

Tenaflly Public Schools
Contact: Christine Corliss
Publicity Coordinator
E-Mail: ccorliss@tenafly.k12.nj.us
Phone: 201-816-4554

Tony and Grammy Award Nominee Damon Daunno Visits with Tenaflly High School Students

'Oklahoma!' star shares Broadway experiences with music and drama students

For Immediate Release

Tenaflly, NJ – June 15, 2021 – Students at Tenaflly High School had a rare treat on Wednesday, June 9th, when 2019 Tony Award nominee Damon Daunno visited with the school's music and drama departments to share what he has learned during his time auditioning on and off Broadway.

A native of Whippany, NJ, Daunno is best known for his performance as Curly in the 2019 Broadway revival of *Oklahoma!* for which he received a 2019 Tony Award nomination for Best Actor in a Musical. Daunno also appeared on Broadway in *Brief Encounter* (2010), and Off-Broadway in *Oklahoma!* (2018), *The Lucky Ones* (2018 - Lucille Lortel Award for Best Actor in a Musical), *Beardo* (2017), and *Hadestown* (2016 - for which an original Off-Broadway cast recording can be heard online).

A long-time friend and former student of Director of Choirs and Orchestras James Millar, Daunno began the visit with a solo rendition of "The Surrey With The Fringe On Top", Curly's, a.k.a. Daunno's, well-known number from *Oklahoma!* followed by "Epic II" from *Hadestown*. Following a round of energetic applause, students asked the actor/singer questions ranging from "What would you tell your high school self now" to "What's the worst thing that ever happened to you during a show?"

"Students interested in the arts love to hear from the people who are doing what they dream of doing," said Millar. "So, to sit down and chat with a Broadway star who grew up near where you live, who went to schools and starred in plays very similar to those in which you took part is not only exciting, but a lesson in life, determination, and drive."

“When things affect you, remember to stay kind, stay confident and playful, and don’t take things too personally,” said Daunno.

During COVID, Daunno found constructive ways to fill the void of not doing shows, making audition tapes, hosting Zoom workshops, and even performing from the rooftop of a hotel.

Daunno and Millar wrapped up the visit by performing “Pore Jud Is Daid” as Curly and Joe from *Oklahoma!* and sharing stories of their performances together.

"I used to have a bit of an identity crisis about having to choose between acting and music," added Daunno. "But as I got older I learned that one really informs the other and in the end, it helped to land roles like Curly and Orpheus."

Daunno stars as Danny in the soon-to-be-released movie “The Hating Game”, starring Lucy Hale, for which he has also contributed an original song.

Daunno’s *Oklahoma!* performance can be listened to on Spotify and Apple Music.

For more information on Tenafly Public Schools, visit <https://www.tenaflyschools.org>.



