

# *Standing* OVATION

THIS PRODUCTION  
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**Edward Jones**  
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



**MAR. 17 - APR. 2, 2023**



**THE PLAYHOUSE**

**#DMPlayhouse**

# Great Red Wine

*made in Iowa  
from Grapes  
grown in Iowa*



## ***Iowa In the Dark***

is a dry red with light, fresh notes. First impressions are tangy acid followed by black cherry fading to plum, a dry mid-palate, and a long, pleasing finish. Made from Marquette, St. Croix, Petite Pearl, and Steuben grapes grown in Iowa, it's a versatile wine that pairs well with grilled meat and spicy foods.

## ***2019 Iowa Sabrevois***

is a dry red with bold aromas of spices and leather on the nose followed by blackberry and plum notes with hints of baking spice, smoke, and licorice on the palate. Made from Sabrevois grapes grown in our Iowa vineyards, it pairs well with grilled meat.

## ***2020 Iowa***

### ***Reserve Marquette***

is a dry red with bright cherry notes and hints of baking spice on the nose and palate followed by a long, moderately acidic finish. Made from Marquette grapes grown in our Iowa vineyards, it pairs well with spicy foods.



Tassel Ridge wines are sold at over 400 retailers in Iowa. For a list, visit [www.tasselridge.com/retail](http://www.tasselridge.com/retail). Or Tassel Ridge Winery can ship wine directly to you in Iowa, Arizona, California, Colorado, DC, Florida, Minnesota, Missouri, and Texas. Call the Winery at 641.672.WINE (9463) to place your order. Adult signature required for receipt of wine. Visit [www.tasselridge.com](http://www.tasselridge.com), our Facebook page, or call 641.672.WINE (9463) for updates on hours, Wine Tasting, and Wine & Food Events.

**Tassel Ridge Dry Red Wines...Simply Extraordinary®**

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**David R. Kilpatrick**  
Executive Director

Thank you so much for joining us today. Our spring musical is always a fun and exciting experience, and this performance will be no different. With music by Cyndi Lauper, Angela Lampe's costumes, and Nicholas Amundson's set design under the vision and direction of Adam Yankow, The Playhouse's *Kinky Boots* will have you dancing along. We hope you have as much fun watching the show as we had putting it together.

There are three more shows in our 2022-23 Season. Next up is *How I Became a Pirate* in the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre, the last show in that space before construction begins. We return to the John Viars Theatre for a clash of cultures in *Native Gardens*. Our garden theme continues, sort of, with *Little Shop of Horrors*, where we meet a plant that talks, sings, and eats people. You will want to see all these shows!

Just as exciting is the announcement of our 2023-24 Season. What a season we have ahead: *Once, Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Our Town*, *The Play That Goes Wrong*, a summer musical to be announced, and a special holiday event *All is Calm*. If you ever considered becoming a season subscriber, this is the year! Great seats, wonderful discounts, and five theatrical events await you.

Of course, The Playhouse is always dreaming about what is next and for us, the future begins now. Our capital campaign to reimagine and renovate our children's theatre is very active. It is not too late to show your appreciation for your community theatre by contributing to the campaign. We are scheduled to start work on July 10 and we need to have all pledges in by then. Please join us and support the next generation of theatregoers.

For more than 100 years, The Playhouse has presented shows for the community. We do this because we believe in the power of theatre to transform lives. But we could not do it without you! Thank you for playing your part.

Enjoy a full season of theatre!



## VOTE for your favorite performances!



**Scan the QR code to tell us who  
your favorite performers were today!**

Outstanding performances are recognized at  
the Dionysos Awards each September.



From all the volunteers, cast, crew,  
and staff at The Playhouse...

# Thank you for your support!

**To make a donation, please contact:**

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Director of Philanthropy

515.974.5370

rcrane@dmplayhouse.com

**Donors listed are current from Mar. 1, 2022 to**

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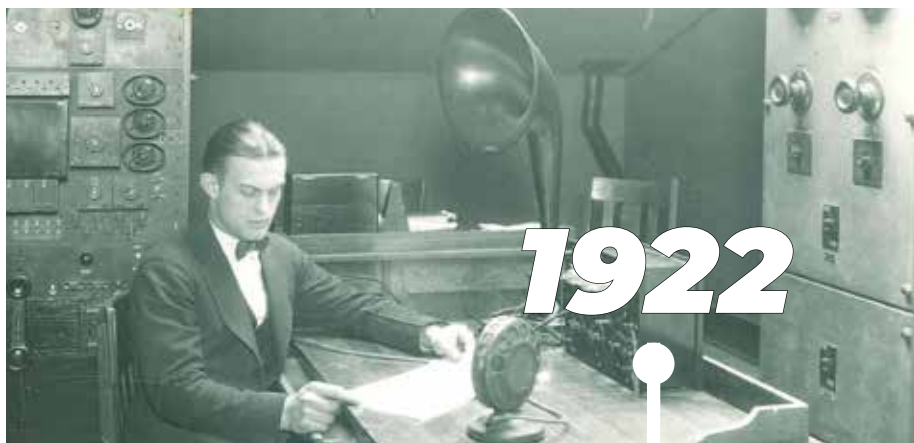


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# 2022

# KINKY BOOTS

Katy Merriman, Playhouse Artistic Director

Different elements of a show entice different audience members. If you are here today to see *Kinky Boots*, you may be a fan of the 2005 film version, starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, Joel Edgerton, and Sarah-Jane Potts, and written by Geoff Deane and Tim Firth. Perhaps you like drag shows and discovered a musical with multiple show-stopping drag numbers fortified by all that Broadway has to offer. There may even be a chance that the title, glitter, and trust in The Playhouse alone were enough to inspire you to purchase tickets. Whatever brought you to the show today, welcome. You are about to see a story told by some of the most talented performers in our area at the exact time a message of love and acceptance is needed in our state and world.



The musical version of *Kinky Boots* began its life in Chicago in 2012 with preview performances at the Bank of America Theatre. The show eventually moved on to Broadway's Al Hirschfeld Theatre, opening on Apr. 4, 2013. It ran for 2,507 performances, closing in 2019 after a six-year run. Both the Chicago production and the original Broadway casts featured Billy Porter as Lola, Annaleigh Ashford as Lauren, and Stark Sands as Charlie. Subsequent productions that followed the Broadway premiere of *Kinky Boots* included a run at the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, a U.S. Tour, a run of over 1,400 performances in the West End's Adelphi Theatre, and international tours in more than 10 countries.

The movie and musical are based on the true story of Steve Pateman, who had taken over leadership of a failing shoe factory, WJ Brookes, in Earls Barton in Northamptonshire, England. In his search for a more competitive shoe market, he ended up on a call with Sue Sheppard, owner of Lacies, a store that sold specialist glamour wear for transgender customers. Sue was having trouble finding traditional "women's" shoes that were the correct size for male-bodied customers who needed more structural support and a bigger shoe size. You'll find out the rest of that story in just a few minutes.

Harvey Fierstein, a four-time Tony winner, was hired to write the book for the stage adaptation of the film. A few prior works in his successful career were also stories about drag – *La Cage aux Folles* and *Torch Song Trilogy*. However Fierstein's musical partner, Cyndi Lauper, made her Broadway songwriting debut with *Kinky Boots*. Lauper was a friend of Fierstein's and had previous musical theatre experience as a performer (in addition to her widespread musical fame), but *Kinky Boots* was her first go at writing music for a full-scale production. Being new to the job didn't keep the show from succeeding. The writing team, along with cast and crew, won six 2013 Tony Awards for *Kinky Boots*, including Best Musical.

I've had my share of eye rolls at "another movie musical," but when you get down to it, there are plenty of adaptations that have had fantastic success on Broadway, including *Kinky Boots*. With a book and music by Harvey Fierstein and Cyndi Lauper, and the story inspired by Steve Pateman's "Divine Footwear," it is no wonder the show is such a success. If a story is worth telling, we should tell it in however many forms it takes to get the message to the world.

# GUEST INFORMATION

## Accessibility

The Playhouse strives to make its facility and performances accessible to all guests. Our theatres are wheelchair accessible. Service animals are welcome. Assisted listening devices are available in the John Viars Theatre. If your hearing aid has a T-coil, toggle to that setting to receive the audio signal directly without any headset or other equipment needed. ASL interpreted performances and audio description performances are available upon request. For these and other needs, please call the ticket office with specific service requests.

## Cameras

The taking of photographs and the use of recording devices are not allowed during a performance and are a violation of state and federal copyright laws.

## Cancellations

If a show is cancelled due to bad weather, an email will be sent to ticket holders. Cancellations will be noted on the phone system, website, and social media sites. Tickets for a cancelled performance may be exchanged for another performance. Please be sure the ticket office has your email information and current phone in the event a performance is cancelled. The Playhouse does not sell its contacts and does not sell or trade its email addresses.

## Concessions

A variety of beverages and candy may be available for purchase and are allowed in auditoriums. No outside drink or food are allowed. Staff reserve the right to deny alcoholic beverage service to anyone at their discretion.

## Elevator

An elevator between levels is located at the east end of the building.

## Emergency Exits

Please note the exit nearest your seat location. In the event of an emergency, ushers will provide direction.

## Etiquette

Latecomers will be seated at an appropriate break in the play. Lobby chimes are sounded five minutes before curtain as well as the close of intermission.

Disruptive, unruly guests, regardless of age, will be asked to leave. Cell phone ringers should be turned off.

## Lost Items

Lost items will be held in the ticket office.

## Parking

Free parking is available in The Playhouse lots and on streets surrounding the theatre. After 5:00 PM daily, free parking is available in the Shops at Roosevelt's east/back parking lot. Parking in the west/front Shops parking lot is restricted to Shops customers at all times. The Playhouse is not responsible for loss of any personal property left in vehicles.

## Performance Content

The Playhouse does not rate subject matter as sensitivities vary from person to person. Questions about content, age appropriateness, or other aspects of the show such as strobe lights and other theatrical affects should be directed to the ticket office.

## Performance Schedule

The regular John Viars Theatre performance schedule is 7:30 PM Wednesdays through Saturdays, and 2:00 PM Sundays. The regular Kate Goldman Children's Theatre performance schedule is 7:00 PM Fridays, and 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM Saturdays and Sundays. The Family Holiday Classic performance schedule is 7:00 PM Fridays, and 1:00 PM and 5:00 PM Saturdays and Sundays. All times are subject to change.

## Preshow Talk

A preshow talk for each John Viars Theatre performance will begin 30 minutes prior to curtain in the west lobby.

## Tickets

Each audience member must occupy a seat and have a ticket, including infants.

## Ticket Office Hours

The ticket office is open Noon to 5:00 PM, Tuesday through Friday, and 90 minutes before each performance. Tickets are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, online. Ticketing fees are the same whether purchased online, by phone, or at the ticket office.

## Des Moines Community Playhouse

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# Kinky Boots



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## KINKY BOOTS

Book by Harvey Fierstein

Music and Lyrics by Cyndi Lauper

Based on the Miramax motion picture *Kinky Boots*

Written by Geoff Deane and Tim Firth

Original Broadway Production Produced by

Daryl Roth, Hal Luftig

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Artistic Director: **Katy Merriman**

### Cast

In Order of Performance

\*Indicates Playhouse Debut

|                     |  |                     |   |
|---------------------|--|---------------------|---|
| Charlie Price ..... | <b>Gavin Runles</b>                      | Harry.....          | <b>Derek Phelps</b>                                     |
| Young Charlie ..... | <b>Blake Dreckman</b>                    | Richard Bailey..... | <b>Maia Talarico</b>                                    |
| Lola/Simon.....     | <b>Travis Ness*</b>                      | Ensemble.....       | <b>Ella Appelbaum*, Michael Beasley,</b>                |
| Nicola .....        | <b>Laura Breyen*</b>                     |                     | <b>Sydney Michele Castiglione*, Tiara L. Green*,</b>    |
| Lauren .....        | <b>Saturn Anya Taylor*</b>               |                     | <b>Michelle House*, Brynn Kelly, Shiloh Mortenson*,</b> |
| Don .....           | <b>Brett Middendorf*</b>                 |                     | <b>Caitlyn Porter, Joe Reed*, Jenny Throckmorton</b>    |
| Pat .....           | <b>Sarah Florian</b>                     | Covers              |   |
| Trish .....         | <b>Jackie Schmillen</b>                  | Charlie Price ..... | <b>Derek Phelps</b>                                     |
| George.....         | <b>Heather Tragesser</b>                 | Lola .....          | <b>Lawrence Walker</b>                                  |
| The Angels .....    | <b>Bryan Gamboa, Mitchell Nieland,</b>   | Nicola.....         | <b>Brynn Kelly</b>                                      |
|                     | <b>Nicholas Quamme*, Lawrence Walker</b> | Lauren.....         | <b>Brynn Kelly</b>                                      |
| Mr. Price .....     | <b>Sam Humphrey*</b>                     |                     |   |
| Simon Sr. ....      | <b>Al Downey Sr.</b>                     |                     |   |

*Kinky Boots* is presented with a 15-minute intermission.

*Kinky Boots* is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI, 423 W 55th St, New York, NY 10019, Tel: 212.541.4684, Fax: 212.397.4684. www.MTIShows.com.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

# MUSICAL NUMBERS

## ACT I

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Price &amp; Son Theme</i> .....           | Workers  |
| <i>The Most Beautiful Thing</i> .....        | Mr. Price, Young Charlie, Workers, Young Lola, Nicola      |
| <i>The Funeral</i> .....                     | Workers  |
| <i>Take What You Got</i> .....               | Charlie, Harry, Ensemble                                   |
| <i>Land of Lola</i> .....                    | Lola, Angels   |
| <i>Land of Lola (Reprise)</i> .....          | Angels   |
| <i>Step One</i> .....                        | Charlie  |
| <i>Sex Is in the Heel</i> .....              | Lola, Angels, Pat, Lauren, Trish, Ensemble, George         |
| <i>Price &amp; Son Theme (Reprise)</i> ..... | Workers  |
| <i>The History of Wrong Guys</i> .....       | Lauren   |
| <i>I'm Not My Father's Son</i> .....         | Lola, Charlie  |
| <i>Everybody Say Yeah</i> .....              | Charlie, Workers, George, Lauren, Lola, Pat, Trish, Angels |

## ACT II

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Entr'acte/Price &amp; Son (Reprise)</i> ..... | Workers  |
| <i>What a Woman Wants</i> .....                  | Lola, Don, Pat, Female Workers, Trish, Lauren            |
| <i>In This Corner</i> .....                      | Referee, Pat, Angels, Lola, George, Trish, Don, Ensemble |
| <i>Charlie's Sad Soliloquy</i> .....             | Charlie  |
| <i>Soul of a Man</i> .....                       | Charlie, Ensemble  |
| <i>Sex Is in the Heel (Reprise)</i> .....        | Workers  |
| <i>Hold Me in Your Heart</i> .....               | Lola   |
| <i>Wrong Guys (Reprise)</i> .....                | Lauren   |
| <i>Raise You Up/Just Be</i> .....                | Company  |
| <i>Bows/Exit Music</i> .....                     | Company  |

Cyndi Lauper wishes to thank her collaborators: Sammy James Jr., Steve Gaboury, Rich Morel and Tom Hammer, Stephen Oremus

## CAST NOTES



**Ella Appelbaum** (*Ensemble*) (*she/her*) is pursuing her B.F.A. in musical theatre at Drake University. Her credits include *Carrie: The Musical* at Drake, a Ghostly Apparition in *A Christmas Carol* with Iowa Stage Theatre Company, Anna in *Frozen Jr.*

with Young Artists Initiative in St. Paul, MN, and Gertrude McFuzz in the touring production of *Seussical Jr.* with ETC Productions. Ella loves to collage and make pottery and is huge advocate of Just Dance.



**Michael Beasley** (*Ensemble*) (*they/them*) has numerous Playhouse stage credits including *Guys & Dolls* (Vernon), *Charlotte's Web* (Second Narrator, Dionysos Award recipient), and *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* (Children's Entertainer/

Big Kid). They also were assistant choreographer for *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. They received the 2022 Playhouse Spirit Award, given to an actor who has assisted a show in ways beyond their role. Beasley enjoys gardening, hiking, creating joy through macramé, and jamming with the family band.

## CAST NOTES



**Laura Breyen** (*Nicola*) (she/her) is a sophomore at Drake University studying musical theatre and psychology. This is her Playhouse debut. At Drake, she played Carrie in *Carrie: The Musical* and was in the ensemble for *9 to 5 The Musical*. Laura

enjoys music arranging, crocheting, psychology, and hanging out with her boyfriend and friends.



**Sydney Michele Castiglione** (*Ensemble*) (she/her) is excited to make her Playhouse debut in *Kinky Boots*. She is a junior at Drake University earning her B.F.A. in musical theatre. She was recently in Drake's production of *Carrie: The Musical*

(ensemble, dance captain). Other Drake credits include *9 to 5 The Musical* (Margaret) and *Into the Woods* (Snow White, Florinda understudy). Sydney's hobbies include cooking and watching reality television. @sydcastig



**Al Downey Sr.** (*Simon Sr.*) (he/him) was named a Playhouse Legend in 2011. He made his Playhouse debut in 1960 in *The Madwoman of Chaillot* and has appeared in more than 25 shows including *Damn Yankees*, *Of Mice and Men*, and, his favorite, *The*

*Boys Next Door* (Lucien P. Smith). He has also volunteered as stage manager, on most backstage crews, and in guest services. Al continues to act with the Final Act Ensemble, The Playhouse's radio troupe. Al plays piano and likes to draw, read, and play computer games.



**Blake Dreckman** (*Young Charlie*) (he/him) is a sixth grader at South Middle School, Waukee. He is excited to be making his mainstage debut, having made his Playhouse debut in the Kate Goldman Children's

Theater production of *Charlotte's Web* (Gander). He was also in the cast of Des Moines Young Artists' Theater's production of *Sister Act Jr.* Blake enjoys playing flute and piano, and also plays tennis.



**Sarah Florian** (*Pat*) (she/her) was in The Playhouse casts of *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Miss Barley/Ensemble), *Hairspray* (LouAnn), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Wife/Ensemble), and *Disney's High School Musical 2*

(Ensemble). Other stage credits include *The Elixir of Love* and *The Magic Flute* at Drake University, where she earned her Bachelor of Music degree, and *La Bohème*, *The Merry Widow*, and *Tosca* at Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre.



**Bryan Gamboa** (*Angel*) (he/him) has Playhouse credits that include *A Chorus Line* (Paul) and *Disney's Alice in Wonderland Jr* (March Hare). Other favorite shows include *Carrie: The Musical* (George) at StageWest and *Reefer Madness* (Ralph) with Kata

Klysmic Productions. Bryan is an executive team leader of human resources at Target and IHSSA musical theater coach at West Des Moines Valley High School. He enjoys spending time with friends and family, catching up on his favorite tv shows, going to the gym, and browsing social media.



**Tiara L. Green** (*Ensemble*) (she/her) is a freshman at Drake University studying biochemistry and cell and molecular biology with a minor in theatre. Her stage credits include *Kinky Boots* (Ensemble) at Theatre-On-The-Hill (Bolingbrook, IL), and

*Anastasia* (Anyia, Illinois High School Musical Theater Award Best Actress nominee), *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* (Silly Girl), and *The Addams Family* (Ancestor) at Romeoville (IL) High School. She enjoys writing music, baking, reading, and gaming.



**Michelle House** (*Ensemble*) (she/her) is new to The Playhouse but not the theatre. Her previous credits include *Les Misérables* (Madame Thenardier) and *The Fantasticks* (Bellomy) at Amelia Earhart

Playhouse in Wiesbaden, Germany, and choreographer for *Brigadoon*, *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Jesuit High School in Tampa, FL. Michelle is a teacher librarian at South Union Elementary School and enjoys reading, dancing, and stepping outside her comfort zone.



**Sam Humphrey** (*Mr. Price/Ensemble*) (he/him) graduated from Purdue University where he was Tenor 1 in the Purdue Varsity Glee Club for four years. He graduated with a B.A. in materials science and engineering and is a business development

associate at Element Materials Technology. Sam is a self-proclaimed history nerd and enjoys Dungeons and Dragons. He is making his stage debut and credits his wife, Brenna, who shared tips from her stage experiences.



**Brynn Kelly** (*Ensemble/Lauren cover/ Nicola cover*) (she/her) is excited to be back on The Playhouse stage. Originally from Lawrence, KS, Brynn is a senior at Drake University studying musical theatre, writing, business, and

## CAST NOTES

technical theatre. Her previous credits include *Singin' in the Rain* (Ensemble/Dance Captain) at The Playhouse, *Into the Woods* (Little Red) at Tallgrass Theatre, and *Carrie: The Musical* (Miss Gardner) at Drake. Her hobbies include carpentry, reading, and hanging out with her cat.



**Brett Middendorf** (*Don*) (*he/him*) is making his Playhouse debut in *Kinky Boots*. Prior stage credits include the Baker in *Into the Woods* at Tallgrass Theatre and Tony in *West Side Story* at Dowling Catholic High School.

Brett earned his B.B.A. from Loyola University Chicago and his J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law. He works for his family's business as a vice president at Middendorf Insurance. In his free time, Brett enjoys traveling to faraway lands, and playing with his dog, Finn.



**Shiloh Mortenson** (*Ensemble*) (*they/them, she/her*) is making their Playhouse debut. Other stage credits include *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Baker) at Urbandale Community Theatre and *The Rocky Horror Show*

*Live* (Phantom) at Skyline Creek Productions in Marion, IL. Their hobbies include studying language, philosophy, and ancient Mediterranean anthropology and religion. Shiloh is a patient care technician with DaVita and life skills trainer for NeuroRestorative.



**Travis Ness** (*Lola/Simon*) (*he/him*) is making his Playhouse debut. His past theatre credits include *Sister Act* at The Palace Theatre (Manchester, NH), *Hairspray*, *My Fair Lady*, and *All Shook Up* at Tent Theatre (Springfield, MO), and *A Man of No Importance*, *Jesus*

*Christ Superstar*, and *The Threepenny Opera* at Drake University. He enjoys drag, theater, dance, food, movies, and travel. Travis is a full-time drag queen, performing as Domita Sanchez.



**Mitchell Nieland** (*Angel*) (*he/him*) has many Greater Des Moines theatre credits including Conrad Birdie in *Bye Bye Birdie* and Judah in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Urbandale Community Theatre and Paul/Gremio in *Kiss Me, Kate* at

Ankeny Community Theatre (Cloris Award nominee). His Playhouse shows include *Billy Elliot the Musical*, *A Chorus Line* (Don), *West Side Story* (A-Rab), and *Disney's High School Musical 2*, and, most recently, *Guys and Dolls*.



**Derek Phelps** (*Harry/Charlie cover*) (*he/they*) made their Playhouse debut as Younger Brother in *Ragtime* and more recently appeared in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*. Other stage credits include William Barfee in *The 25th Annual*

*Putnam County Spelling Bee* at Ankeny Community Theatre and Cogsworth in *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* at Post Playhouse (Crawford, NE). Derek teaches at The Playhouse and is part of the Friday Funday cast. They have just joined The Playhouse staff as volunteer and production coordinator.



**Caitlyn Porter** (*Ensemble*) (*she/her*) made her Playhouse debut in *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Other stage credits include Caitlyn/Nick in *Godspell* at Ankeny Community Theatre and Katskills Wintergreen in *The Humor Games* at Des Moines

Lincoln High School. She graduated from the School for Music Vocations and is a piano teacher at Arrow Academy. In addition to playing piano, Caitlyn likes writing music, playing video games, and hanging out with friends.



**Nicholas Quamme** (*Angel*) (*he/him*) is thrilled to be returning to the stage and grateful for the opportunity to once again be a student. His last onstage role was Big Deal in *West Side Story* in La Crosse, WI. Nick is a self-

employed freelance choreographer, working with 25 competitive show choir programs across the U.S. In his free time, he enjoys hiking, cooking, and traveling.



**Joe Reed** (*Ensemble*) (*he/him*) is making his Playhouse debut in *Kinky Boots*. His favorite role he played was Uncle Frederick in *The Woman in White* in Junction City, KS. Joe says his primary hobby is watching his daughter grow up.



**Gavin Runles** (*Charlie Price*) (*he/him*) has many memorable Playhouse roles including Jack Kelly in *Disney's Newsies* (Cloris Award winner, Dionysos Award nominee), Agent Branton in 2019's *Catch Me If You Can*, Rolf in *The Sound of Music*, and,

most recently, Benny Southstreet in *Guys and Dolls*. Gavin enjoys rock climbing, disc golfing, card games, and bartending in his free time. He plans to move to New York later this year to pursue a career in performance.



## CAST NOTES



**Jackie Schmillen** (*Trish*) (*she/her*), a broadcast journalist for nearly 20 years, is now director of public affairs for the Iowa National Guard, the first civilian to hold the position. Her last performance in a musical was Mom in *A Christmas Story The Musical* and she is delighted to be back on The Playhouse stage. Other Playhouse shows include *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein* and *Disney's The Little Mermaid* (Ursula, Cloris Award winner). Jackie is passionate about Des Moines and enjoys volunteering and promoting great things happening in the community.



**Maia Talarico** (*Richard/Ensemble*) (*they/them*) made their Playhouse debut in *Ella Enchanted* as Olive. A seasoned actor, their credits include *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* (Avery) at Iowa Stage Theatre Company, *Keely and Du* (Keely) and *Twelfth Night* (Viola) at the Stella Adler Studio, and *Treasure Island* and *A Christmas Carol* at Iowa State University. Their last Playhouse stage performance was the title character in *Tinker Bell*.



**Saturn Anya Taylor** (*Lauren*) (*they/them*) is a first-year student at Drake University studying psychology and law, politics, and society. They have been very active in theatre in their hometown of Flagstaff, AZ, working as stage manager as well as appearing onstage in *Anastasia* (Dowager Empress), *Zombie Prom* (Delilah Strick), *Sweeney Todd* (Toby Ragg), *Hamlet* (Ophelia), *Starlight Express* (Electra), and *Disney's Newsies* (Katherine Plumber) with Theatrikos Theater Company and *Disney's The Little Mermaid* (Ursula) in high school. Their hobbies and interests include theatre, writing poetry, video games, and livestreaming.



**Jenny Throckmorton** (*Ensemble*) (*she/her*) volunteers in all areas of the theatre: onstage, backstage, and guest services. Onstage at The Playhouse, she was Carol Strong, a favorite role, in *Catch Me If You Can*, Mrs. Time/Mrs. Luckenbill in *Disney's Freaky Friday One Act*, and a Nun in *The Sound of Music*. Her other area shows include *The Bridges of Madison County Concert Version* at Tallgrass Theatre and *Annie* at Urbandale Community Theatre. Jenny enjoys running and spending time with her kids, Jordan and Laila.



**Heather Tragesser** (*George*) (*she/her*) is excited to return to The Playhouse where her past performances include *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, *Choices*, *Proof*, and her favorite, *Schoolhouse Rock Live!* The past few summers she performed at Urbandale Community Theatre in *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Annie*, and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Narrator, a favorite role). Heather is a reading specialist at Ashland Ridge Elementary in Ankeny. She enjoys traveling with her family, kickboxing, and performing in musicals with her daughter, Ember.



**Lawrence Walker** (*Angel/Lola cover*) (*he/him*) is a seasoned Playhouse performer whose shows include *Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka* and *Disney's The Little Mermaid*. Lawrence enjoys all things theatre and music. He loves the outdoors – hiking, long-boarding, and swimming. He also spends as much time as he can with family and friends. Lawrence is a supervisor at The TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center.



**Adam Yankow** (*Director*) (*he/him*) is a native of Louisville, KY, and a theatre professor at Drake University. Over the past seven years he has taught in the theatre departments at Iowa State (ISU), Grand View, and Minnesota State universities. Adam holds an M.F.A. 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: *Carrie The Musical*, *It Shoulda Been You*, *Songs for a New World*, *Sunday on the Rocks*, *Runaways* (Drake), *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre). Previous music direction: *Cabaret* (Playhouse, Cloris Award winner for Music Direction); *Carrie The Musical*, *It Shoulda Been You*, *9 to 5 The Musical*, *Into the Woods*, *Songs for a New World*, *Pippin*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *Runaways* (Drake); *Fun Home* (Iowa Stage Theatre Company, Cloris Award winner for Music Direction); *Oklahoma!* (ISU); *A Christmas Story*, *The Musical*, *Disney's Mary Poppins*. New York performance credits: *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 *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein* (Playhouse, Cloris Award winner), 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.)

## CAST NOTES



**Tristan Miedema** (*Music Director*) (*he/they*) is a musical theatre voice instructor at Drake University. Some of their area credits include Production Singer in *Singin' in the Rain* at The Playhouse, Chorus Singer in *The Magic Flute* with the Des Moines

Metro Opera, and Lilas Pastia in *La Tragedie de Carmen* and John Brooke in *Little Women* at the University of Iowa Opera Theatre. They earned their B.A. in music from Central College and their M.A. in voice performance from the University of Iowa. Tristan's hobbies include singing as a section leader in the Des Moines Gay Men's Chorus (DMGMC.org), playing piano, cooking and baking, show choir, gender affirming voice work, and show choir.



**Megan Helmers** (*Choreographer*) (*she/her*) has choreographed many shows at The Playhouse including *Cabaret*; *Godspell*; *A Christmas Story*, *The Musical*; *Disney's Newsies*; *Elf The Musical*; *Billy Elliot The Musical*; and *Disney's The Little Mermaid*. Other

recent choreography includes *Cabaret*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Hello, Dolly!* for Theatre Cedar Rapids and *Brucemorchestra XIV, Oklahoma!*, and *Chaplin* for Revival Theatre Company. Megan's work as a director/choreographer includes Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre's *Heathers The Musical* and *Bring it On The Musical*, The Playhouse's *A Chorus Line* and *Disney's Freaky Friday One Act*, *Noce's Tick, Tick . . . Boom!* and *Murder Ballad*, and Tallgrass Theatre's *The Revolutionists*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, and *Ordinary Days*. Megan is a senior analyst, digital marketing for Capacity Interactive and teaches various dance styles for the Drake University Theatre Department. She enjoys dancing around the house with husband Charlie Reese and their pets, Detective Olivia Benson Helmers-Reese and Elliott Patrick Swayne Helmers-Reese.



**Nicholas Amundson** (*Scenic Designer/Stage Consultant*) (*he/him*) earned his B.F.A. in theatre design and technology from the University of South Dakota. Working on theatre all over town, he has designed in many different styles with StageWest

Theatre Company (*Ugly Lies the Bone*, *Marjorie Prime*), Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre (*The Hobbit*, *James and the Giant Peach Jr.*), Noce (*bare: A Pop Opera*), and Kata Klysmic Productions (*The Rocky Horror Show*, *Reefers Madness*). He served as scenic designer for *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein*, *Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka*, *A Chorus Line*, *Choices*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *Ragtime*, *Catch Me If You Can* and many more at The Playhouse. In the 2019-20 season, he directed and designed *James and the Giant Peach* in the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre. His favorite thing about theatre is

creating out-of-the-box ways to present a story that gives the audience something fun to experience.



**Angela Lampe** (*Costume Designer*) (*she/her*) began her tenure with The Playhouse in 1993 and has designed costumes, sets, and props for nearly 300 productions including *Gyps and Dolls*, *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and*

*Murder*, *Ella Enchanted*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, *Ragtime*, *Les Misérables*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *West Side Story*, *Into the Woods*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Sunset Boulevard*, and *Hairspray*. She has a B.A. from Central College in Pella and a M.F.A. in theatre from the University of Nebraska. She is the recipient of four Cloris Awards for excellence in costuming and puppetry.



**Sam Stephen** (*Lighting Designer*) (*they/them*) has a B.A. in live entertainment design and technology from North Central College. Their first and most recent Playhouse production was lighting designer for *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical*.

They have recently designed *The Legend of Georgia McBride* at Metropolis Performing Arts Center, *It Runs in the Family* at Citadel Theater, *Among the Dead* at Jackalope Theater, *She Loves Me* at Brightside Theater, and *Cabaret* at Metropolis, all in the Chicago area. [www.DesignsBySamuelStephen.com](http://www.DesignsBySamuelStephen.com)



**SJ Knox** (*Sound Designer*) (*she/her*) is from Kansas City, MO, and grew up attending performing arts schools for vocal and instrumental music. She is a current theatre design technology student at Drake University.



**Kerrie Lee** (*Properties Designer*) (*she/her*) is a visual artist and owner of Dream Up. She has appeared on The Playhouse stages in *Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* (Actress 1) and *James and the Giant Peach* (Aunt Spiker). Kerrie has also

used her considerable talents backstage including assistant stage manager for *The Velveteen Rabbit*. She received a 2020 Dionysos Award from The Playhouse for her work backstage, dressing actors in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, creating the Bumpus Hounds and properties for *A Christmas Story*, *The Musical*, and light board operator for *The Diary of Anne Frank*.



**Ash Howland** (*Stage Manager*) (*they/them*) first became involved at The Playhouse through classes, later serving as an education intern for summer theatre classes. Their production credits include master electrician for *Jesus Christ Superstar*

and lighting designer for *A Beautiful Day in November* on the *Banks of the Greatest of the Great Lakes* at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle and assistant lighting designer for *Disney's The Little Mermaid* at Village Theatre in Issaquah, WA. At The Playhouse they have served on numerous backstage crews. Ash is an assistant preschool teacher at Gan Shalom Preschool in Waukee and enjoys arts and crafts, video games, hiking, and their pet rats.



**Brandon Brockshus** (*Fight Choreographer*) (*he/him*) is a PhD student in kinesiology at Iowa State University and is a recognized Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) actor/combatant. He has served as a fight director for Iowa Stage

Theatre Company, Shot in the Dark Productions, Central College, Simpson College, Drake University, Morningside University, Iowa State University, and Iowa high schools. His research interests include methods of teaching stage combat and the effects of stage combat training and practice on the human brain. He lives in Ames with his wife, daughter, and son.



**Stella Webster** (*Assistant Choreographer*) (*she/her*) began her Playhouse career as a youth in *Disney's Alice in Wonderland Jr.* and more recently appeared in *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* (Acrobat/Big Kid) and *Rodgers + Hammerstein's*

*Cinderella*. Other area shows include *Legally Blonde Jr.* (Brooke Wyndham, a favorite role), *Fame Jr.*, *Annie Jr.*, and *Hairspray Jr.* at Des Moines Young Artist's Theatre (DMYAT). Stella is a choreographer at Des Moines Roosevelt and Lincoln high schools. A junior at Iowa State University, Stella is majoring in performing arts with a double emphasis in musical theatre and dance.



**Jonathan Garton** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) (*he/him*) answered a volunteer call for crew for *The Sound of Music* in the fall of 2021 and has been very active at The Playhouse ever since. He made his stage debut as the waiter in *Agatha Christie's*

*Murder on the Orient Express* while serving as assistant stage manager and most recently enjoyed a similar dual role as Giant and assistant stage manager for *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Jon is a supervisor at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. He enjoys

sharing his passion for photography both in and out of The Playhouse. He greatly appreciates the support of his husband, Nenad, and their children Milos and Sofia.



**Katherine Jurado** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) (*she/her*) was involved with theatre at her alma mater, Des Moines North High School, serving as stage manager for *12 Angry Jurors* and as assistant director for *Vintage Hitchcock*. She also played

Little Red Riding Hood in North's production of *Into the Woods*. Katie likes singing, acting, all things theatre, and photography.



**Katy Merriman** (*Artistic Director*) (*she/her*) has been an active member of the local theatre community since moving to Des Moines in 2013. Her Playhouse directing credits include *Guys and Dolls*; *The Sound of Music*; the world premiere of *Escaping the Labyrinth*; the

co-production with Pyramid Theatre Company, *A Love Offering* (co-directed with Tiffany Johnson); *I and You*; *The Roommate*; and *Love Letters*. Katy is an emeritus company member of Iowa Stage Theatre Company with performance credits including *The Glass Menagerie* (Laura) and *Our Town* (Emily). She also directed their 2018 production of *Fun Home*. Prior to her time in Des Moines, Katy worked with numerous theatres in the Midwest as a performer, director, and administrator.



**Harvey Fierstein** (*Book*) is a four-time Tony Award-winning writer and actor. His Broadway writing credits include *Kinky Boots*, *Torch Song Trilogy* (Tony, Drama Desk, Dramatists Guild Awards), *Casa Valentina*, *Safe Sex*, *Legs Diamond*, and *A Catered*

*Affair* (12 Drama Desk nominations and the Drama League Award for Best Musical). His *La Cage Aux Folles* is the only show to ever win Best Musical and two Best Revival Tony Awards. Other plays include *Spookhouse*, *Forget Him*, and *Flatbush Tosca*. His teleplays include *Tidy Endings* for HBO (ACE Award) and *On Common Ground* for Showtime. His children's HBO special, *The Sissy Duckling*, won the Humanitas Prize and the book version is in its eighth printing. Other honors include the Drama League Award for Outstanding Performer of the Year, a special OBIE award, NY Magazine Award, and nominations for The Olivier Award and an Emmy. His political writings have been seen on PBS' series "In The Life" and published in *The New York Times*, *Huffington Post*, and *Hartford Courant*. He was inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame in 2008.

## CAST NOTES



**Cyndi Lauper** (*Music & Lyrics*) is a Grammy, Emmy, and Tony award-winning artist with over 30 sterling years and global record sales in excess of 50 million albums. With her first album, "She's So Unusual," Lauper won a Grammy Award for Best New

Artist and became the first female in history to have four top-five singles from a debut album. Since then, Lauper has released 10 additional studio albums, been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, and celebrated as a *New York Times* best-selling author. Overall, during her storied music career, Lauper has been nominated for 15 Grammy Awards, two American Music Awards, seven American Video Awards, and 18 MTV Awards. In 2013, Lauper became the first solo woman to win Best Original Score for her music and lyrics for *Kinky Boots*. Never one to slow down, she is currently writing the score for the Broadway adaptation of the 1988 feature film *Working Girl*. She contributed a song to the score of the Broadway musical *Spongebob Squarepants* and launched her own fashion line, A Touch of Cyn, with Home Shopping Network.



**Tim Firth** (*Original Screenplay*) was born in Wirral, Merseyside, in the northwest of England. He spent most of his time at his Warrington comprehensive school writing songs and it was only a couple of months before going to Cambridge to read

English that he attended an Arvon Foundation course in West Yorkshire. This was run by Willy Russell and whilst on it, Firth had to write dialogue. He wrote about the only thing he knew: two 16-year-olds trying to write a song. Another course participant optioned it for his production company and Firth decided to become a writer. While at Cambridge he joined and composed songs for the Footlights where his contemporaries included David Baddiel who later invited him to contribute music to *The Mary Whitehouse Experience* on BBC radio. His first plays at this time were all directed by Sam Mendes. On leaving Cambridge, he wrote and composed music for the Radio Four series *And Now In Colour* but was soon invited to meet Alan Ayckbourn in Scarborough and commissioned to write a play for the Stephen Joseph Theatre. His one-act play *A Man Of Letters* was a success and led to the commissioning of a full-length play from Ayckbourn, *Neville's Island*, which later transferred to the West End and has been seen in translation all round the world in almost continuous production since its premiere. During two successive Christmas runs, his stage musical version of his tv film *The Flint Street Nativity* at the Liverpool Playhouse became the most successful Christmas production in the theatre's history. The play *Calendar Girls*, adapted by Firth from his own film, found favor with audiences across the UK during its 2008/09 tour, and in the process broke the all-time British box office record for a play and continued to sell out during its West

End residency. In 2010, the hit comedy embarked on a UK country wide tour, one of the largest ever for a play. *Calendar Girls* is also a success across the globe, playing in Germany, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Israel, Greece, Argentina, France, Czech Republic, Belgium, Holland, Hungary, Poland, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Russia, Bulgaria, and Slovakia. In 2011, it beat the all-time British box office record for a play and has since raised over half a million British pounds for Blood Cancer Charities, funding its own research project in Yorkshire hospitals. In an 18-month window, Amateur Rights were snapped up by over 500 amateur dramatic groups across the UK and the rest of the world. 2013 marked the premiere of Firth's first solo musical, *This Is My Family*, for which he wrote the book, lyrics, and music. Directed by Daniel Evans, it premiered at Sheffield Studio Theatre on 19 June 2013. *This Is My Family* won the UK Theatre Award for Best New Musical and Sian Phillips won Best Supporting Actress. In 2015, Tim Firth and Ivor Novello award-winning songwriter Gary Barlow co-wrote *The Girls*, based on the story of the *Calendar Girls*. Directed by Roger Haines and Tim Firth, the new musical opened at Leeds Grand Theatre in November. The show then moved to The Lowry in Manchester in January 2016. In all, *The Girls* played 60 sold-out performances, complete with 60 standing ovations, and was seen by just under 100,000 people. It is anticipated *The Girls* will move to the West End. In 2004 Firth released a solo album, *Harmless Flirting*, completing a tour of words and music with fellow playwright Willy Russell that won positive reviews at the Edinburgh Festival. In March 2010, Firth was awarded an honorary Doctorate by the University of Chester. Tim helps run the choir at Alvanley Primary School in Cheshire.

## PRODUCTION CREWS

Technical Directors: **Nicholas Amundson, Paul Cartwright**

Dialect Coach: **Adam Yankowy**

Dressers: **Sabrina Fullhart, Maddie Mardesen**

Run Crew: **Jenny Bryant, Troy Ellerbroek, Jo Guerdet, Keith Hayes, Mike Howland, Rick Manion, Lindsey Nelson, Hudson Pulver, Keelin Reilly**

Followspot Operator: **Katie Hughes**

Sound Board Operators: **SJ Knox, Katherine Jurado**

Costume Crew: **Virginia Babeau, Susan Eisenhour, Barbara Mydland**

Master Electrician: **Virgil Kleinhesselink**

Audition Crew: **Hannah Beuse, Kyle Bochart, Jenny Bryant, Pilar Burg, Cheryl Critelli, Troy Ellerbroek, Tonie Farris, DC Felton, Brandon Record**

Historians: **Mark Morrison, Lloyd Von Hagen**

*THE PIANO LESSON SPECIAL THANKS*

*Due to print deadlines, these individuals could not be acknowledged in the previous playbill.*

Guest Services: **Phyllis Allen-Morris, Riley Babel, Giovanni Bahena, Nathalie Batiste, Kim Blakesley, Steve Blakesley, Bonnie Braatz, Barb Braband, Jay Braband, Shannon Bristow, Juls Bruns, Dan Chase, Kim Cheeks, Karna Converse, Judi Cooper, Rhya Cowden, Carol Culmer, Patty Davis, Jady Davis-Ballard, Daniel Dunham, Linda Dunham, Marcella Edmonds, Penny Edmonds,**

**Mark Eikenberry, Xymeriah Elder, Mar Feitelson, Paula Feltner, Jane Flagler, Rory Freeman, Simone Freeman, Fred Gee, Sharon Gee, Jill Gray, Jen Green, Tesa Greenlee, Genevieve Gualerzi, Ellen Harvey, Nevaeh Hawkins, Keith Hayes, Linda Hendricks, Therese Herold, Dave Higbee, Mary Higbee, Harold Hinkhouse, Charlie Johnson, Britini Jones, Catherine Kaiser, John Kaiser, Lloyd Kaufman, Abhishek Khanna, Shahriyorkhoja Khojaev, Angela Knowler, Susan Lee, Rachel Lewis, Marcia Lyon, Mary Marshall, Linda McClure, Barbara Merrill, Maggy Miller, Monica Muhammad, Sheila Mullen, Judy O'Keefe, Pamela O'Keefe, Ingrid Oakley, Dale Oakley-Bentlage, Aimee Oakley-Runyan, Carol Palmer, Janet Peck, Kathy Polson,**

**Karen Puffett, Darlene Pullen, Mark Pullen, Shirlee Reding, Isabella Rempe, Jamie Rempe, Stephanie Roe, Stephanie Schneider, Maureen Sexton, Auriela Singleton, Kristi Sithonnorath, Amy Skarin, Barbara Slinker, Lu Spaine, Ruth Staplin, Carey Templeton, Ava Thornton, Angie Umthun, Lori VanZee, Billie Wade, Fran Watson, Randy Watson, Cliff Wendel, Susan Wendel, Mary Whisenand, Sherill Whisenand, Janet Whiteside, Trudy Woline, Crystal Woods, Mary Wyant**

Production Intern: **Jackson Newhouse**

Run Crew: **Jenny Bryant, Lindsey Nelson, Hudson Pulver, Ashley Scarbrough, Becky Scholtec, George Sparks, Oliver Thrun**

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David R. Kilpatrick, *Executive Director*  
Katy Merriman, *Artistic Director*

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Lee Ann Bakros, *Marketing & Public Relations Director*  
Lindsey Ballard, *Concessions Manager*  
Tiffany Briggs, *House Manager*  
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Ryan Crane, *Director of Philanthropy*  
Peyton Haas, *Marketing & Philanthropy Intern*  
Mary Hofer, *Finance*  
Debbie Jacobson, *Ticket Office Manager*  
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Bartley Mullin, *House Manager*  
Derek Phelps, *Volunteer & Production Coordinator*  
Robin Heldt Spahr, *Education Director*  
Jessica Van Essen, *Costume Shop Supervisor*  
David A. VanCleave, *House Manager*  
Nate Weber, *Education Outreach*

## Education Staff

|                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Nicole Chavas-Schwegler | Brandon Record      |
| Jenna Darsee            | Abby Rogers         |
| Katie Dorrell*          | Sarah Schaefer      |
| Tali Eisenstadt         | Brett Spahr*        |
| Anne Frett              | Molly Thorsen       |
| Robin Kim Van Haecke    |                     |
| Breen Fulton*           | Sarah Beth Weinberg |
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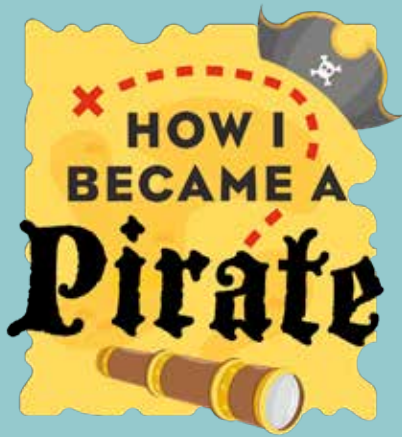
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