

PRIDE to host annual drag show

By Kayla Gaffney

Southeast Missouri State University's student organization PRIDE will host its annual drag show Friday, Oct. 14.

Last year the drag show was titled "Halloqueen" and was Halloween themed. But unlike last year, the event will not have a direct theme attached to it, but will have an essence of fall in some of the performances.

"We were going to stick with the Halloween theme again but since it's two weeks earlier than Halloween we decided that it would be kind of a fall theme," Rane Belling, president of PRIDE, said. "In the performances I think some of them are going to do Halloween numbers."

Belling said the process of organizing the event started early and has gone smoothly.

"We started talking about it last semester, getting all the performers set up and everything. It's a longer process, but overall everyone is really helpful and setting everything up, it goes really smoothly," Belling said. "Student Government this year is sponsoring the event, usually we use D.I.C.E as our funding, but I went to Student Government and that was an easy process too."

Julie Socorro, known as Fame Lee Jewels on stage, has performed at the drag show before but in addition to performing this year she will also host the show.

"I actually enjoy hosting, I like to make the evening fun and keep people's attention," Socorro said. "I used to have my own show at one point and I really enjoyed doing the shows that much - I just really enjoy it."

The show will feature some other familiar faces, including Riley James and Blanche DuBois. Along with some veterans of the show, there will be new performers joining as well. One of those performers is Adryan Masters-Michaels, who will not be performing as the opposite sex.

"The coolest thing, the newest thing about this is that they're not all just kings and just queens," Belling said. "Adryan is a male and performs as a male, which is something that people don't understand, but it's really just expressing a different part of himself, so he dresses in male costumes but wears lipstick and makeup ... so it's a different expression, which I think is going to be a cool experience for people to see."

Socorro said she enjoys doing drag because it gives her a chance to express herself creatively.

"I enjoy it myself because it's a creativity outlet and gives you a chance to stretch your artistic legs," Socorro said. "It's an energy that you only really understand if you've ever done it yourself."

Belling said the size of the audience has grown each year and attendance is expected to be high.

“This year we’re looking for over 300 people to show ... I’m really excited about that,” Belling said.

Belling said the growth this year may have to do with this year’s freshman class.

“This year I think it’s going to be bigger ... the freshman class this year is just incredible, they’re all really looking to get involved and so far PRIDE has been bigger than usual just because this freshman class is coming in and getting involved with PRIDE,” Belling said. “I’m expecting it to be a pretty big event.”

Socorro said anyone who plans to attend the show should expect to feel comfortable and have fun.

“The best thing you can expect is to have a lot of fun, be comfortable with who you are and why you’re there because you’re among many people that don’t judge, you’re among many people that are there to do the same thing you are – have fun,” Socorro said.

Belling said the event is not only a way for the audience to have a good time, but is also a learning opportunity.

“It’s just a really fun event to go to, and really laid back, and it’s a safe environment to just enjoy yourself and be yourself,” Belling said. “But also for those that aren’t in the LGBT community or allies, it gives them a chance to expand their mind — I think that’s a really cool thing, this fun environment where they also will have this opportunity to learn things that they don’t understand.”

The event is free and open to students, faculty and members of the community. According to Belling, PRIDE will accept donations for the organization at the event but it is not an admission fee into the show.

Although not mandatory, Belling said tips for the performers are always encouraged and appreciated.