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Janet Albanese is a strong supporter of Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards and a native of Des Moines. Janet has worked professionally as a production manager and stage manager on both coasts. She has taught stage management to students in undergraduate programs and mentored young stage managers at a variety of professional theaters and academic programs. Janet brings over 20 years of experience working on productions from concept to realized design. She is passionate about communicating this collaborative experience to liberal arts students so they can grow in whatever capacity they are interested—as actors, designers, directors, or stage managers. Janet is the director of production and building services at Des Moines Performing Arts. Previously she has stage managed Iowa's longest running show, Triple Espresso, as well as shows around the country, including in Los Angeles and New York.

Bri Atwood is a sound designer and audio engineer in the Iowa City/Corridor area. She has been designing professionally for 10 years. Bri loves to work with the next generations of artists to help keep the art alive and evolving. Bri's favorite mixes include City Circle's productions of *Next to Normal* and *Newsies*, and the University of Iowa's production of *Fun Home*.

Robert Barry is a retired vocal music instructor from Sioux City, Iowa. He possesses a Bachelor's of Music Education from Morningside College, and Master's of Science in School Administration from Wayne State College. Bob spent 38 years teaching vocal and instrumental music in public and private schools in Northwest Iowa, covering all aspects of music education in primary, secondary and collegiate settings. Bob has extensive experience as a performer, director, accompanist and musical director. His work extends from middle and high school productions in the Sioux City area, regional theater work at Lamb Arts Regional Theater and professional productions at the Betty Ling Tsang Summer Theater Series at Morningside College. Bob maintains a private voice studio, and mentors new choral conductors through the Iowa Alliance for Arts Education and the Iowa Choral Director's Association, and appears often on adjudication panels with the Iowa High School Music Association.

Cary Beatty holds a Master of Arts degree from the University of Iowa and taught literature, German and theater for 34 years. He has directed more than 50 shows, performed in approximately 100, and has been an acting teacher for 22 years. At Kennedy High School in Cedar Rapids, he produced the very first full high school production of *Cats*, and brought the first productions of *Laramie Project* and *High School Musical* to that metro area. Additionally, Cary attended the Music Theater International workshops in New York City and had the chance to work with Broadway performers in such productions as *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Hairspray* and Craig Birko's rendition of *The Music Man*. Cary received an award from Governor Vilsack for creating an interactive drama event for elementary students as drug prevention.

Tracy Bennett retired from the dance business after 45 years in the family dance studio. She is now the new executive director of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and produces over 75 shows per year as director of programming. Tracy studied theater and music extensively in high school and college and was involved in musical theater at her community theater in Sioux City, where her family was responsible for most of the choreography from 1970 to 1980. She studied at the National Academy of Dance—a high school for the performing arts—for two years and was involved in multiple productions. Tracy holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education, Speech and Drama. She has produced, directed and choreographed over 100 shows in local theatres. She also sees performances wherever she travels and has been to over 50 countries, including London, Paris and Beijing; she's also gone to Broadway, Off Broadway and Off-Off Broadway. She has worked lights, sound, sets, props and costumes (she's ironed too many tutus to mention). Tracy often works all



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aspects of backstage as a casual to the union stage hands when touring musicals come to The Orpheum.

Scott Bertelsen taught at Forest City High School for 39 years and is now retired from this role. While teaching, he co-directed 35 musicals and 30 plays. During his time as co-director of the high school musical, the Forest City community abundantly supported him with sold-out shows. In 2015, Scott and Michele Jacobsen, vocal instructor at the time, were highlighted as high school musical directors on an IPTV special. In 2018, Scott was the recipient of the IHSMTA Impact Award and was inducted into the IHSSA Hall of Fame.

Dani Boal has been attending local theatre since she was able to walk. Her mom swears by the statement that one day she took her to a children's show at the Des Moines Ingersoll Dinner Theatre and she refused to leave until she could find out how to, "get her up on that stage". A few months later she played Baby Louise, at age 6, in Gypsy, and hasn't slowed down since. Dani holds a degree in music from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and has been involved in local Community Theatre's in Iowa, Arizona, and Nebraska. She not only performs onstage but enjoys being on the production side as a choreographer, stage manager, vocal coach, or music director. She now calls Des Moines home where she lives with husband, son, and soon-to-be daughter.

Linda Brant is a retired educator, most recently the speech and drama director in Charles City. She directed high school and community productions for over 40 years and was named to the IHSSA Speech Hall of Fame. Other citations have included Rotarian Vocational Award, Charles City Woman of the Year, and Wartburg College High School Teacher of the Year. She has been a presenter at many state conferences, especially for costuming and set design.

Kendra Breitsprecher is a lifelong theatre lover, performer, director, judge, and critic. She successfully coached and directed high school theatre for over 25 years and has been a certified IHSSA judge since 1983. With a BA in theatre and an MA in Shakespeare, Kendra also enjoys the academic side of drama. Kendra has also performed in musical theatre, as have her three children.

Michelle Brylczyk has grown her high school love of theater into a two-decade career spanning three continents. After touring as a stage manager, lighting designer and stagehand, Michelle is currently the ticketing manager for DMPA. Michelle has managed ticketing in Des Moines, Philadelphia, and Las Vegas and has a BA in Theatre from Taylor University.

John Busbee is a creative project developer and founder of The Culture Buzz, an independent arts and culture resource for Iowa. He has trained in both theater design and arts management and has reviewed theater for almost 20 years. Performing arts career highlights include co-owner/performer of Music/Theatre Artists, which toured nationally from Las Vegas to Chicago to New York, plus a Caribbean USO Tour. With more than 150 professional and local stage credits, key musical theater roles include "Teveye," "John Adams," "Cowardly Lion" and "Nathan Detroit." He created lead roles in *Caucus the Musical* (2008, 2012). John coached teams for several years for IHSSA in musical theater, including multiple All-State invitations. He adjudicated for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. He serves as a co-founder and judge for the Greater Des Moines Cloris Leachman Excellence in Theatre Awards and has adjudicated for the IHSMTA since 2015. Since 2007, John has produced an arts and culture radio program on KFMG 98.9 FM TheCultureBuzz.com—which focuses on promoting Central Iowa's cultural scene. His work in the arts was recognized with the 2014 Iowa Governor Award for Collaboration & Partnership in the Arts.



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Erin Bustin's parents returned from London when she was five years old with recordings: Les Misérables, The Phantom of the Opera, Chess, and more. She was swept away by the music, the stories, and especially by the power of the human voice. From that moment on, she found every possible opportunity to sing. Erin lives in Grinnell, Iowa where she is the founding director of the Grinnell Children's Choir and co-founder and singer in Vox Feminae, a women's chamber ensemble. She teaches voice lessons, music theory, and Music Together - an early childhood music and movement class - at Studio E Grinnell. Erin holds a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from the University of Prince Edward Island and a Master of Arts in Musicology from the University of Toronto. Before moving to Iowa in 2014, Erin worked in non-profit arts management, including positions at prestigious Canadian organizations Soundstreams and Choral Canada, and was a professional member of the Toronto Bach Festival Singers (Doreen Rao) and Toronto Choral Artists (Mark Vuorinen). While choral singing is her first love, Erin is also an active soprano recitalist. Erin is a passionate advocate for music education and accessibility. She believes singing develops invaluable life and leadership skills and creates happier, healthier communities.

Mary Campbell received her Bachelor of Arts in Speech and Theater; Certification in Secondary Education from Fontbonne College in St. Louis, Missouri and her Master of Science in Education with Principal's Licensure: Secondary from Drake University. Currently, she is an adjunct professor for Kirkwood Community College in the social sciences department and substitute teaches in the Prairie High School and Center Point-Urbana School Districts. Mary is also an Iowa High School Speech Association judge and was inducted into the IHSSA Hall of Fame in 2012.

Susan Cantine-Maxson received her BA from Wartburg, majoring in speech, theatre and English. Her Master's Degree from UNI focused on creative drama and communications. She directed high school musical theatre and variety shows at Decorah High School for 30+ years before her retirement in 2005. She was inducted into the Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame in 2005. In addition to high school theatre, Cantine-Maxson worked for several years with Luther College's Dorian Opera theatre in the summer as an assistant to the director. Summers also brought an opportunity to work with Decorah's community theatre on musical theatre productions in a variety of roles both onstage and offstage.

Steven Carignan is enjoying his 20th year at the University of Northern Iowa where he serves as executive director at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center. He is responsible for overseeing all operations at the center, as well as serving as associate dean for outreach and special programs. Prior to moving to Iowa, he worked at the Maine Center for the Arts at the University of Maine for 14 years. Steve is a leader and manager, with expertise in marketing, fundraising and education. Steve is currently serving the community as part of the Waterloo Culture and Arts Commission and in the past served two terms as president of the Cedar Valley Cultural Alliance. He has served on the Boards of the YMCA, Boy Scouts and United Way. He has served the state by working with the Iowa Arts Commission and on the executive board of Iowa Public Radio for four years, with a nine-month stint as interim executive director. Steve received a bachelor's degree in history and another one in theatre from Dickinson College, as well as a master's degree in theatre from the University of Maine. He was named a fellow of the Stanford Graduate School of Business's Center for Social Innovation in 2003 and received his doctorate in higher education from Iowa State University in 2012.

Daniel Chase has a BA in music education from Iowa Wesleyan College with graduate studies in music education and musical theater from the University of Northern Iowa, VanderCook College of Music and Drake University. He was a music educator for 27 years, teaching choral music and voice around the state and continues to shape high school musicians as an adjudicator for Iowa High



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School Music Association and Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards. In addition, Dan directed Cardinal KeyNotes vocal jazz ensemble at Iowa State University and has guest-directed musicals at area high schools. Dan has also performed in more than 30 dramas, comedies, and musicals. Favorite acting roles include Rote in “Wait Until Dark”, Carmichael in McDonagh’s “A Behanding In Spokane” and John Wilkes Booth in Stephen Sondheim’s “Assassins”. Along with his wife Carol Palmer, Dan acts professionally with Jest Murder Mysteries performing interactive murder mystery dinner theater across the midwest.

Jeff Chelesvig is President and CEO of Des Moines Performing Arts. Under his leadership, Des Moines Performing Arts presents seven performance series and serves over 300,000 people annually. Chelesvig plays an integral role in the Broadway theater community, serving on The Broadway League’s Board of Governors and Executive Committee. He is Iowa’s only voter for Broadway’s highest honor, the Tony Awards.

Holly Christine Brown saw her first musical theater production in 1988, Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella, and was enchanted from that moment on. She loved every aspect of performing — starting in dance class, and from there went on to act in middle school, high school, and community theater performances and participate in high school speech, band, and choir before moving backstage at the University of Iowa. There, she worked on crew on multiple shows for the Iowa Summer Rep and was crew chief for the world-premiere show, “Klub Ka: A Blues Legend.” Since graduating with her BA in theatre arts, Ms. Brown has worked as a line producer on several independent films, contributed her voice acting talents to a documentary and radio play, and currently works as a judge for the Iowa High School Speech Association. She works as a professional writer and editor in Cedar Rapids, IA.

Anna Cramer is the development manager at Des Moines Performing Arts (DMPA). Prior to her role at DMPA, Anna worked for the DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., where she served over 500 arts and culture organizations in capacity building efforts. She has also worked for the Overture Center in Madison, WI, Wisconsin Public Radio, and the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul, MN. Anna worked as a stage and production manager in Minneapolis and spent nine summers working for Theater e3, a 5-week summer theater intensive for kids ages 7-14. Anna holds a Master of Business Administration degree from the Bolz Center for Arts Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater and Business from Elmhurst College in Illinois.

Kathie Danielson taught theatre, speech and English for Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) for 20 years. In addition, she directed musicals and plays at Hoover High School and choreographed musicals at East High School in Des Moines. During her years as a DMPS principal and director of high schools, she supported and attended numerous high school theater productions. Kathie and her husband Ron have made numerous trips to their favorite city, New York, to view musicals and plays. In addition, they are Willis Broadway Series season ticket holders at Des Moines Performing Arts. Kathie believes there are a multitude of benefits to academic and social-emotional growth high school students receive from their involvement in musical theater.

Emily Davis is a local actor, director and stand-up comedian. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music and Theatre from Northwestern College in Orange City. Currently she is the production manager for Kata Klysmic Productions, and acts, directs and teaches for multiple theater companies in the Des Moines area. Favorite Des Moines roles include “Kristine” in A Chorus Line, “Alice” in Closer, “Christine” in A Doll’s House, “Nina” in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, and “Alice” in You Can’t Take It With You.



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Peter Dean is a local actor, director, IHSSA Large Group Speech judge and IHSSA Speech coach. He has performed numerous roles with the Des Moines Community Playhouse on both the main stage and the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre, as well as performed with other local theater companies. Peter is also part of the educational staff and a member of the Playhouse Partners at the Des Moines Community Playhouse. Some of Peter's favorite roles to date have been "Sharktooth" in *How I Became a Pirate* (Dionysus Award winner), "Cowardly Lion" in *The Wizard of Oz*, "Gaston" in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and "Sheriff Tom" in *Girls' Weekend*. Most recently, he directed *Polka Dots: The Cool Kids Musical* at the Des Moines Community Playhouse.

V~ Dumas-Wines began performing more than 60 years ago, and never stopped. She is a Master Teacher at The Des Moines Playhouse and was a member of their professional troupe Actors On Tour. She has worked as an actor, director, acting coach, writer, and taught acting workshops all over Iowa. V~'s company Allegro Children's Theatre Productions produced plays around Central Iowa, many at the state Historical Building. For Allegro, she was producer, director, costumer, sound, stage manager, props, and, in a pinch, actor. She most recently appeared in *The Full Monty* at Stephens Auditorium in Ames. Last fall she directed *The Savannah Sipping Society* at Stephens. She received Best Supporting Actress for IA/South Dakota Theater AACT/Fest for her roles in *From The Window*. Other credits include: *Nunsense*, *The Cemetery Club*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *I Do! I Do!*, *Company*, *Zorba*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Busybody*, *He Keeps Me Singing*, *Absurd Person Singular*.

David Felton has been involved in theater since his middle school production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Throughout high school he stayed onstage, and once he got to college he started exploring the backstage world of theater. It was during college that he found his love of directing. Since graduating, he has become a board member for Carousel Theatre of Indianola, where he has served for nine years. During this time, he has helped to ensure that there has been at least one opportunity each year for a family-friendly show in which kids of all ages can be involved. While with Carousel, he has directed eight shows, including four musicals. He is also a judge and coach for the Iowa High School Speech Association and Des Moines contributing editor for *BroadwayWorld*.

River Fisher received her Master of Music Education in Choral Pedagogy from Illinois State University in 2017. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Augustana College in 2010. While there, she studied piano with Dennis Loftin, voice with Sangeetha Rayapati, organ with Larry Petersen, and opera with John Pfautz. Over the past ten years, River has been a K-12 music educator in Illinois and Nebraska, focusing primarily on vocal music. She currently teaches musical theater and voice in the Omaha area. In addition to her teaching experience, River is a thriving vocalist and pianist. Opera roles include "Laurie" in *The Tenderland* and "Jenny" in *Down in the Valley* with Opera@Augustana. Musical theater roles include "Emma" in *Jekyll & Hyde*, "Inga" in *Young Frankenstein*, and "Lily" in *The Secret Garden*.

Peggy George, mezzo-soprano, is a Voice and Music Education grad of Simpson College. She has graduate credits in Theater and Education from the University of Northern Iowa, where she performed the role of "Frau Schneider" in *Cabaret*, among others. An Iowa-licensed teacher, she has taught vocal/general music and theater skills in schools, theaters and community education programs. Peggy has credits in musical theater, choral music, opera and plays, including *Almost, Maine*, *Annie*, *Carmen*, *Carousel*, *Chicago*, *Coastal Disturbances*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Evita*, *Expiring Minds Want to Know*, *42nd Street*, *Game Night*, *Give My Regards to Broadway*, *Guys and Dolls*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Little Chimney Sweep*, *Lucky Stiff*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *The Music Man*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Pretty Trap*, *Quilters*, *The Apple Tree*, *The*



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Marriage of Figaro, The Sound of Music, West Side Story and others. She has performed at the Indianola, Ankeny, and Cedar Falls Theaters, Des Moines Playhouse, Drake University, Old Creamery Theater, the former Charlie's Showplace, Ingersoll Dinner Theater, and Dorian Opera Theaters, and Michigan's Thunder Bay Theater. She's also served on costume, light, makeup and props crews. She currently teaches voice, piano, guitar, stage dialects, and theater basics through her DSM Fine Arts Studio.

John Gibson is a retired theater teacher of 44 years. He was introduced to theater when he was in 5th grade growing up in Chicago. He has directed/choreographed many types of musicals and has a career in community theater, at local Universities, and also on the junior/senior high school level. Since he retired he has worked as an adjudicator for Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards, Iowa High School Speech, and many high school festivals. Mr. Gibson loves to see what high schools are presenting and in so many different theater spaces, and is amazed at the quality work that is produced.

MK Gillette is the Development Assistant at Des Moines Performing Arts (DMPA). She has been involved in local theater in Des Moines since she was a child. MK has spent time dancing with The Joffrey Ballet School, The Ailey School, and Jessica Lang Dance. MK has worked with The Arts and Learning Conservatory in the Development Department and with the organization's summer camp program during her college career. She earned her BA in Integrated Educational Studies with an emphasis on Arts Education from Chapman University in 2021.

Mia Fryvecind Gimenez has performed with conductors and directors from all over the globe including Juilliard, Paris National Opera, New York City Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. She has performed with great American companies including the Lyric Opera of Chicago (Die Meistersinger), Tony® Award winning TheatreWorks in Silicon Valley (Sweeney Todd (Begger Woman), Ray of Light Theatre (Andrea, Jerry Springer the Opera), and Bay Area Theatre Circle Critics® award-winning Broadway By the Bay (Fantine, Les Misérables). Mia has been recognized by the Metropolitan Opera National Council as a Regional Finalist for the Upper Midwest Region. A graduate of the University of Iowa, she is currently pursuing the Performing Arts Industry Essentials credential as well as Music Industry Essentials credential from NYU. She is Theatre Arts faculty at the Iowa Conservatory and Nolte Academy, and has directed, and music directed multiple youth and adult musicals within the Nolte organization. Mia is the founder and principal teacher at Fryvecind Voice Studio and is the Vice President of the Iowa Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

Chelsea Haaland is an educator, director, and performer in the Des Moines region. For the past 15 years, she has served on the education staff for programs around Iowa including the Des Moines Community Playhouse, Ankeny Community Theatre, Sturgis Youth Theatre in Cedar Falls, and ArtsLIVE in Okoboji; she also led high school speech and theater programs for Des Moines Public and Waukee Community Schools. Favorite directing credits include The Wiz, Les Miserables, Little Shop of Horrors, and The Hunchback of Notre Dame. She has been active with the Iowa High School Speech Association as an officer, coach, judge, and clinician. Chelsea was previously named the Iowa Communication Association's Outstanding Teacher of the Year as well as UNI's Yager Exemplary Teaching Award winner, and was one of eleven educators selected internationally to participate in the inaugural BroadwayEvolved program in New York City. Chelsea is now the Related Arts Curriculum Facilitator for the Waukee Community School District.

Nick Halder is the executive and artistic director at the Grand Opera House, as well as the founding producing artistic director of Rising Star Theatre Company, both in Dubuque. His career has bridged



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both the academic and professional realms of theatre, providing the good fortune of being involved with many great productions both on and offstage. Nick's recent directing credits include Disney's Newsies, Spring Awakening, Into the Woods, Hairspray, Ordinary Days and Disney's Beauty and the Beast, among many others. He holds a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre from the University of Arizona and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Performance and Design from the University of Northern Iowa. Nick has also completed doctoral coursework in acting and directing, as well as arts administration from Texas Tech University.

Kenneth Hayes went to Northwestern College, Orange City, IA. While attending Northwestern College, he was awarded a theatre scholarship to study under Jeff & Karen Barker where he performed in numerous plays and musicals. After graduating, Dr. Hayes was a high school business teacher where he also served as the advisor/coach for the school plays, musicals, large group & individual speech. He is the author of several published monologues and continues to write scripts in his spare time. He has acted and directed in community theater plays and musicals with Orange City's Tulip Festival and Starfighter's Theatre in Anamosa. In 2000, Dr. Hayes became a principal and was awarded the Fine Arts Administrator of the Year by the Iowa High School Speech Association (IHSSA) in 2009. Dr. Hayes has served as a judge for the IHSSA for many years in the past two decades. He currently works at the UNI.

Laura Hinspeter is the owner of and instructor at L.A.H. Music Studio in Waukee, where she teaches private voice and piano lessons year-round. She is an active music educator as a clinician, adjudicator, substitute, and studio instructor. She received her Bachelor of Music Education from Wartburg College in 1999 and holds a current teaching license for K-12 Music. Laura taught 6th-12th grade vocal music for the St. Ansgar Community School District from 1999-2001. Laura's students nominated her and she was the recipient of the Golden Apple Award as the Teacher of the Year – Finalist in the spring of 2000 from KIMT-TV in Mason City. Her career continued in the West Des Moines Community School District where she taught 7-8 grade vocal music at Stilwell Junior High School from 2001-2005. A highlight while at Stilwell was when her students sang on the east staircase at the Des Moines Civic Center before attending opening night of Les Misérables. Laura is an active member of the Iowa Choral Directors Association, an adjudicator with the Iowa High School Music Association and Iowa All-State Jazz Choir and is an active choral clinician for 6th-12th grade music programs and festivals throughout the state of Iowa.

Monté J. Howell New York City based actor who's currently pursuing his MFA at the University of Iowa (Acting), where he also serves as a graduate teaching assistant. Select Credits: Les Misérables (National Tour), The Golden Apple (City Center Encores!), Les Misérables (The MUNY), Shrek (Alliance Theatre), Sister Act (Arkansas Rep), The Music Man (Flat Rock Playhouse), Porgy and Bess (Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh), and Little Shop of Horrors (Stages St. Louis). Proud member of Actors Equity Association. Praise to God. Love to Ma, Brown, Alyssa, and Allison. Psalms 116:12

Craig Ihnen has directed over 400 plays or musicals, was the head of two summer stock theatre programs, was a director and teacher for over 20 years and has been the head of the IHSSA for 27 years. Craig has also been a national leadership coach for the Educational Theatre Association, national chair for the NHFS Theatre, Speech and Debate committee. He judges plays and musicals for several state events: Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas, South Dakota, Texas, and others. He has judged national theatre events and the finals for all areas for EdTA for many years, been inducted in theatre Hall of Fames for Iowa, Ohio, Michigan and has been inducted into the National Educational Theatre Association Hall of Fame. He has spoken at the National EdTA



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conference and NFHS national conferences on judging theatre events and what to look for. He has written ballots for judging of theatre events for EdTA and other national groups.

Bridget Johnston was the 2013 Triple Threat Award winner of the IHSMTA's, Bridget is a music director, is pursuing a master's degree in Vocal Performance and has worked as a professional musical performer for 4+ years.

Craig Kaufman is a Simpson College Theater alum and has worked as a professional sound, lighting and video designer, ATD, Technical Director, Production Manager and Venue Operator. Kaufman was the resident sound designer for New York University's Steinhardt School of Music productions from 2007-2015. In addition Kaufman has also worked with students at Northwestern University and The University of Kentucky. He began his professional career at the Des Moines Playhouse in 2004 and moved on to the Berkshire Theatre Festival in 2006. He then spent 2006-2016 designing shows in New York City, Long Island, Chicago, Lexington Kentucky and in the Berkshires. Kaufman also spent a year as the Technical Director for the National Opera Center in New York City. Currently he manages the Ames City Auditorium and Durham Bandshell for the City of Ames.

David Kilpatrick has been part of the Des Moines Playhouse since May 2017. David's career has included producing artistic director of a small professional theatre, owner of a dinner theatre, production manager, director, lighting designer and professional stage manager. David's past productions at the Playhouse include "Weekend Comedy," "Rounding Third," "Newsies," "Catch Me If You Can," and "Mamma Mia!" Other favorite directing experiences include "The Wizard of Oz," "Sister Act," "Thoroughly Modern Millie," "Titanic," "Sound of Music," "Grease," "Leaving Iowa," "The Dining Room," "Boeing, Boeing" and "Sideways Stories from Wayside School" to name a few. His education includes degrees from George Mason University, Missouri State and University of Missouri, where his dissertation was the exploration of the audience as it prepares for the show.

Wayne Kischer is a strong advocate for the importance of Theatre Arts as part of Iowa high school education. His 35 years as theatre arts educator in high schools and at the university level and as a performing arts center manager, has given him a unique perspective on the value of student learning and personal growth gained from participating in the "world's first art form." As a performer since the age of five, he has honed his skills to become a member of both acting unions: the Screens Actors Guild / AFTRA and Actors Equity Association. With an undergraduate degree in arts administration, performance and design, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Theatre and Dance, he has used these skill sets as producer, director, costume designer, scenic designer, lighting designer, props designer, choreographer, vocal music director, and performer as well as educator. He has been recognized three times as an award-winning best director, twice as a designer and once as a performer. His favorite role is that of mentor - guiding and encouraging young people to find another means of success in theatre arts.

Doug Krejci is a performing arts educator and media professional with over 30 years of experience in middle school, high school, and college theatrical productions. He is frequently sought out for his expertise of stagecraft, stage design, lighting design, sound design, and new media usage in theatrical productions. Credits include: Sweeney Todd, Company, Oklahoma, Beauty and the Beast, 42nd Street, Jesus Christ Superstar, Skin of our Teeth, The Baache, Mystery Comedy Murders of 1940, The Diary of Anne Frank, The Music Man, Madagascar Jr., and Noises Off among many other productions. Mr. Krejci has also supported national touring productions, touring rock concerts, and mounted a production at the International Thespian Festival. Mr. Krejci is an IHSMA (Iowa High



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School Music Association) judge (percussion) and an IHSSA (Iowa High School Speech Association) judge specializing in the speech, theatre, and media fields.

Emily Kruse is a development manager at Des Moines Performing Arts (DMPA). While growing up in Libertyville, IL, a northern Chicago suburb, she attended many performances at the Marriott Lincolnshire Theater in Lincolnshire and the Auditorium Theater in Chicago. She began playing French horn in fourth grade and was in the pit orchestra for her high school performances of *My Fair Lady* and *Into the Woods*, the latter of which was selected for the Illinois High School Theatre Festival. Emily was a four-year member of the Hawkeye Marching Band and has continued to play her instrument since then. She is a season ticket holder at the Civic Center and donor to DMPA. Emily has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Iowa and a Master's Degree in Communication from the University of Dubuque.

Danielle Lee is a theatre director/stage manager and high school drama/English teacher currently residing in Cedar Rapids. She received both her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Directing with Musical Theatre and English minors and Master of Arts in Teaching degrees from Drake University. Danielle has worked as a director and stage manager for over 10 years with theater companies throughout the state. She was also the directing associate for a new production at two-time Tony award winning Goodspeed Musicals' Norma Terris Theater in Connecticut. Danielle has also worked with speech and theater programs at high schools in the Des Moines area. Danielle most recently directed *The Tin Woman* at Giving Tree Theater in Cedar Rapids. Favorite credits include: *Parade*, *Hamlet*, *Spring Awakening*, and *The Clean House*.

Andy Lesieur began his directing/choreographing career in 2005 with Kirkwood Community College's *The Mikado*. He went on to study music and theatre at Simpson College where he assistant directed/stage managed two operas. He also served as assistant company coordinator for the Des Moines Metro Opera company. Andy left Simpson College to become the drama director at Assembly of God Church in Cedar Rapids in 2008. In 2012, Andy revived his teaching and performance career at Theatre Cedar Rapids (TCR). He has taught classes to children of all ages, as well as adults, and was able to work extensively with TCR's autism spectrum program. Andy has performed lead, ensemble, and dancing roles in many Cedar Rapids area and touring productions. Andy recently sat as the education committee chair for the Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre in Cedar Rapids. He currently teaches private lessons and leads theatre camps through his own lesson studio.

Carl Lindberg is an educator, actor, and director originally from northern California. He is the Chair of Des Moines Area Community College's Ankeny Theatre Program—a flagship department within The Simon Estes School of Fine Arts. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Acting from California State University, Stanislaus, and a Master of Fine Arts in Directing from Western Illinois University. He has trained with Steppenwolf, The Second City, Shakespeare & Co., and has worked professionally as an actor, director, educator, designer and administrator throughout the country. Most recently, Carl lived and worked in Chicago where he performed on stage with professional Equity companies such as Lookingglass, Remy Bumppo, About Face Theatre, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, Oak Park Festival Theatre, and many others. Carl has appeared in national and regional commercials and short films. He also taught at the College of DuPage and the Chicago Academy for the Arts, Chicago's only private performing arts high school.

Heidi Mason is a Resident Artist with Iowa Stage Theatre Company. She is a native of Northwest Iowa, and holds a Bachelor's degree in Performing Arts from Iowa State University. Heidi was last seen on stage as Senator Amy Klobuchar in *Adore Us!* Line, Amy in *Company* and the Nurse in



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Romeo & Juliet with Iowa Stage Theatre. Heidi has worked in theater education and administration with Missoula Children's Theatre, American Theater Company, Old Town School of Folk Music, and Steppenwolf Theatre Company. Heidi has also taught locally with Story Theater Company in Ames, IA.

Tim Mitchell is a retired 34-year veteran Iowa high school vocal music and musical theatre director. During that tenure, he co-built strong programs in 3 schools: South Winneshiek (Calmar), Waukon High School and Union Community Schools (LaPorte City). He has directed 40 full scale musicals at the high school, community and semi-professional level. Tim was also very active in the Iowa High School Speech Association where 32 of Union Community's 37 musical theatre entries under his co-guidance were named All-State; earning the Critic's Choice Banner 3 times. During his last 7 years at Union Community, the Annual Spring Musical was an active participant in the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards Program. After their initial year, Union earned the top production award being invited to perform 6 straight times as part of the IHSMTA Awards Ceremony. Tim is a member of the Charles City High School Fine Arts Hall of Fame, Iowa High School Music Association Teacher Tenure Award Winner and a recipient of the IHSMTA Impact Award.

Jeffrey Neary judges musical theatre at district and state speech contests. He has performed lead and supporting roles in musicals at LeMars Community Theatre: played Gomez in Addams Family and supporting role in A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder. In college, he was a vocal music scholarship recipient with participation in Chorale, Madrigals and presented a senior voice recital. He is a tenor all-state qualifier for 2 years

Elizabeth Nye is a community theatre director and former theatre educator. She has been working in the theatre for over thirty years, the past 12 as a director and teaching artist. Her work has been seen in Germany, Denver, and Omaha. She especially enjoyed working as an Education Coordinator for low-income theatre outreach and directing innovative summer Shakespeare, including an aerial version of Lear.

Vivian Parr (she/her) is a graduate of Creighton University, where she received a BFA in Theatre Performance and a BA in Music. Her theatrical focuses are playwriting, directing, and acting. She produced her play, Riot, Repeat, as a student-run production during her senior year. Riot, Repeat earned her a Kennedy Center America College Theatre Festival playwriting award. As an actor, she most recently performed Feminine Endings for Flatwater Shakespeare's Unshaken Festival, directed by Sarah Brown. Her favorite shows include She Kills Monsters (Agnes), Welcome to the Tree Museum (Harriet), Language of Angels (Kendra), and All's Well That Ends Well (Soldier). She made her film debut as Terri in the short film Sheila, an official selection in the DC Independent Film Festival and the Jim Thorpe Independent Film Festival. Vivian's work is rooted in metamodernism. She finds artistic inspiration in the human ability to access joy in times of suffering.

Dylan Peck has been performing professionally since 1998. He has appeared on stages throughout the Omaha, Nebraska metro area, as well as in Dallas & Fort Worth Texas. Some of his favorite roles have been Toby in Sweeney Todd, Yvan in Art, Boy in Henry V, & Jacey Squires in The Music Man. Dylan was a long time performer with the Omaha Press Club Show and with The Velvet Kittens of Le Cabaret Burlesque. Dylan has also originated 11 roles for the stage. Dylan serves as an assistant coach at Lewis Central High School for their speech team. Dylan is also a certified judge for the Iowa High School Speech Association. Dylan holds a degree in Psychology and is currently furthering his education.



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Michael Petkewec Michael Petkewec has more than 29 years of experience in the theater and arts from being an actor, director and designer to an arts administrator. He has been an Iowa High School Speech Association judge since he moved to Iowa in 2010. Michael's other Iowa experiences have included being a director at Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Theater in Mt. Vernon; an arts administrator, costume designer and director at Iowa Theatre Artists Company in Amana; an arts administrator, actor, and costume designer with City Circle Acting Company in Coralville; and he has served on the Iowa Arts Council's Large Grant Panel. Currently, Michael works full time at the UI REACH Program at the University of Iowa where he teaches, acts as marketing and recruitment coordinator and serves on the Career & Transition Team. Michael also has his own consulting business called The Arts and Design Nexus and has helped individual and organizational clients around the country.

Breanna Poage holds her Bachelor of Arts degree in Music with a minor in Psychology from Iowa State University. A native Iowan, Bre works as a Worship Leader for Lutheran Church of Hope and prides herself on fostering a safe and encouraging environment for students and adults wishing to use their musical gifts. An avid music and theater admirer, Bre has participated in several choirs, ensembles, and productions over the last 10 years and is thrilled to continue the tradition of excellence that the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards uphold. She plans on marrying her fiancé, Antonio, in January and is ready for a new journey and a new last name (Ruiz)!

Dakota Rachuy is a full-time ticketing associate with Des Moines Performing Arts and has spent most of his life entrenched in theater. Throughout his high school career, Dakota performed in every production on the Dowling Catholic stage. From there he studied musical theater at Columbia College of Arts, before returning to Des Moines to care for family. He has performed in and directed several productions throughout the community. He is currently working as a scare actor at Sleepy Hollow while spending his free time writing.

Donna Scarfe was in the film *The Miracle Worker* at 7. She studied ballet in Bucharest, Romania on a Fulbright Fellowship then choreographed and performed with the Epiphany Dancers in London. She's acted with the National Theatre of the Deaf (CT, Los Angeles, Deaf West Theatre (Los Angeles) and interprets theatre for Deaf audiences. At the DM Playhouse she performed in *Rosa Parks* and *The Miracle Worker*. Stage West Theatre - Miss Witherspoon, *Outside Mullingar* and costumes for *Angels in America*. With Iowa Stage Donna acted in *A Christmas Carol*, *The Woman in Black*, *God of Carnage*, *Sense & Sensibility*, *The Crucible*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, *King Lear* and *Romeo & Juliet*. She teaches yearly in CA at Costume College. Donna has a MA in Theatre and Deaf Studies, is a professional ASL interpreter and creates Period Costume and Contemporary hats.

Jackie Schmillen has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Musical Theatre from "The U", University of Miami, in Miami, Florida. She began her musical theater career touring the country in various productions, including *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Gypsy*. She eventually made her way back home to northwest Iowa and entered the world of television journalism. Before making the move to Local 5-ABC in Des Moines, Jackie was the face of KPTH Fox 44 in Sioux City, the host of Iowa Live and the traffic reporter for KCCI 'This Morning' on TV-8. Jackie continues to pursue her passion for the theater by participating in various theater projects around Des Moines with the Des Moines Community Playhouse, Repertory Theatre of Iowa, Pyramid Theatre, Open Door Rep and Iowa Stage. She is also actively involved with the Iowa High School Speech Association and is an IHSSA Large Group Speech coach for musical theater at Roosevelt High School (Banner Winner 2018). Jackie is also an inductee in the Iowa Rock n Roll Hall of Fame with the group ROCKESTRA.



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Nicole Schumacher has always enjoyed music and singing and has found a passion in theatre. After singing in a women's choir Lyrica at Iowa State University and learning the thrill of one voice in large sound, Nicole graduated and found something was missing in life. Nicole got a start in theatre while living in Cedar Rapids and cannot imagine life without it. The stage is her second home. Whether it be on stage, assisting with stage crew, or backstage quick changes with costume crew. The thrill of being a part of making the whole. Big or small the involvement brings joy to her heart.

Kara Sherman has been the executive director of the Wilson Performing Arts Center in Red Oak for the past 12 years, providing educational opportunities on and off the stage as well as piano, dance, voice strings, percussion, guitar, technical training and camps. Kara is a Simpson graduate with a degree in Music Education. She lived in the New York metropolitan area for 15 years before coming back to Iowa in 2003 with my family. To date she has either been in, directed or produced 63 main stage shows.

Amy Friedl Stoner is an accomplished and versatile cabaret/jazz singer born and raised in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She has been a staple in the Cedar Rapids theatre community for the past decade. Notable performances include: Maria in Sound of Music, Eva Peron in Evita, and Mother in Ragtime. Her solo cabaret shows have sold out in venues around the US, including St. Louis, Chicago, and New York City. Amy made her Carnegie Hall debut in May 2018 as a featured performer in "All the Way: The Music of Jimmy Van Heusen" produced by the Mabel Mercer Foundation. She has performed with the legendary Marilyn Maye as a special guest in her show at The Inn (Lake Okoboji, IA) Amy has worked with numerous Tony and Grammy award-winning artists, such as Faith Prince, Christine Ebersole, Jason Robert Brown, and Billy Stritch (music director for Liza Minnelli and Tony Bennett). She has been a featured soloist with Orchestra Iowa, and will headline their Holiday Pops concert this December.

Laura Sweet is the VP/COO for Des Moines Performing Arts. Laura currently serves on the Central Iowa Chapter for the American Red Cross board of directors and is the past-president of the Nexus Executive Women's Alliance. She just completed her two-year term as chair of the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) Performing Arts Managers Committee and volunteers regularly with the Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP). Laura has a Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Kansas, respectively. She has played the flute and piccolo since childhood as well as serving in various positions with the Lincoln Community Playhouse and Lincoln Symphony Orchestra.

Libby Waterbury is a writer, actor, director, choreographer, and arts educator. She graduated from the University of Iowa—where she performed for two years as the university mascot "Herky the Hawk"—with degrees in theater and speech education, and from the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA) in New York City with an emphasis in musical theater. After AMDA, she joined the touring cast of Four Score and Seven Years Ago, an educational musical about the Civil War. Over the years Libby has performed in, directed and choreographed touring, regional, community and school productions, but she has a particular affinity for helping young artists grow in their craft. Her most recent project was co-directing and choreographing You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown at Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre with fellow AMDA grad and IHSMTA adjudicator Adam Yankow. Libby is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

Kyle Weber is a graduate of UNI in Community Communication with extensive work in the Interpreters Theatre and graduate coursework in Performance Studies. His love for theatre took early root in performance. He began volunteering as an actor with the Waterloo Playhouse/Black Hawk Children's Theatre which led to multiple terms on their Board of Directors chairing many



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committees and events. The network he built there took him for an unexpected turn. He helped with a few area high school shows in various capacities and was eventually asked to join one school as their theatre director and speech coach. He has been their sole director since January 2014. Kyle has continued working with community theatre as well, recently adding to his directing resume a summer musical at the Oster Regent Theatre. As an IHSSA judge, he has found great reward offering feedback for students beyond the ones under his immediate direction.

Julia Weisshaar-Mullin is a veteran music educator (PK-12 instrumental and vocal) from southwest Iowa. She received her degree in music education from the University of Kansas with additional studies in theatre and vocal jazz, and recently completed a Masters of Music degree in Choral Conducting at Simpson College. Julia has extensive performance and technical experience in professional repertory and community theatre in Kansas and Iowa, as well as producing and directing shows in school and community settings, collaborating with musicians and actors of all ages and ability levels. Her goal is to give each and every participant a sense of ownership in the creative process, so they feel they are a valued, essential part of a cooperative artistic community. Julia also adjudicates for the IHSSMA and IHSSA, teaches privately, and - as often as possible - plays weekend music gigs with her family.

David Wendt retired from K-12 English, Speech teaching and coaching/directing, he moved to the collegiate level. He is currently directing productions at Iowa Wesleyan University. He also teaches some performance course, as well as, English courses. He still works on the community theatre level as a director and performer when COVID allows. He considers himself a performance specialist as a dance adjudicator, IHSSA judge and Miss America judge.

Valerie Williams started working in musical theater at age 12 and hasn't stopped since. Performing as a featured dancer in shows produced by both amateur and professional theaters, she toured throughout the Midwest, dancing, singing and acting in shows such as Godspell and Company. She became a choreographer and has since made dances for over 80 shows for professional theater, opera, community theater and high schools. Making the move to modern dance, she co-founded Co'Motion Dance Theater in 1978 as a professional modern dance company, and with that company and the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company she has toured throughout North America, Europe, and New Zealand. This season, among other dance gigs, Valerie is directing performance workshops and choreographing Street Scene and Honk.

Adam Yankowy is a native of Louisville, KY and is currently a theatre professor at Drake University. Over the past 5 years he has taught in the theatre departments at Iowa State (ISU), Grand View & Minnesota State Universities. Adam holds an MFA in Musical Theatre (Minnesota State University, Mankato), Bachelor's in Music Education (University of Louisville), and a Musical Theatre Performance Certificate (AMDA, NYC). Previous direction: Songs for a New World, Sunday on the Rocks, Runaways (Drake), You're A Good Man Charlie Brown (DMYAT). Previous music direction: Cabaret (DMPlayhouse), Into the Woods, Songs for a New World, Pippin, Nice Work If You Can Get It, Runaways (Drake), Fun Home (Iowa Stage- Cloris Award for Music Direction), Oklahoma! (ISU), A Christmas Story: The Musical, Disney's Mary Poppins. Performance credits: New York: Babes in Toyland (Lincoln Center), Ruddigore, The Pirates of Penzance (NY City Center), Broadway's Rising Stars (Town Hall), Swinging Christmas (Carnegie Hall) Other favorites: The Monster in Young Frankenstein (DMPlayhouse- Cloris Award), Jud in Oklahoma!, Javert in Les Misérables, Beast in Disney's Beauty and the Beast. Tours: Curious George Live!, Streetmosphere (Venetian Resort in Macau, China.)



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Tyler Youngers is currently an Educational Consultant with Northwest AEA. Prior to Northwest, Tyler taught in two different school districts. During his teaching career, he directed Fall & Spring play productions and served as an assistant speech coach. Tyler's background in musical theater started as a young man in community theatre productions in his hometown of Sheldon, Iowa and he has gone on to perform in productions throughout high school, college, and in any community productions he can find. Tyler has his bachelor's degree in vocal performance from St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota and currently adjudicates for the Iowa High School Speech Association.

Ian Zahren is an Iowa native who originally got his start as a child actor at The Old Creamery Company. Upon graduation, Ian attended Point Park University where he obtained a B.A in Theatre Arts from their rigorous and esteemed performing arts conservatory. Ian's performance works includes international touring as well as regional work with Mixed Blood Theatre, Old Log Theatre, The Iowa Theatre Artists Company & The Old Creamery Theatre Company. An educator at heart, Ian currently serves as a faculty member and teaches at The Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Arts, Children's Theatre of Minneapolis, Youth Performance Company and Stages Theatre Company. His passion for education has also propelled him into starting The Iowa Youth Performing Artists Company, a nonprofit arts education center for youth based in The Eastern Iowa Corridor. Ian also enjoys directing and composing. His directing credits include In the Heights, Fiddler on the Roof, The Little Mermaid and Joseph (City Circle Acting Company). Ian's composition work can be seen at The Broadway Musical Institute in New York, The Children's Theatre of Minneapolis and Nautilus Music Theatre.