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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.

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.

Janice Bear is semi-retired and a 1968 TV grad living in West Union IA. With a BA in English & Creative Writing and an MBA from U of I, she worked in the Washington DC, Cincinnati, and Boston areas prior to returning to NE IA in 1990 with her son Brian Frenzen. In Iowa, she lent her talents in marketing and sales, accounting, computers, teaching at NICC, property management, and more. For the last 20 years or more, you can see her judging high school speech contests, playing trombone in the Community Band, singing in the West Union Messiah and offering her comedic skills in local melodrama and community performances. She has been the Secretary for Classic Tractors of NE IA for the 20 years, organizing rides to raise scholarship funds for Northeast Iowa Community College and local Food Banks. She enjoys her flower gardens, collecting hats, and making people laugh!!

Ashley Becher is an active professional actor, director, choreographer, and creator who truly loves the transformative magic of theatre and the way it can bring us together! After receiving her B.F.A. in Musical Theatre (Viterbo University), Ashley spent more than a decade as an NYC based actor, creating in professional theatres around the country, and 3 years developing and performing in TYA shows in South Korea. While you'll only see Ashley perform at professional theatres, her Directing/Choreography resume includes work at the professional level, as well as collegiate, high school, youth, and community theatre. In addition to these roles, Ashley is the current Artistic Director for Davenport Junior Theatre in Davenport, Iowa. As an avid theatre fan, she loves to consume as much theatre as possible, and has seen 100 Broadway shows.

Bobby Becher is a professional musical theatre actor and creator, originally from Huntsville, Alabama. A 2011 graduate of the University of Alabama, Bobby has since made his living acting, writing, teaching, and working in various creative positions in the theatre. A performer primarily, some of his favorite acting credits include: The Play That Goes Wrong, Beauty and the Beast, Million Dollar Quartet, and Disaster! Bobby has also written original scripts and scores for several Theatre



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for Young Audiences musicals and is the co-owner of the TYA company WhatFun! Theatre with his wife, Ashley. Bobby also continuously works as a music director and arranger and has produced the tracks for several professional shows and concerts. www.abBecher.com @bobbybecher11

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 involved in the Des Moines theatre community since the age of 6 and hasn't stopped since. She graduated from Ankeny High School with a huge involvement in Choir, Show Choir, Speech, and Drama. She went on to earn her Bachelor of Music from the University of Nebraska. While living in Nebraska she served as a board member at the Lincoln Community Playhouse and Pinewood Bowl. She also served as a volunteer leading actor in many productions such as: Shrek, Les Miserables, Mary Poppins, Hairspray, 9 to 5, Spamalot, and West Side Story. Since being back in the metro she jumped right back into the Des Moines theatre world. She has worked with many theatre companies including The Des Moines Playhouse, Iowa Stage, CAP, and Urbandale Community Theatre where she served as a board member for a few years. Dani is the recipient of a Cloris Award for her work as Belle in Beauty and Beast (UCT) and has been nominated for her work as Sarah in Guys and Dolls. She is no stranger to working at the Des Moines Playhouse where you might have recently seen her in Mary Poppins, Les Miserables, The Addams Family, Some Enchanted Evening, Ragtime, or many more. She also has served on many committees and on the production teams as assistant stage manager or music director.

Linda Brant is a retired high school and college educator who spent her career immersed in directing plays and writing and coaching speech contest events. She stays in daily contact with over 400 of her drama alumni on a Facebook site. She was named to the Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame in 2007. Other citations have included Wartburg College's High School Teacher of the Year, KIMT's Golden Apple Award, Rotary's Vocational Award, and Charles City's Woman of the Year. She especially enjoys directing period plays and designing and building realistic interior sets and costumes.

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 two-decade career spanning three continents. After touring as a stage manager, lighting designer and stagehand, Michelle is currently the ticketing manager for Meow Wolf. Michelle has managed ticketing in Des Moines, Philadelphia, and Las Vegas and has a BA in Theatre from Taylor University.

John Busbee has served in variety of roles in theater, having managed and performed in a national touring company he cofounded, to lead roles in regional theater and musicals, to design work at the university and professional level. He also has been reviewing theatrical productions for more than 20 years, and, since 2007, continues to produce a weekly arts and culture radio show that is anchored by the performing arts. He was awarded the 2014 Iowa Governor's Award for Collaboration and 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.

Susan Cantine-Maxson received her Bachelor of Arts from Wartburg College with a triple major in English, Speech and Theatre, and received her Master of Arts from University of Northern Iowa in Communications/Theatre. She is a 2005 IHSSA Hall of Fame member, and directed high school musicals, theatre, variety shows and speech contest for almost 30 years at Decorah High School. She directed numerous Outstanding Performance Groups for Iowa High School Speech Association (DHS). As most high school directors, she actively participated in all technical aspects of the show. She worked closely with choreographer Valerie Williams from Ames when Williams worked as an Artist-in Residence for twelve DHS musicals. In addition to her high school experience, she was assistant to the director for Luther College's Dorian Opera Theatre for seven summers. She also assisted backstage and performed onstage for several community theater musical productions. After her retirement from teaching, she became the executive director of the Brown Grand Theatre—a 100-year-old restored opera house in Kansas—for eight years. She served six times as an All-State critic for the IHSSA speech festivals in both large group and individual events.

Daniel Chase has a BME 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 School Music Association and Iowa High School Music Theatre Awards. In addition, Dan directed Cardinal KeyNotes vocal jazz ensemble at Iowa State University and has guest-directed musicals at area high schools and community theaters. 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," Arvide Abernathy in "Guys And Dolls," 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.

Stephanie Coble-Day has her degree in Speech, Communications and Theater Arts Teaching from the University Of Northern Iowa. With over 25 years of experience Stephanie has directed actors as



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young as 3 and as old as 80 in plays and musicals for community theater and school productions. She has also taught theater and speech and coached speech teams. Stephanie has served as a judge for IHSSA for the past 11 years, judging many areas including one act play, musical theater, radio news broadcasting, choral reading and readers theater. When not working on a production Stephanie is a Principal at Community Christian School, volunteers at her church First United Methodist Church, serving on the Comedia Musical Players and the Hawkeye Community Theater boards in Ft. Dodge, Iowa. Stephanie and her husband Scott enjoy traveling and spending time with family, especially all of their wonderful grandchildren.

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.

Jim Cross A graduate of Greenville University, with a BA in Theatre with an emphasis in artistic direction. Jim Cross careers has including during high school productions and community theatre in both Illinois and Iowa. In addition, he has been a speech coach for the Iowa High School Speech Association for over 10 years in the Riceville Community School District and more recently Northwest High School in Waukee.

Peter Dean is a local actor, director, IHSSA Large Group Speech judge and Assistant Large Group Speech coach for DCG High School. 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 at the Playhouse. Most recently, Peter has directed "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus, The Musical" and "Polkadots: The Cool Kids Musical", both at the Des Moines Community Playhouse and on stage, reprising the role of "Sheriff Tom Lane" in Girls' Weekend 2. 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 and Girls Weekend 2.

V~ Dumas-Wines began performing more than 65 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 just directed a production of Steel Magnolias for Actors in Ames. She most recently appeared in The Full Monty at Stephens Auditorium in Ames, and directed The Savannah Sipping Society, also at Stephens. She received Best Supporting Actress for IA/South Dakota Theater AACT/Fest for her roles in From The Window. Other credits include: Nonsense, The Cemetery Club, Anne of Green Gables, I Do! I Do!, Company, Zorba, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Wizard of Oz, The Busybody, 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



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backstage world of theater. It was during college that he found his love of directing. He has served on the board of directors for both Carousel Theatre of Indianola, and Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre. He is also a judge and coach for the Iowa High School Speech Association and Des Moines contributing editor for BroadwayWorld.

Eric Field is a veteran teacher who has taught and coached speech and drama at the middle and high school level. Although he is currently getting his doctoral degree in school psychology, he still serves as an experienced judge for Iowa High School Speech Association and has judged both Solo and Large Group Musical Theatre. Eric also has performed in amateur and semiprofessional theatre for 30+ years, with favorite roles including Nathan Detroit (Guys and Dolls), Mr. Boddy (Clue the Musical), Herman (Sweet Charity), Jeter (Footloose), and Levi/Baker (Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat). Favorite productions he has directed include My Fair Lady, Hello Dolly!, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, and Copacabana.

River Fisher is an accompanist and vocalist based out of the Omaha area. She currently accompanies and directs the musical pit, curricular choirs, and show bands for Gretna High School. She manages a full piano studio at Iowa Western Community College and a vocal studio at her home in Council Bluffs. In her evenings, River enjoys performing with Opera Omaha, Resonance Vocal Ensemble, and several community theaters. She most recently played piano for The Loft Theatre's production of "Legally Blonde: the musical" and sang soprano for Opera Omaha's "Opera Outdoors".

Dave Fog directed all aspects of 21 musicals at the high school level over 41 years of choral teaching. He has previously adjudicated for IHSMTA amongst other professional commitments.

Olivia Forney is a mom of three young children, all of whom have come to love musicals (mostly because that is what Mom forces them to listen to at home). Olivia grew up in Storm Lake, Iowa, where she was active in theatre and speech. She attended the University of Iowa and has degrees in English and Theatre Arts. While working as a camp counselor, she found her husband and they bonded over their love for musical theatre (he has been found both in the pit and on stage). In college, Olivia was active in the theatre and fell in love with life behind-the-scenes. After graduation, Olivia coached both individual and large group speech. She also directed high school plays and musicals. Today, time doesn't allow for coaching and directing (see "three young children" mentioned above), but Olivia is still often seen judging at IHSSA events and sitting in the audience of local high school, college, community, and professional shows.

Lynnea Fredrickson-Smith is a Forest City native and a passionate proponent of creating quality theatre in rural areas. She earned her BFA in Musical Theatre from Nebraska Wesleyan University and a BA in Theatre Arts at Bowling Green State University. In the summer of 2015, she organized and directed Brickstreet Theatre's revival production of Carousel. Since then, she has directed four more musical, acted in three productions, and has costumed twelve. She currently serves as the artistic director of Brickstreet Theatre.

Anne Frett is a theater educator, currently working at Dallas Center-Grimes, where she teaches high school English and drama and coaches the large group speech team. Anne is a part of the education program at The Des Moines Playhouse where she has directed several shows in the Kate Goldman Children's theater and recently directed Matilda Jr. on the mainstage. Anne has acted in more than 25 shows in the Des Moines area, including Thoroughly Modern Millie and Producers at The Des Moines Community Playhouse as well as Superior Donuts at Stage West. Anne has also directed the musical Utopia: The Iowa Musical Revue for Epic Stage Productions.



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Jessica Fridley has been involved in the performing arts for the last 15 years whether as a performer, a coach/director, or a judge for the IHSSA. She has taken multiple classes that assist in enhancing her knowledge of staging, acting, and speaking. She has been a coach for the AC/GC individual speech team for 2 years as well as assisted in coaching both large group and individual events at numerous schools throughout her career. She also has experience with staging and choreography during her time as a color/winter guard coach.

Peggy George, mezzo-soprano, is a Voice/Music Ed. grad of Simpson College with graduate credits in Theater and Education from U.N.I.. There, she performed the role of "Frau Schneider" in Cabaret, among others. Peggy's taught Vocal/General music and Stage Dialects in schools, theaters and community ed. programs and currently teaches Piano, Voice and Guitar in her private studio. She has sung with and/or served as alto soloist with The Dubuque Chorale (toured Europe,) Waterloo Met Chorale and other choral groups, Peggy has credits in musical theater, opera and plays, including ANNIE, ANNIE GET YOUR GUN, APPLE TREE, CABARET, CARMEN, CAROUSEL, CHICAGO, COASTAL DISTURBANCES, CRIMES OF THE HEART, EVITA, EXPIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW, 42ND ST., GAME NIGHT, GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY, GUYS AND DOLLS, H.M.S. PINAFORE, LITTLE CHIMNEY SWEEP, LUCKY STIFF, MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS, MUSIC MAN, MY FAIR LADY, PIRATES OF PENZANCE, THE PRETTY TRAP, QUILTERS, WEST SIDE STORY, AND ZORBA.

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.

Maria 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 (Beggar Woman), Ray of Light Theatre (Andrea, Jerry Springer the Opera), and Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle award-winning Broadway By the Bay. Mia performs with Timberlake Playhouse (Mamma Mia (Rosie)) Riverside Theatre (Sonnets for an Old Century (Cordelia)), City Circle Acting Company of Coralville (Sweeney Todd (Mrs. Lovett), Evita (Eva)), Nolte Productions (Rock of Ages (Justice)), and the University of Iowa (Fun Home (Helen), (Sunday in the Park with George (Dot)). Mia is a theatrical director, private voice teacher, and theatre faculty at Nolte Academy. On the horizon, you can see Mia in Riverside Theatre's Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812 (April 2022), and Revival Theatre's Passion (November 2023). Follow your bliss! www.miasings.com.

Susan Golwitzer was involved in high school drama and play productions and also encouraged her daughters to do the same. All three were lead performers in their high school performances. She also encouraged them to be proficient in public speaking and being able to present materials well and to the public. They have all had the role of speech association judges.

Katie Gucik is an actor, singer and artist who is currently pursuing her MFA at the University of Iowa (Acting). She also serves as a graduate teaching assistant at the University, teaching Basic Acting as well as an arts integration course, Drama in the Classroom. She was most recently seen in the



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Iowa New Play Festival production of "It's Like Riding A Bike", in the Iowa Director's Festival production of "Small Hours" and on the Mabie Stage as Marcia in "Our Lady of 121st Street". Other recent credits include: "Crazy for You" (Patricia Fodor) with San Diego Musical Theater, "Lend Me A Tenor the Musical" (Young Maria), "Mamma Mia" (Ensemble/ Donna US), "Freaky Friday: A New Musical" (Ensemble/ Katherine US) at the Pacific Conservatory Theatre in California.

Kenneth Hayes went to Northwestern College, Orange City, and majored in Business Education. While attending Northwestern College, he was awarded a theatre scholarship to study under Jeff & Karen Barker, Jeff Taylor, and Keith Allen. While in college, Dr. Hayes performed in *Androcles and the Lion*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Man of La Mancha*. He played the main character of the *Lion* in *Androcles and the Lion*. Dr. Hayes also worked on set construction, costumes, and properties for various other performances. He also performed in Orange City's Tulip Festival musical, *Oklahoma* during the summer after his senior year. After graduating from Northwestern, Dr. Hayes was a high school business teacher where he also was the advisor/coach for the school's plays, musicals, large group speech, and individual speech. During the time of directing and advising on more than 50 dramas, musicals, and speech scripts, he also wrote and published several monologues with Wetmore Declamation Bureau. He has acted and directed in various community theater plays and musicals with Starlighters Theatre of Anamosa, Iowa. In 2000, Dr. Hayes became a principal and was awarded the Administrator of the Year by the Iowa High School Press Association in 2004 and the Fine Arts Administrator of the Year by the Iowa High School Speech Association in 2009. As an administrator, Dr. Hayes developed theatrical student groups to provide messages on topics around social issues to audiences around the state. This group won an Iowa Peace Award for their work in presenting an original play from Dr. Hayes called "Paul's Prayer" on the topic of school bullying and suicide awareness. Dr. Hayes has served as a judge for the Iowa High School Speech Association for many years in the past two decades. Dr. Hayes has written church musicals with over 3,000 attendees. He currently works at the University of Northern Iowa where he coordinates and instructs in the principal preparation program. This fall, Dr. Hayes will be a faculty volunteer at UNI's Interpretive Theatre where he will assist student-led productions.

De Heaton has a Bachelor of Music Education from Morningside College and Master of Education from Viterbo University. From teaching music in the public and private sector for over 20 years De then became the Executive Director of the Corning Opera House to keep the arts alive in rural areas of Iowa. Her experience includes teaching vocal and band music plus directing school and community productions for youth through adult ages. Behind the scenes, De has designed stage lighting, painted sets including stage curtains, created props, assisted backstage, and performed in pit orchestras on flute and piano. De is a passionate advocate for music education, believing the arts make for healthier and happier individuals.

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



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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.

Adam Hooten is the director and choreographer for the Wolfpack Theater Company, a young adult theater group based in northeast Iowa which he co-founded with his son Ethan. Under his direction and guidance, the Wolfpack produces musicals, performs dinner theater and conducts charity work throughout the local communities. Originally from Milwaukee, Hooten has been involved with show choirs and musical theater since middle school. He was also a competitive dancer specializing in swing and ballroom dance, which fueled his passion for choreography. Hooten attended the University of Wisconsin Stout, majoring in Business with a Speech minor. He was a member of the Menomonie Theater Guild, where he acted, choreographed, and did lighting design for musical productions such as Gifts of the Magi, Fiddler on the Roof and West Side Story at the historic Mabel Tainter Theater. He has since been a part of countless high school musical productions, concerts and film festivals throughout Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, providing everything from choreography and directing to backstage management, lighting, costume and set design.

Monté J. Howell is a 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.

David Kilpatrick is the executive director of The Des Moines Community Playhouse. Prior, he was the executive director of La Crosse Community Theatre and The Old Creamery Theatre. In addition to the business, David is also very experienced as a creative theatre artist. He has directed musicals (Newsies, Catch Me If You Can and Sister Act to name a few), and straight plays, (Murder on the Orient Express, Weekend Comedy and Boeing Boeing, for example). David's career also includes owner of a dinner theatre, a lighting designer and a production manager and a stage manager. David has enjoyed working for theatres in such diverse communities as Iowa, Wisconsin, Missouri, Virginia, Georgia, California, and Upstate New York. His education includes degrees from George Mason University, Missouri State and University of Missouri, where his dissertation was the exploration of the audience preparing for the show

Doug Krejci is a performing arts educator and visual digital content creator 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, Peter and the Star Catcher, 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 School Music Association) judge (percussion) and an IHSSA (Iowa High School Speech Association) judge specializing in the speech, theatre, digital media and motion 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



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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.

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, helping them reimagine and rebuild their drama ministry. In 2012, Andy revived his teaching and performance career at Theatre Cedar Rapids (TCR). There he taught classes to children of all ages, as well as adults, worked extensively with TCR's autism spectrum program, and spearheaded their improvised "Play in a Day" program for elementary aged children. In 2015, he began creating shows and interactive programs for the nationally renown Cedar Rapids Downtown Public Library, bringing in record numbers - from hundreds up to over 5,000 depending on the program's capacity. Andy also sat as the Education Committee Chair for Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre in Cedar Rapids during this time. In 2018, Andy took on the children's ministry at River of Life Church, adding six interactive larger-than-life projection screens transforming traditional Sunday School into an immersive worship and education experience. The ministry grew over 25 percent in his first year before Covid changed the world. Andy has held multiple lead, ensemble and dance roles in many Cedar Rapids area and touring productions throughout his lifetime. He currently leads theatre camps and teaches private lessons in acting, singing, dance, piano, strings, and other creative fields both online and in person through his own lesson studio: Your Voice Found.

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 a Senator Amy Klobuchar in *Adore Us! Line*, *Amy in Company* and the Nurse in *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



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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 Theatre 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 1987 Graduate of Luther College and 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.

Julie Murren is a long time board member, actor, and director of adult and youth productions for community theatres in southwest Iowa. In addition to directing many productions, she founded and serves as director of the youth programs for Southwest Iowa Theatre Group in Shenandoah, IA. Due to the creation of the youth program, the proceeds from those youth camps provided a fund to create a scholarship for graduating seniors for their contributions to musical theatre in their school programs as well as community theatre, a dream Julie had had since joining the SWITG Board in 2013. Julie enjoys all kinds of theatre but enjoys working with children of all ages most because of their enthusiasm, growth mindset, and willingness to try new things.

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 Liz Nye has worked as a theatre artist and educator in Nebraska, Colorado, and Germany. She received an MA in Theatre from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and has spent her time working primarily in community theatre as a director and in schools and theaters as an education director and teacher.

Patricia Olson is from Lansing, Iowa. She got her start at Kee High School, earning membership into the International Thespian Society. After graduating from the University of Northern Iowa, Ms. Olson returned to her hometown and was the speech sponsor from 2012-2017. During this time she attended her first IHSSA coaches convention where she earned her judging certificate, and still judges today.

Shawn Pavlik is an experienced community theatre actor and a professionally trained singer, with voice lessons from Janet Alcorn at Iowa State University and from Thea Engelson at Westmar University (graduate, 1996). He has acted in over 50 shows across Iowa at community theatres in LeMars, Ankeny, Marshalltown, Knoxville, Pella, Newton, and Indianola. He has also directed 6 shows, including 5 musicals, most recently this past summer at Carousel Theatre in Indianola, and is currently serving on the board for Carousel Theatre.

Michael Petkewec has been an IHSMTA adjudicator for several years and loves to see the work of high school theatre artists and all the people who produce the shows. Michael has a BA in Theatre and English and an MA in Arts Administration/Non-profit Administration. He has lived and worked as an artist and arts administrator across the country for over 27 years as a director, actor, designer, producing artistic director, gallery director consultant, marketing director, and development director. Currently living in Iowa City since 2010 with his wonderful wife Megan, Michael works for the UI REACH program as a Senior Program Specialist and coordinates marketing and recruitment efforts at the department as well since 2015.



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Josie Poppen has been a member of the Drake University Theatre Department faculty since 1988. She is currently the head of the BFA Design and Technology program for the department. Poppen has designed over 100 productions at Drake and around the Des Moines metro area (Costumes primarily, but also scenery, lights, props and sound design). When not designing for the department, Josie teaches Thea 031 (Costuming and Lab) every semester. Other courses she regularly teaches are Stage Makeup, Costume Design and Advanced Costume Technology. Travel is a passion of Josie's and she has been fortunate to lead groups of students on theatre history travel seminars to London.

Michael Powers is a lifelong lover, addict, aficionado, educator and professional technician of musical theatre. He feels there is need to promote and foster the education and development of musical theatre in specific and the fine performing arts in general. By adjudicating performances and recognizing and rewarding excellence, he feels that students are encouraged to develop an interest in and love of the fine arts, and of course, theatre. As an advisor and mentor, he helps to encourage those who have interest and abilities to consider careers in the arts. The growth of fine arts improves the health and wellbeing of society and the students we guide are the future of the society we live in.

Brittney Rebhuhn is a freelance performer & creator based in Ames, Iowa. She is an alumni of Iowa State University and Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre. She has spent much of her time touring productions in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Utah, Oregon, California, and across Canada in the Fringe Circuit. She specializes in storytelling through a physical lens, often experimenting with puppetry, mask work, and movement. Recently, she has directed multiple children's theater productions with Story Theater Company and was seen onstage with Iowa Stage Theater Company performing in King Lear as The Fool.

Donna Scarfe was in the film *The Miracle Worker* at 7. She had a Fulbright Fellowship for ballet in Bucharest, Romania then choreographed and performed Liturgical Dance with the Epiphany Dancers in London. She's acted with the National Theatre of the Deaf (CT, Los Angeles), Deaf West Theatre's *A Streetcar Named Desire* and interpreting theatre for Deaf audiences. At the DM Playhouse performed in *Rosa Parks*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Plaza Suite* and *Murder on the Orient Express*. Stage West Theatre - *Miss Witherspoon*, *Outside Mullingar* and costumes for *Angels in America*, Parts I and II. A founding member of the Repertory Theatre of Iowa (2008-Now Iowa Stage Theatre Company), Donna acted in *Crowns*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Woman in Black*, *God of Carnage*, *Sense & Sensibility*, *Our Town*, *The Crucible*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Lear* and *Romeo & Juliet*. She teaches yearly in CA at Costume College. Donna has a M.A. in Theatre/Deaf Studies, is a professional ASL interpreter and owner /designer of Fyne Hats by Felicity creating Period and Contemporary hats.

Jackie Schmillen graduated from Idyllwild Arts Academy in California before receiving her 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 CW Iowa LIVE in Des Moines, Jackie was the face of KPTH Fox 44 in Sioux City 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.



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Nicole Schumacher had a chance to adjudicate in the 2021-2022 academic year and is thrilled for the continued opportunity to participate with IHSMTA this new year. Nicole has spent time on all sides of the stage curtain with her local community theatre onstage and off. When not on stage she has been known to assist with sets, costumes, hair/makeup and props. To be one single voice in a cast to combine to a larger impacting ensemble sound is her joy. Often helping wherever a hand is needed she loves the opportunity to make the magic of live theatre shine in the eyes of the community who all gather in the venues across the state.

Cary Shaprio has been a theatre educator for over 28 years, with 25 years as the drama director at Ankeny High School. Cary received his Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts and his Master of Arts in Theatre Directing and has taken numerous classes and workshops over the years. He was named a national finalist for the American High School Theatre Festival in 2005, 2007, 2010 and 2013; as such, he was able to take performing arts students to Edinburgh, Scotland to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. He has former students performing in various venues across the U.S. and internationally and was named the 2012-2013 Iowa Speech/Theatre/Debate Teacher of the Year by the National Federation of High Schools, and the 2012 Ankeny Teacher of the Year (presented by the Ankeny Masonic Lodge). He has been a judge for the Iowa High School Speech Association since 1975, and in 2015, Cary was inducted into the Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame.

Kara Sherman has played an active role in the arts in Iowa for many years. Most recently serving as the Executive Director of the Wilson Performing Arts Center in Red Oak, IA. Kara has performed in numerous roles of her own onstage, served as a producer, director, theatre camp leader and as a private vocal coach as well.

Robin Suing has been working in the collegiate theatre world since 2015, and heavily involved in the dance studio world since she was very young. Robin has a lot of choreography experience in many dance styles, but musical theatre is her focus. She anticipates graduating with a Master of Arts degree in Dance Education and will be teaching dance classes at Dordt University to grow the musical theatre talents throughout the student body. She has worked with high schoolers through dance team and dance classes. In addition to her dance and choreography knowledge, her work in producing and marketing of all theatre productions at Dordt has given her a wide range of knowledge.

Laura Sweet has served as the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Des Moines Performing Arts since 2012. Sweet is past chair of the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) Performing Arts Managers Committee and co-chairs the Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP) new colleague orientation program. Sweet 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.

Leslie Tyler Leslie's life has been filled with music and dance. She grew up in a musical home learning a variety of instruments as her Dad was involved in several dance bands. In high school she was active in band, choir, plays and the musicals. She had the joy of the Iowa Youth Chorale trip to Europe in 1978, and she was an actor one summer at Okoboji Summer Theatre in Spirit Lake, Ia. Viewed as a trusted Representative, Mentor, and Colleague in Dance and Tumbling communities across the United States, Leslie owned and taught in her dance & tumbling studios for 42 years. She was heavily involved with Dance Masters of America, serving on all board positions and making



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Dance happen in Iowa! She retired from traditional dance studio ownership in May 2021 and formed Blue Spruce Studios to create the life she wanted, to continue to inspire and teach in the next chapter of her life. Leslie is a Freelance Teacher and Adjudicator, Consultant for small dance, cheer and tumbling studios, Teacher to Teacher workshops in Clogging, Tap, Acro and Classic Jazz and Ballet, plus student technique workshops. She continues to choreograph for musicals, dance teams, and couples dance for weddings.

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 Yankowy. Libby is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

Kyle Weber is a graduated from UNI in Community Communication with his primary collegiate work in the Interpreters Theatre and continued 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 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, including directing summer musicals in Cedar Falls 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, Missouri, 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 IHSMA and IHSSA, teaches privately, and - as often as possible - plays weekend music gigs with her family.

David Wendt has over 40 years of educational performance experience. He was a K-12 educator for 32 years where he coached Individual Events, Large Group and Debate. He also directed numerous high school productions. He acted, directed and produced community productions for two theater groups. He was inducted into the Iowa High School Speech Association Hall of Fame in 2016. Currently he is an Assistant Professor at Iowa Wesleyan University where he serves as the Director of Writing Center and teaches a variety of English, Communication and Theater courses.

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 professional and amateur theaters, she toured throughout the Midwest, dancing, singing and acting in shows such as *Godspell* and *Company*. She



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became a choreographer and has since made dances for over 100 shows for professional theater, colleges, 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. She loves being part of the spirit of live performance.

Nancy Wright taught at Glenwood Community School District for 42 years and recently retired. During this time she has been an active board member for the Mills Masquers Community Theater, and has served as music director or director of many productions along with children's theater camp. She has directed two shows at the Glenwood Community High School, as well as the Barton-Rowe Theater in Glenwood, and the Wilson Performing Arts Center in Red Oak. Nancy is a certified IHSSA judge for individual and large group speech contests. She is a member of the Vine Street Bible Church praise band, church organist, and choir director.

Adam Yankowy (he/him) is a native of Louisville, KY and is currently a theatre professor at Drake University. Over the past 7 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: It Shoulda Been You, Songs for a New World, Sunday on the Rocks, Runaways (Drake), You're A Good Man Charlie Brown (DMYAT). Previous music direction: Cabaret (DMPlayhouse- Cloris Award for Music Direction), It Shoulda Been You, 9 to 5, 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.)

Megan Young performed in two musicals and one play during high school: Camelot (small role), The Comedy of Errors (small role), and The King and I (wife). In college, she helped create and perform short skits to raise awareness in a social outreach theatre class. She received a minor in theatre arts. I am certified to teach speech communication and theatre K-12. I have coached speech club through the IHSSA for 8 years. She has served on several committees as well as hosted contests. Her students have received All-State nominations for the past 4 years. She enjoys working with students and wish to provide feedback for students in the performing arts field.

Tyler Youngers is currently an Educational Consultant with Northwest AEA and an Online Instructor. Prior to Northwest, Tyler taught in two different Iowa 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



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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. A 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. (launching in 2018) 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.