
Broad Ripple Magnet High School for the Arts & Humanities Students Attend Hamilton in Chicago

By Shawnta S. Barnes - May 22, 2017



On Wednesday, May 10, 2017, 38 performing arts students from Broad Ripple Magnet High School for the Arts & Humanities, 15 adults including a few Broad Ripple teachers and other teachers from Indianapolis Public Schools, traveled to Chicago to attend the Broadway show Hamilton: An American Musical, written by Lin-Manuel Miranda about the life of Alexander Hamilton, US founding father and the first US Secretary of the Treasury. This critically acclaimed musical with great box office success has won 11 Tony Awards including Best Musical, a Grammy Award, and a Pulitzer Award for Drama.

Once the group arrived in Chicago, Broad Ripple Choral Director Denise R. Johnson asked for a show of hands of students who had never been to Chicago and four hands went up. Attendees spent time on Michigan Avenue and the Magnificent Mile. Then, they enjoyed Gino's East Chicago style deep-dish pizza before attending a matinee showing of Hamilton.



After the musical, one performing arts student stated, "I had listened to the soundtrack and knew all of the songs. I had pictured in my head how it would look

on stage. This was better than anything I could have ever imagined. I'm just so glad our teacher planned this trip."

During her 17 year tenure at Broad Ripple, Ms. Johnson and has traveled out of the state with the choral music students, but this was the first time she took students out of Indiana to see a musical. Her goal for next year school is to travel with her students to New York. She believes this is possible with sponsorships and fundraising. To travel to Chicago, the trip was mostly funded by student-led fundraisers and some donations.

Students attending this magnet high school have interest in the performing, visual arts and media, while many pursue a major in college afterwards. Two former Broad Ripple students who are currently attending college in Chicago were able to attend the musical with the group. Sixty percent of students at Broad Ripple receive free and reduced lunch; without attending this school they might have never been able to travel to see professionals perform in the field that interests them.