



YAVAPAI COLLEGE STUDENT ARIEL CUNNINGHAM EARNS PRESTIGIOUS PERFORMING ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

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Ariel Cunningham felt 'confident and good' walking away from her February audition. "I didn't think 'Oh, I got it.' But I got through all my stuff - my song, and contemporary monologue. The auditioner said she might stop and work with the actors a bit. But when I finished, all she said, was 'thank you.'" **Three days after returning to Prescott, Ariel - a twenty-year-old YC Performing Arts student - was notified that she was the newest member of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA).**

"It's such an honor," she says.

One of the country's preeminent schools for performing artists, AMDA has launched some of the most successful careers in theatre, film and television. Staffed with a faculty of working Broadway and film directors, choreographers, actors, producers and casting agents, AMDA instills a standard of excellence, and a strong, well-rounded skill set.

"Even during my high school years, I knew about AMDA," says Ariel, who initially shied away from the idea of attending there. "It was a big city, and a big jump. I wanted something more familiar."

Instead, the Prescott High School graduate pursued an Associate of the Arts Degree at Yavapai College. "Each class was small, so teachers could work with you one-on-one. My main Theatre professor, Nanette Hofer, is good with helping people reach that higher level." She credits Mary Heller, her dance instructor, and Chamber Choir Director Chris Tenney, with helping her develop her movement and vocal skills. "All the professors at Yavapai College want you to succeed and grow. Being in *Singin' in the Rain* last November was amazing, as well. It taught me how to be a professional."

That approach came in handy when AMDA's national audition tour rolled through Phoenix in February. "I was nervous. But at the same time, I went in with a kind of 'can-do' attitude." She says. "If I want to be a professional in this field, I have to get used to auditioning and rejections."

Ariel begins classes in the American Musical Dramatic Academy's Bachelor of Fine Arts Program this October, in Los Angeles.

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Yavapai College operates six campuses and centers throughout Yavapai County and offers over 100 degrees and certificates, two baccalaureate degrees, student and community services, and cultural events and activities.



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