clear to me the importance of being a global citizen to creating peace. We are living in a culturally turbulent time with ability, race, and gender relations, and it is critical that we all develop as global citizens to minimize the negative impact we have on each other. Understanding and empathy are at the root of peace, and while uncomfortable, intercultural engagement is about stepping outside your comfort zone to expand your worldview. Moving forward, I intend to make opportunities for myself to engage with other cultures. I want to work in as many locations as possible, be it in theatre or outside of it, and develop my global citizenship as much as possible by keeping myself out of my comfort zone.



About Me

[Work Resume](#)

I was born and raised in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota right next to the Mississippi River. I am the oldest of three children and I am a first generation college student. On the rare occasion I'm not at work, in the theatre, or on campus, some of my favorite things to do are eat interesting foods, spend time with friends and family, attend events, and learn about new people and things!



Education

Minnesota State University, Mankato
BA Theatre Generalist, exp. May 2023

Sauk Rapids-Rice Public Schools, May 2019

Work Experience

Mankato-St. Peter Drama Kids International, Lead Teacher, 2021-present

MNSU New Student and Family Programs Student Worker, 2020-2022

MNSU Educational Talent Search, Mentor, April 2021-present

World Classrooms Chief Experience Officer, Summer 2021

Coborn's, Deli Merchandiser, 2017-2021

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Theatre

Nevaeh Braucks is a self-proclaimed overachiever from Central Minnesota, right along the Mississippi River. An actress, mover, singer, director, designer, and stage manager, she is currently in her final semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato where she is pursuing a BA Theatre Generalist degree (exp. 2023). Nevaeh is also an Honors student and Presidential Scholar. She spends most of her time in rehearsals for a variety of productions, but when not in the theatre, she loves hiking, traveling, leading, and trying new foods in her free time. She is currently in rehearsals for *Something Rotten!* as a member of the Bard's Posse, Most recently, as a member of the Bard's Posse in *Something Rotten!*, Lil in *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove*, and Kelsi Nielsen in *High School Musical*. Her favorite stage management experiences were December 2022 for the Fall Dance Concert, and April 2021 for *Next Fall* at MSU Mankato, where she was production stage manager. Nevaeh also volunteers with Open Arts Minnesota's Aktion Club of Mankato and teaches students in the Mankato area about the joys and skills of theatre through Drama Kids International. Nevaeh will be making her professional debut this summer in the ensemble of *Spongebob: The Musical* at Highland Summer Theatre!



[Complete Theatre Resume](#)


Recent and Upcoming Productions

Stay tuned...
Upcoming!




See me in the ensemble of Spongebob from June 7-10 at Highland Summer Theatre in Mankato, MN!

April 2023
Bard Posse- *Something Rotten!*



w/ Billy Krager, Sarah Patvin, Elizabeth Albanisius, and Rachel Reidburn
Directed by Paul J. Hustalos
Lighting Design by Steven Smith
Set Design by John Paul
Costumes by David McCarl

November 2022
Lil- *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove*



w/ Iyeshia Ghoston-Green
Directed by Vladimir Rovinski
Lighting Design by Finley Alexander
Set Design by John Paul
Costumes by Lainey Gregerson

October 2021
Nora Meyers- *Good for Otto*



w/ Gray Robertson and Parker Adams
Directed by Vladimir Rovinski
Lighting Design by Steven Smith
Set Design by Jason Wagaman
Costumes by David McCarl