



NEWS RELEASE

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STAGES ST. LOUIS AND EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION OPEN APPLICATIONS FOR AREA MIDDLE SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN THREE-YEAR JUMPSTART THEATRE PROGRAM.

(ST. LOUIS) – Beginning Monday, January 15, 2018, St. Louis area middle schools may submit applications to be considered for the JumpStart Theatre program, a three-year fully funded musical theatre program sponsored by STAGES St. Louis, the Educational Theatre Association (EdTA), home of the International Thespian Society, and the Educational Theatre Foundation (ETF). Three middle schools will be selected to begin the program in the 2018-19 school year.

The JumpStart Theatre Program equips non-theatre teachers with the skills and resources to produce their school's first musical through a proven combination of hands-on mentoring and boot-camp style training. Because of their success in producing Broadway-quality productions over its 32-year history, and its commitment to performing arts education through the STAGES Performing Arts Academy, STAGES St. Louis was chosen as one of two theatre companies in the country to spearhead the initiative in their cities, offering mentorship, training and guidance to the selected schools. La Jolla Playhouse was selected to launch the JumpStart Theatre model in the San Diego area.

The application is open to all St. Louis metro area middle schools, both public and private. Selection criteria includes the commitment of a minimum three educators from each school who will remain dedicated to the program for the duration. Previous theatre experience is not required. Schools will be mentored by STAGES Performing Arts Academy teaching artists throughout the entire program with the goal of building a sustainable, long-term musical theatre curriculum.

When asked about the ideal applicant, STAGES Executive Producer and Educational Theatre Foundation (ETF) National Board of Trustees member, Jack Lane, responded, "The ideal institutions are those with dedicated leadership who have a passion for and a commitment to arts education as well as an understanding of how a school arts program contributes to student success in and beyond the classroom. We are excited to work with non-theatre teachers and equip them to maintain their own theatre program for many years to come."

Applications will be available on the STAGES St. Louis website beginning January 15, 2018. The application period runs from January 15, 2018 to February 15, 2018. Applications received after this date will be notified and advised to apply for the 2019 school year. All applications will be reviewed, and schools selected to move forward will be notified by March 15, 2018. Site visits and interviews will be scheduled at that time with a final selection to be completed and announced by April 1, 2018.

Questions regarding the JumpStart Theatre program and application process may be addressed to Tali Allen, STAGES Performing Arts Academy Director of Education & Outreach, at spajumpstarttheatre@stagesstlouis.org.

About STAGES St. Louis

STAGES St. Louis is the region's foremost not-for-profit company committed to preserving and advancing the art form of Musical Theatre through excellence in performance and education. In 2018, STAGES celebrates 32 years of producing Broadway-quality theatre, presenting 140 performances from June through October to nearly 50,000 patrons. The critically-acclaimed 2017 season broke all previous box office records. STAGES supports the artists of tomorrow through the STAGES Performing Arts Academy's education and outreach programs including the JumpStart Theatre program as well as apprenticeships and internships. www.StagesStLouis.org

About The Educational Theatre Association (EdTA)

The Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) is an international association with approximately 125,000 active members. EdTA's mission is shaping lives through theatre education: honoring student achievement in theatre; supporting teachers by providing professional development, resources, and recognition; and influencing public opinion that theatre education is essential and builds life skills. EdTA is the home of the International Thespian Society, an honorary organization established at more than 4,700 schools that has inducted more than 2.3 million theatre students since its founding in 1929. EdTA also produces the International Thespian Festival and publishes Dramatics magazine for high school theatre students, and Teaching Theatre, a journal for theatre education professionals. For more information, visit www.schooltheatre.org

About the Educational Theatre Foundation (ETF)

ETF provides essential financial support to enhance excellence in theatre education and to expand access to school theatre programs for every child, putting them on a more positive life path. ETF is focused on three areas: JumpStart Theatre—to create sustainable musical theatre programs where there previously were none; need-based grants to schools—to provide teaching and performance resources and equipment in under-resourced schools; and, merit and need-based grants to individuals—to nurture the next generation of theatre teachers and artists. www.educationaltheatrefoundation.org

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