

Storytelling is an art form that has been with society since before the written word. Cultural traditions have passed down the craft through the generations, and it is still as engaging today as it was for our ancestors. The Lone Star Storytelling Festival is an event which celebrates this oral tradition, and provides an opportunity for the next generation to learn to appreciate and even develop their talent for storytelling. This is exemplified in the student storytellers who will participate in this year's storytelling festival.

The biggest aspect that makes this year stand out among other years of student tellers is the quality of auditions submitted to the 2009 Lone Star Storytelling Festival. "We have some amazing talent this year," says Teresa Jones, a youth services library assistant and student teller coach. On top of having amazing talent, for the first time, student tellers will perform for Frisco ISD schools on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October, the first day of the festival. This will be a great opportunity to share their talent with their peers. The student tellers will also be performing on Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, alongside professional storytellers from around the world!

Student tellers range from 8 to 16 years old. They are generally enrolled in the Frisco or Prosper school district, or are homeschoolers. Becoming a student teller at the Lone Star Storytelling Festival isn't easy. These young tellers must not only meet an application deadline, and extensive submission requirements, they must also meet three main criteria for assessing the quality of an audition: believability, movement, and diction. "We choose quality over quantity," says Jones. The three student teller coaches teach and speak from experience. All have professional backgrounds varying in theater, film, television, and storytelling. The students selected to be storytellers must attend a minimum of five 1-hour coaching sessions, as well as a mandatory orientation. At the orientation they are to pick a story which can range in emotion and style, from humorous to dramatic. They also have one dress rehearsal which will take place in the city's Council Room Chambers in front of peers, family, and friends.

Student storytellers will be performing in September at *Wow! It's Wednesday!* a story time program in the Frisco Public Library's Children's Programming Room. This popular story time program is geared for kids in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Student talent will ultimately perform at the Lone Star Storytelling Festival (which will be held at Frisco Square) on October 9<sup>th</sup> for Frisco ISD, and on October 10<sup>th</sup> for Texans of all ages! Local residents can support their homegrown talent by coming to the Festival and seeing these student tellers perform. This is an amazing opportunity for the community to embrace its own identity and support our young Texans!

Please visit <http://www.friscostorytellingfestival.org/> for more information about the festival.