

STATEN ISLAND

Wagner College alumnus joins Broadway cast of 'Dear Evan Hansen'

Taking on role of Conner Murphy in Tony Award winning musical

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Broadway's Tony Award winning musical "Dear Evan Hansen" added Wagner College Theatre alumni Alex Boniello to its cast list Tuesday.

Boniello, a theater major who graduated in 2013, got his big break as the voice of Moritz in Deaf West's acclaimed 2017 Broadway revival of "Spring Awakening."

Last night, he officially took

over the part of Connor Murphy, originated by Tony nominee Mike Faist, in "Dear Evan Hansen" at The Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St.

"This role resonated with me the first time I saw it off-Broadway," Boniello told the Advance.

"I knew that somehow, somehow, I wanted to be a part of this production. I'm really excited that it's happening. I'm excited to start."

"Dear Evan Hansen," with music and lyrics written by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, captures the zeitgeist of modern day.

Using catchy songs and a high-tech set design to bring suicide awareness into the conversation, the show has generated the most massive mainstream stage stir since "Hamilton."

The titular character, Evan

Hansen, is a high school senior who suffers from social anxiety disorder, which inhibits his ability to connect with other people and make friends.

After the death of one of his classmates, he fabricates a lie that inadvertently brings him closer to the classmate's family while also allowing him to gain his own sense of purpose.

BUDDIES REUNITE

Boniello isn't the only Wagner College Theatre alum on the "Dear Evan Hansen" cast list.

Already there are Danielle Buccino, assistant stage manager, and Olivia Puckett, an understudy.

Score tickets to see these Wagner alumni via www.dearevanhansen.com or www.tdf.org.



Alex Boniello, right, with Olivia Puckett in a Wagner College Theatre production of "The School of Lies." Boniello is joining the Broadway cast of "Dear Evan Hansen," reuniting with Puckett, who is an understudy for the Tony Award winning musical. *Karen O'Donnell*