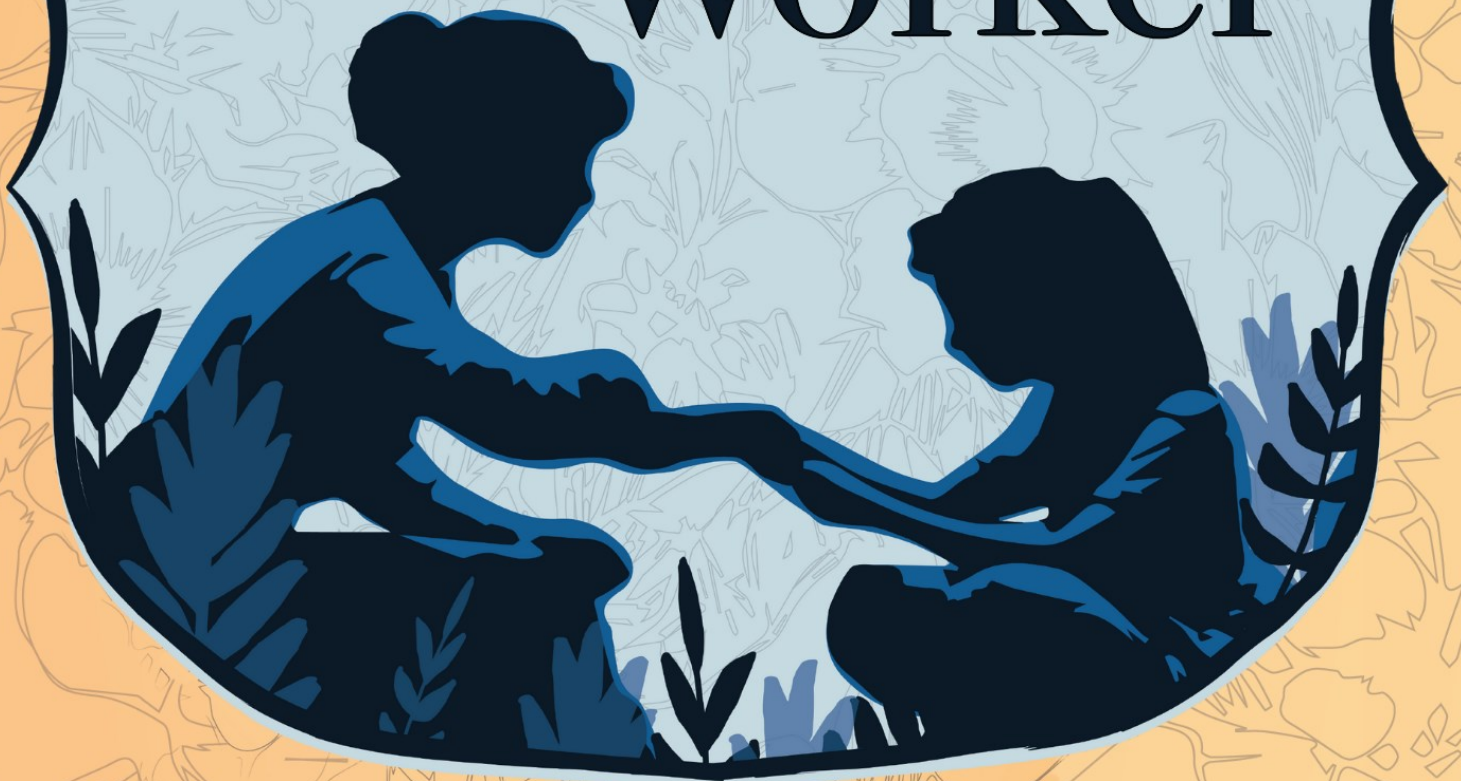


# The Miracle Worker



**prime  
stage**

**THEATRE<sup>CO</sup>**

**November 3 - 12, 2023**

at the New Hazlett Center for Performing Arts

## HELEN KELLER AND LIONS INTERNATIONAL

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Helen Keller challenged Lions to become "Knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness."

Looking back over Lions Club International's century of service, Lions are known around the world for their service to the blind and visually impaired. From vision screenings and guide dog sponsorships, to supporting pediatric eye-care centers, for nearly 100 years Lions have worked to improve the lives of people who are blind or living with low vision. What became a worldwide phenomenon can be traced back to the tireless work of one extraordinary woman.



### Biography

Born in Tuscumbia, Alabama, USA, in 1880, Helen Keller developed a fever at 18 months of age that left her blind and deaf.

With the help of an exceptional teacher, Annie Mansfield Sullivan of the Perkins School for the Blind, Helen Keller learned sign language and braille. A few years later, she learned to speak. As an adult she became a tireless advocate for people with disabilities. And in 1925, she attended the Lions Clubs International Convention and challenged Lions to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness." The Lions accepted her challenge and our work ever since has included sight programs aimed at preventable blindness.

In 1971, the Board of Directors of Lions Clubs International declared that June 1 would be remembered as Helen Keller Day. Lions around the world implement sight-related service projects on Helen Keller Day.

### 1925 Speech at Lions Clubs International Convention

Helen Keller's landmark speech at the Lions Clubs International Convention in 1925 marked the beginning of an era of vision service and support that would come to define Lions for decades.



Link to her speech - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EurAXgbcaiQ>

## RECYCLE GLASSES

Prime Stage Theatre in Partnership with the Downtown Pittsburgh Lions Club will be collecting **usable glasses that give new life** during the run of The Miracle Worker.



*Refractive errors can be easily corrected with eyeglasses, yet millions living in low- and middle-income countries lack access to basic eye care services. Lions have recognized the urgent need for corrective lenses and collect usable glasses in their communities to support the Lions Recycle for Sight Program.*

# Prime Stage Theatre

*Presents*

## The Miracle Worker

Written by William Gibson

Directed by *Wayne Brinda*

*Consultant*

*Maryjean (Mj) Shahan*

**Featuring**

*Kendall Knotts*

*Holland Adele Taylor*

*Stacia Paglieri*

*Rick Dutrow*

*Peter Stamerra*

*Lynne Franks*

*Linda Haston\**

*John Dolphin*

*Adjoa Opoku-Dakwa*

*Ezra Archibald*

*Cole Datsko*

\* Appears courtesy of Actors' Equity Association under a special Pittsburgh guest artist contract

**Production Manager**

*Erin Barnhart*

**Technical Director**

*Alex Barnhart*

**Scenic Designer**

*Johnmichael Bohach*

**Lighting Designer**

*Ken Clothier*

**Sound Designer**

*Smantha Magill*

**Costume Designer**

*Ashlynn Swauger*

**Properties Designer**

*Alex Keplar*

**Fight Choreographer**

*Michael R. Petyak*

**Dialect Coach**

*Lisa Bansavage*

**Stage Manager**

*Jason Kmetic*

*Produced by Special Arrangements with Concord Theatricals*

# The Miracle Worker

Explore the boundaries of the senses as we venture inside this true story of young Helen Keller, who was blind, deaf, and struggling to connect. Her teacher, Annie Sullivan, is our courageous guide to reach Helen's isolation and bring her into contact with the outside world.

## THE CAST

*In Alphabetical Order*

Percy.....	Ezra Archibald
Dr. Anagnos.....	John Dolphin
Captain Keller.....	Rick Dutrow
Aunt Ev.....	Lynne Franks
Viney.....	Linda Haston
Helen Keller.....	Kendall Knotts
Martha.....	Adjoa Opoku-Dakwa
Kate Keller.....	Stacia Paglieri
James Keller.....	Peter Stamerra
Annie Sullivan.....	Holland Adele Taylor
Cole, the dog.....	Cole Datsko

### Setting:

The late nineteenth century at the home of the Keller's in Tuscumbia, Alabama, when Helen is six years old and Annie Sullivan comes from Boston to tutor her.

### Run Time:

Approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes plus intermission.

## ARTISTIC AND DESIGN STAFF

Director.....	Wayne Brinda
Consultant.....	Maryjean (Mj) Shahan
Production Manager.....	Erin Barnhart
Technical Director.....	Alex Barnhart
Scenic Designer.....	Johnmichael Bohach
Lighting Designer.....	Ken Clothier
Sound Designer.....	Samantha Magill
Costume Designer.....	Ashlynn Swauger
Properties Designer.....	Alex Keplar
Carpenter.....	Michael Boone
Stage Manager.....	Jason Kmetic
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Emma Moore
Master Electrician and Light Board Operator.....	Tony Clayton
Scenic Painter.....	Natalie Rose Mabry
Fight Choreographer.....	Michael R. Petyak
Dialect Coach.....	Lisa Bansavage
Audio Describer.....	Nathan Ruggles
ASL Signed Interpreters.....	Jennifer Flaggs and Heather Gray
Real Time Live Captioner.....	Anna Cillo
Photographer.....	Laura Slovesko
Videographer.....	Brandon Pierce
New Hazlett Sound Board Operator.....	Laura Moeller
New Hazlett Box Office Manager.....	Nathan Wagner



**Please note:** The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited. Please silence all cell phones.

## PRIME STAGE THEATRE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

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Kim Brown and Spotlight Costumes  
Megan Datsko and Cole  
Leann and Delaney Knotts with Voice overs  
Beth Lawry and Shaler North Hills Library  
Illume Lighting and Event Design  
Downtown Pittsburgh Lions Club  
Kelly Strayhorn Theatre  
Little Lake Theatre  
New Hazlett Staff & Ushers  
Pittsburgh Children's Museum  
Pittsburgh Playhouse Props Department  
Seton Hill University  
Sewickley Eye Center  
Trader Joe's  
Prime Stage Staff and Volunteer

thank you!

## ACCESSIBILITY

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### SENSORY INCLUSIVE PERFORMANCE

**The last Saturday of each production at 2:30 PM.** Our Sensory Inclusive Performance is a family experience. For all performances, our patrons have access to Sensory bags designed to assist the needs of adults and children. The bags are filled with items that may help lessen sensory overload and engage. The bag items are also easily cleaned and sterilized for multiple uses.

Prime Stage Theatre staff is certified for Sensory Inclusive with KultureCity



### AUDIO DESCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

**The last Sunday of each production with On-Stage Pre-Show, Actor Voice ID, and/or Touch Tour at 1:30 PM, Audio Pre-Show at 2:15 PM, and Performance at 2:30 PM**

**Audio Description (or AD)** helps to make visual imagery accessible to people who are blind, with low vision, or vision loss. Visual elements can include costumes, sets, and character appearances, along with action, gestures, facial expressions, and other visually important images. It's used to enhance understanding and enjoyment of the live performance.

*This equipment was made available to the community thanks to the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council through a grant from the Allegheny Regional Asset District.*



### ASL SIGNED INTERPRETED PERFORMANCE

**The last Sunday of each production at 2:30 PM.**

We are pleased to offer American Sign Language interpreted performances with two certified interpreters. We also encourage students studying sign language to attend for observation.



### REALTIME LIVE CAPTION

**The last Sunday of each production at 2:30 PM.**

We are pleased to offer Realtime live captions to our patrons by Anna Cillo, of Advance Realtime Captioning Solutions.



# SUITE LIFE

A CELEBRATION OF BILLY STRAYHORN & GENE KELLY

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**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2023**

**5:30pm VIP Reception** | Duolingo Headquarters | 5900 Penn Ave.

**7:30pm Concert** | Kelly Strayhorn Theater | 5941 Penn Ave.

Pay What Moves You: \$35 - \$200

KST invites you to celebrate our namesakes with the music of composer **Billy Strayhorn** and the imagery of performer **Gene Kelly** in an unforgettable **theatrical jazz benefit concert**. We warmly welcome Music Director and Pianist **Dr. Alton Merrell**, as well as his band members: **Dwayne Dolphin** (bass), **James Johnson III** (drum), and **Colter Harper** (guitar). The concert features jazz singer and Billy Strayhorn aficionado **Joshua Banbury**, along with *Suite Life* veterans **kelsey jumper** and **Treasure Treasure**. KST welcomes back our friends, media artist **Scott Andrew**, and lighting designer **Madeleine Steineck** for a dazzling visual experience. Let's dress for jazz and "sing in the rain," immersing ourselves in the shower of rich and lush harmonies.

**VIP RECEPTION TICKETS: \$100 - \$200**

**CONCERT TICKETS: \$35 - \$65**

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## CONSULTANT

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### **Maryjean (Mj) Shahen** (Consultant)

MJ worked for years as a counselor/trainer for deafblind and deaf individuals with multiple intellectual disabilities at Helen Keller National Center for the Deafblind. She utilized various technologies/visual cues for instruction and visual/tactual communication. She then joined the Peace Corps Program and lived in Kenya working as a Special Education teacher with deaf children with those with other disabilities such as deafblind, learning disabilities, and autism. Mj was previously a Communication Assessor for Temple University. She also employed as an American Sign Language instructor at the University of Pittsburgh. Mj was also a Communication Support Specialist/Trainer for C.E.M. She is currently an ASL coordinator and professor at the Community College of Allegheny County. Mj has a Bachelor of Science degree in recreation/leisure counseling from Gallaudet University and a Master of Science degree from Hofstra University with a specialty as an Education/Rehabilitation Counselor.

### **Helen Keller National Center for DeafBlind Youths and Adults**

Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) is the only national program providing comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to youth (16 and older), working-age adults and seniors (55 and better) with combined hearing and vision loss. We work together with people who are DeafBlind to achieve their goals and aspirations.



### **OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING INTERPRETERS**

For their assistance during our rehearsal process

Maryjean (Mj) Shahen, Consultant  
Heather Gray, professional ASL/English interpreter  
Alison Bartley  
Madison Eibel  
Dan Randolph  
CCAC Interpreting Training Program students, Kaleigh Penrod, and Ceresa Morsaint

## **EVERY DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!**

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Your donation will enable us to continue bringing great literature to life on stage and support our mission, programs, productions, artists, and staff.

- Online at [www.primestage.com/support](http://www.primestage.com/support)
- Scan the QR Code
- By mail to Prime Stage Theatre, PO Box 99446, Pittsburgh, PA 15233



## DIRECTOR

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### **Wayne Brinda, Ed.D. (Director)**

Wayne is Co-founder/Producing Artistic Director of Prime Stage where he directed *Treasure Island*, *The Outsiders*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* and *The Terezin Promise*, as well as the world premieres of *The Music Lesson*, and *Clemente: The Measure of a Man*. As Producer, Prime Stage has commissioned several world premieres, such as ***The Westing Game***, ***Perks of Being a Wallflower***, and ***Perseverance***.

Locally, Wayne has directed for Apple Hill Playhouse, Duquesne University Red Masquers, Penn State Thespian, Little Lake Theatre, Red Barn Theatre in Allison Park, and South Park Theatre, and was the Director of the Playhouse Jr.

As a Museum Teaching Fellow of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, Wayne produces theatre productions on the Holocaust and conducts presentations on using literature and theatre to teach the Holocaust. He has delivered presentations on adolescent literacy and Holocaust education at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, as well as the National Council of Teachers of English, The Association for Middle-Level Education, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the International Reading Association 21st World Congress on Reading in Budapest, Hungary, and others.

Wayne recently retired as an assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh Bradford, He also taught at Duquesne University, The Oakland School, and Sewickley Academy Senior School.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

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My research with *The Miracle Worker* has been inspiring as we bring this true story of courage, teaching, determination, and love. Discovering the challenges and accomplishments of Anne Sullivan, the teacher, Helen Keller, the student, Helen's family, and those in the lives of these people makes one stop and realize the scope of thinking beyond and reaching for your dreams – this is “courage and discovery.”

Selecting *The Miracle Worker* to open our 27<sup>th</sup> season was to let you know about our accessibility outreach that includes the update of our website to be accessible for the blind and visually impaired. Little did I know what was about to unfold.

It was especially exciting to discover Pittsburgh connections with Helen Keller, like the Lion's Club and the William Wade House in Oakmont. Please take the time to look at the information about Annie Sullivan and Helen Keller in our lobby, on our website. When inspired by Helen Keller, I invite you to discover even more. You'll be amazed by her accomplishments as an adult.

A special thanks is extended to our consultants, partners, sponsors, and staff who all help to make the production authentic and true to Helen Keller, Anne Sullivan, and those with special needs in our community. This includes the Helen Keller National Center Eastern Division who inspired us to expand our Accessibility Programs to include Live Captioning!

Bringing this story and history to life with Pittsburgh connections for all audiences and celebrating teachers and families is what Prime Stage is about. I hope you enjoy the journey of courage and discover with *The Miracle Worker*.

# The Miracle Worker



Kendall Knotts  
*Helen Keller*



Holland Adele Taylor  
*Annie Sullivan*



Stacia Paglieri  
*Kate Keller*



Rick Dutrow  
*Captian Keller*



Peter Stamerra  
*James Keller*



Lynne Franks  
*Aunt Ev*



Linda Haston  
*Viney*



John Dolphin  
*Dr. Anagnos*



Adjoa Opoku-Dakwa  
*Martha*



Ezra Archibald  
*Percy*



Cole Datsko  
*Cole*

## ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Ezra Archibald** (Percy)

Ezra is an 8-year-old 3rd grader at Pittsburgh Linden. His favorite subjects are Math and Science. He is the youngest of three children. Ezra loves reading, conducting science experiments, and learning about animals. Ezra recently developed an interest in acting through a workshop at his school in 2022. Ezra also plays football for the Southside Bears where he plays free safety and defensive end. Ezra hopes to become a scientist when he grows up.

### **John Dolphin** (Dr. Anagnos)

John was last seen in *The Servant of Two Masters* at the Pittsburgh Savoyards. He has been seen with Prime Stage in the productions of *A Wrinkle in Time* and *The Boxcar Children*. Last year he was seen in *Painting Lessons* during the CSA Series at the New Hazlett Theater. Previously he understudied the role of (The Legionnaire / Mike) for *What the Constitution Means to Me* at City Theatre. Other local appearances include The Pittsburgh New Works Festival, The Young Playwrights Festival at City Theatre, and The New Renaissance Theatre. He has performed at the Studio Arena Theatre in Buffalo where he also worked as a teaching artist. New York City credits include productions at the Off-Center Theatre, The New Theatre, The American Folk Theatre and The Music Theatre Lab.

### **Rick Dutrow** (Captain Keller)

Rick started his professional acting career at the age of 17 playing Mercutio. Rick went on to study as a Theatrical Performance major at St. Vincent and Seton Hill Colleges. Rick has been performing for over 40 years on various Pittsburgh area stages, television productions, and feature films. He most recently costarred in season one of Showtime's *American Rust* as the recurring character Nolan Danek and you may have seen his depiction of Serebryakov this summer in ThroughLine Theatre's production of *Uncle Vanya*. Rick is married to the beautiful actress, Stephanie Swift, and has three incredible adult children! This is Rick's first project with Prime Stage Theatre, he is very honored to be part of this incredible cast and is thrilled to work for the second time under Mr. Wayne Brinda's Direction. Rick personally commends you for your support of the Arts!

### **Lynne Franks** (Aunt Ev)

Lynne is honored to portray Aunt Ev in *The Miracle Worker* with old and new friends at Prime Stage Theatre. Many thanks to Wayne and Connie and the entire cast, crew, and production team, for making this experience as joyful as past productions here, including *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Walk Two Moons*, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, *The Westing Game*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Favorite roles in other local venues, include Sala in *Letters to Sala*, Sr Aloysious in *Doubt, a Parable*, Madam Arnfelt in *A Little Night Music*, Hanna/Ethel Rosenberg in *Angels in America* and others. It's a privilege to share a part of this production with you.

### **Linda Haston** (Viney)

As an Actor' Equity Association performer, Linda has directed and/or performed for the past 23 years with local Pittsburgh professional theatre companies. Some favorite performance roles: Jeannette in City Theatre's 2005-2006 season opener of *Crowns*; Tituba, in Quantum Theatre's and Prime Stage Theatre's production of *The Crucible* and Mrs. Dickson in Lynn Nottage's *Intimate Apparel* at City Theatre and Henry from the *Club* on National Tour and in Pittsburgh, 2009 as Addie in *The Little Foxes* and in 2013 a Citizen in *Our Town* at the Pittsburgh Public Theatre. She has directed and/or performed from 2008 to 2018 at Off the Wall Productions seasons: *How I Learned to Drive*, *Four Dogs and a Bone* and the *Club* which she also choreographed and performed, *Baby Makes Seven*, the *Whale*, *An Accident and World Builders*. She has performed her acclaimed one woman show *Mother Lode* written by Virginia Wall Gruenert, Artistic Director at Off the Wall Theatre Productions in *Repand* in February 2018 performed it successfully Off Broadway in New York and in June of 2023 in Reykjavik, Iceland. *Sojourner* in 2020 was her main stage directing debut with Prime Stage Theatre having assisted directed *The Diary of Anne Frank*. She has performed with Prime Stage in past productions which include *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She is also the Education Director/Teaching Artist for Prime Stage's Educational outreach programming which is led by Literacy in ACTION (LACT). After performing in *The Miracle Worker*, she will be directing Prime Stage's production of *Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott*.

## ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Kendall Knotts** (Helen Keller)

Kendall is a 5th grader at Central Christian Academy. She is very excited to be involved in her first Prime Stage production, but Kendall is no stranger to the stage. She has been seen as Madeline in *Madeline's Christmas*, as Jojo in *Seussical Jr*, as Charlie in *Willy Wonka Jr* and in the ensemble of *Captain Louie Jr*, where she learned ASL and was fortunate to work with some of her peers from Little Lake Theatre, as well as students from the Western PA School for the Deaf. Kendall can't wait to help tell the incredibly inspirational story of Helen Keller. Romans 8:31

### **Adjoa Opoku-Dakwa** (Martha)

Adjoa is thrilled to join the cast of *The Miracle Worker*. She is an 8th grade theater major at Pittsburgh CAPA and has been in several productions at her school. Outside of CAPA, Adjoa's other roles include being a dancer in Hill Dance Academy Theater's *Black Nativity*, Pittsburgh Public Theater's *A Christmas Story*, Pittsburgh Playwright Theater's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* and several productions with Hope Academy. In 2022 and 2023, Adjoa also won 1st place in the youth monologue and scene divisions respectively, of the Pittsburgh Public's Shakespeare competition. She loves playing piano, singing, acting and dancing. Adjoa sends thanks to her amazing family, friends, and teachers.

### **Stacia Paglieri** (Kate Keller)

Stacia is delighted to be in another Prime Stage Theatre production alongside such an amazing cast and crew! Stacia graduated from Point Park University with a BFA in Acting and continued to train and work in New York City for several years in theater and film. Upon returning to Pittsburgh, she premiered the role of Mary Shelley in the world premiere adaptation of *Frankenstein* with Prime Stage. Some other credits include *As You Like It* and *All's Well That Ends Well* at Longmont Theatre Company in Colorado, where she is originally from. Stacia is honored to help share this powerful story of perseverance, and thanks her loved ones for their enduring support.

### **Peter Stamerra** (James Keller)

Peter is thrilled to return to Prime Stage Theatre! Having previously appeared in *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Tjaden) and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (Charlie), Peter is now a senior Musical Theatre major at University of the Arts. His most recent musical credits include *Urinetown* (Mr. McQueen, Bobby u/s) and *Head Over Heels* (Musidorus)

### **Holland Adele Taylor** (Annie Sullivan)

Holland is thrilled to be making her Prime Stage Theatre debut! Holland earned her B.A. degree in Theatre Performance at Xavier University in Cincinnati. Some of her past favorite roles include *Buried Child* (Shelly), *The Wolves* (#25), and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Siobhan). She would like to thank the cast and crew for their dedicated efforts and collaborative spirit with building this story, as well as her family, friends, and boyfriend for their endless love and support. Enjoy the show! IG: hollandadele

### **Cole Datsko** (Cole the Dog)

Cole is co-owner, co-founder, and co-operator of 'The FURgh' a self service dog wash and pet marketplace in South Park. Prior to opening the FURgh, Cole has been a loyal companion since being adopted as puppy in April 2018. When not busy being a 2 brand mascot and shop dog, he enjoys being outside with his mom, going for walks, hiking, running with his best buddy Angela, water sports, and loves his chew bones! Cole is also an avid swimmer and dock diver, with his longest dock dive being an impressive 18 feet! This friendly boy enjoys meeting and making new friends and loves to talk to everyone he meets. Cole is very excited to participate in his very first play and share the stage with his new friends.

## ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Lisa Bansavage** (Dialect Coach)

Lisa is delighted to be working on her eighth production with Prime Stage Theatre. As an actor, her career spans Broadway, Off Broadway, regional theatre, film, television and national commercial credits including *Master Class*, *Sideman*, *Turn of the Screw*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Grace & Glorie*, *Mastergate*, *Red Scare on Sunset*, *The Changeling*, *The Country Wife*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *The Sisters Rosenweig*, *Night of the Iguana*, *Mississippi Burning*, *Married to the Mob*, *Three Men and a Baby*, *The Fisher King*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Loman Family Picnic* and a third of the full Shakespearean canon as well as a role opposite Sir Anthony Quayle in the BBC-London production of *An Exchange of Gifts*. She is a graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University's theatre conservatory and holds a Masters from The University of Pittsburgh where she was the Merrill Fellow. Her most recent New York performance was as Elizabeth Jackson, Rebekah Baines Johnson and Virginia Clinton in *First Mothers: The Women Who Raised America's Presidents*.

### **Alexander Barnhart** (Technical Director)

Alex is a Theater artist and educator from Pittsburgh, PA. A graduate of Slippery Rock University's BA Theater-Design and Technology, class of 2014. Graduate of Kent State University's MFA Theater- Design and Technology, class of 2021. Alex has been working as a Designer, Educator, and Technical Director for various companies and universities in Pittsburgh and beyond including Prime Stage Theater, Kinetic Theatre, 12 Peers Theater Company, Carnegie Mellon University, Kent State, and Wilkes University. Over the years, they've had the opportunity to work on a number of incredible solo and collaborative projects. Thriving on creative challenges and building long-term relationships with artists and students along the way, Alex is always leaving an impactful impression behind.

### **Erin Barnhart** (Production Manager)

Erin is a Pittsburgh based Production Manager and a Theatre Management graduate of Kent State University. She worked as a Resident Stage Manager and Production Stage Manager in Scranton, Pennsylvania before returning back to her hometown of Pittsburgh. Erin is excited to be working as the Production Manager here at Prime Stage Theater, and as always, she would like to thank her friends and family for their continued support!

### **Johnmichael Bohach** (Scenic Designer)

Johnmichael is a freelance scenic designer and properties artisan based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 2006, he graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with degrees in Theatre Arts and Architectural Studies and has since gone on to design over 175 productions with a variety of theatre and opera companies, both locally and nationally. He is honored to have been a part of Prime Stage for over ten years while designing the sets for *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Karloff*, *Mockingbird*, *Twelfth Night*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *1984*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Giver*, *A Lesson Before Dying*, *The Crucible*, *The Mousetrap*, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Turn of the Screw*, *Walk Two Moons*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *The Elephant Man*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Antigone*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *Our Town*, *The Westing Game*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Jack & Rochelle*.

### **Tony Clayton** (Master Electrician / Light Board Operator)

Tony is a Spring 2022 graduate of IUP. He has been doing electrics and lighting design in the Pittsburgh area and Woodstock, New York since. This is his fourth show working with Prime Stage Theatre. He also did work with Pittsburgh Playwrights, Texture Ballet, and IATSE union calls this summer working on concerts such as, Ed Sheeran, and Taylor Swift.

***Helen Keller Loved Dogs.*** *Because she was deafblind, she never heard a dog's joyous bark or watched a puppy exuberantly chase a ball. But she could feel the inquisitive nudge of a dog's wet nose, or soft fur under her hand or a tired canine head resting gently on her lap. Love finds a way to communicate.*

*Quote from "The Story of My Life" (1903) by Helen Keller*

## ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Ken Clothier** (Lighting Designer)

Ken is excited to be making his design debut with the Prime Stage Theater. He has created designs and performed technical work for Mountain Playhouse, the Montgomery Theatre, Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center, the New Hazlett Theatre, and CMU's Schools of Music and Drama. Ken is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Seton Hill University in Greensburg, PA. In addition to teaching in the design & technology curriculum, he has served as Technical Director and designed sets, lights, media & sound on nearly a hundred productions. Ken earned his MFA in Scenic Design from Boston University. His work may be found at <https://www.kgclothier-design.com/>

### **Alex Keplar** (Resident Properties Designer)

Alex is a Pittsburgh based scenic and properties designer. She is a graduate of Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts and is excited to be working with Prime Stage again as their Resident Properties Designer! Some of her recent credits include *These Shining Lives* (Scenic Designer, South Park Theatre), *The Prom* (Scenic Designer, Pittsburgh CAPA), *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *39 Steps* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *The Sunshine Boys* (Scenic Designer, South Park Theatre), *The Amazing Lemonade Girl* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *Angels in America* (Properties Master, The Pittsburgh Playhouse), and *Little Children Dream of God* (Scenic Designer, The Pittsburgh Playhouse). She would like to thank her friends and family for all of their support!

### **Jason Kmetc** (Stage Manager)

Jason has been working in theater for 20 years. He started with Prime Stage theater in 2005 and has worked with them on and off for the last 18 years. He has also worked for Disney and production companies in California. Jason has recently returned to Pittsburgh to go back to his passion of theater. Some of Jason's credits include: *The Long Road Today/ El Largo Camino Del Hoy* (Lighting Technician/First Assistant Stage Manager), *Apsis Requiem* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Gypsy* (Master Carpenter/Stage Manager), *Of Mice and Men* (Assistant Stage Manager), *15 Min of Fame* (Assistant Director/Stage Manager), *Fifth Feeling: A Performance Ritual* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Westfield Mall Holiday Show 2014* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *High School Drama Awards* (Production Stage Manager), and most recently *The Boxcar Children* (Stage Manager). Jason is proud to have worked on this production and would like to thank his parents for their continued support. And a special thanks to Shannon, for attending every show Jason has worked!

### **Samantha Magill** (Sound Designer)

Samantha is thrilled to be a part of another Prime Stage Theater production! Her previous works include: *The Amazing Lemonade Girl* (Sound Designer), *The White Rose* (Sound Designer), *The Boxcar Children* (Sound Designer), *The 39 Steps* (Sound Designer) and *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* (Sound Designer) with Prime Stage Theater. She has also designed for the New Hazlett CSA program, South Park Theater, and Pittsburgh Public Theater. She is a proud IUP graduate (class of 2021) and a member of the SoundGirls' Pittsburgh chapter which promotes and inspires the next generation of women in audio. When she is not in the theater, she spends her time working as a full-time producer for KDKA News radio. She is extremely thankful for Prime Stage and her friends, family, and cat for their support.

"I wanted to teach her what language is. I know without it to do nothing but obey is no gift. Obedience without understanding is a blindness, too. Is that all I've wished on her?"

~ Annie Sullivan



## ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Michael R. Petyak** (Intimacy Coordinator/Fight Director)

Michael is extremely thankful to being welcomed back into the Prime Stage family for yet another great production. Holding a B.F.A. in Musical Theater (Magna Cum Laude) from Shenandoah University, Michael has performed, directed and choreographed nationally for stage, television and film. Some of his most notable credits include sword-fighting at the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire & Powel Crosley Estate (Sarasota, FL), doubling "Across the Universe" star Joe Anderson in the locally filmed television series, "Outsiders", as well as doubling Disney star Calum Worthy in "Replicate" on Netflix. He can be seen doing stunts most recently in the film "Rustin" (Netflix - Release November 3rd 2024). He also has done fight direction locally for Pittsburgh CLO, Quantum Theater, Pittsburgh City Theater, Kinetic Theater, Prime Stage, Little Lake Theater and numerous high schools in the Greater Pittsburgh Area. Michael has taught master classes in stage combat/stunts at the University of Pittsburgh, Point Park University, Carnegie Mellon University, Westminster College, CAPA, Seton Hill University, & Steeltown Entertainment Project (WQED). He has also stunt coordinated films such as "Juniper & Lamplight", "Secret Santa", and "Child Warfare" and has assisted numerous fight masters in the entertainment industry. Michael is a proud member of SAG-AFTRA, AEA, & IATSE. He would like to thank Connie & Wayne Brinda for their faith in him for yet another wonderful production and season.

### **Ashlynn Swauger** (Costume Designer)

Ashlynn is a local Costume Designer from West Newton, Pennsylvania. With a Bachelor's in Theater Design and Technology from Seton Hill University, Ashlynn has traveled the country designing for companies like Tibbits Opera House and Strongbox Theatre. She is beyond excited to work with Prime Stage this fall and become reacquainted with her Pittsburgh theater family.





## ASSECESSIBILITY STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Nathan Ruggles** (Audio Describer)

Nathan has provided Audio Description (AD) services for Prime Stage patrons who are blind and visually impaired since 2017. Together they received the 2022 Award for Achievement in Audio Description for Theater from The American Council of the Blind (ACB). Founder and Principal of Audio Describe Pittsburgh!, he provides AD for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust Broadway Series and Pittsburgh CLO, and serves theaters and venues in the greater Pittsburgh area and beyond. He has also worked with organizations such as Film Pittsburgh, the Children's Museum, Andy Warhol Museum, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He has trained through the Audio Description Institute, Audio Description Access, Audio Description Coalition, VSA Pennsylvania, and the Kennedy Center Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD). Beyond writing and narration, he furnishes comprehensive services that include recording, consulting, and technical support, bringing his unique background in professional stage acting, voice over, broadcast radio, podcast production, arts administration, political advocacy, and radio reading services. Learn more about Nathan and his work at [nathanruggles.org](http://nathanruggles.org).

### **Jennifer Flaggs** M.Ed., MMP, NIC-Adv, SC:L, Ed:K-12 (Signed Interpreter)

Jennifer has been interpreting since 1996. She currently serves as the program coordinator at the Community College of Allegheny County, where she has taught interpreting since 2012. She has worked in a wide variety of interpreting settings that include theater, court, and the educational field. She currently splits her time between Pittsburgh and the New River Gorge in West Virginia where she enjoys rock climbing and hiking with her two dogs.

### **Heather Gray** (Signed Interpreter)

Heather is a certified ASL Interpreter, working with the Deaf community for nearly 25 years. She earned her BA from The University of Pittsburgh, where she was the 1997 Homecoming Queen, a Herald Trumpet, and studied ASL under the late Karen Walkney Mrdjenovich. She holds an MA from Duquesne University. Heather is an award-winning actor, published and award-winning writer, and her photography has been seen online and in printed publications.

### **Anna Cillo** (Realtime Captioner)

Advanced Realtime Captioning Solutions is owned and operated by Anna Cillo, who has been providing captions and real-time court reporting in western Pennsylvania and the surrounding states since 2009. Anna Cillo is a member of the NCRA, the Association of Court Reporters and Captioners, and a graduate of CCAC. She worked as the staff captioner for the Pittsburgh Pirates from 2014-2022 and has provided captions for the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association throughout her career. Advanced Realtime Captioning Solutions was founded in 2018 in response to the demand for captioning in and around the City of Pittsburgh. We have provided captions and consulting to many organizations and individuals within the City of Pittsburgh and the surrounding areas. Some organizations we have worked with include Carnegie Mellon University, The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Duquesne University, City Theater, The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Temple Sinai, The Heinz History Center, and have been working with the Center for Hearing and Deaf Services for many years.

### **Conrad Calhoon** (Accessibility Dog)

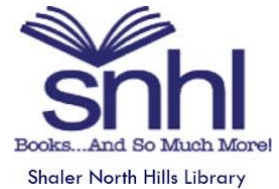
Conrad is happy to be a part of Prime Stage Theatre and their Accessibility Outreach since he needs assistance with walkin'wheels. He has appeared in the production of Big Fish at the Theatre Factory and helped with Prime Stage's production Of Mice and Men. For the past seven years he has attended rehearsals as a visitor, critic, and dog consultant. Conrad loves theatre and being with his owner, Scott.

*Prime Stage Theatre is committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and welcoming to all patrons. Please identify any special seating needs to our Box Office staff when reserving your tickets in advance on-line or by calling Box Office at the New Hazlett 412.320.4610*

## SUGGESTED READING LIST

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If this play has piqued your interest, we invite you to check out a book or movie and explore more. Your public libraries have many online resources you can access from home through Libby or Hoopla. Check your library's website for help in getting started.



### Children's Books

#### ***Helen Keller: Courage in the Dark* by Johanna Hurwitz**

For beginner readers--A biography of the blind and deaf girl who overcame her physical challenges with the help of her teacher, Annie Sullivan.

#### ***Annie Sullivan and the Trials of Helen Keller* by Joseph Lambert**

Presented in comic book format, the story of Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan, focusing on the struggles both women faced.

#### ***Helen Keller: Crusade for the Blind and Deaf* by Stewart Graff and Polly Anne Graff**

A biography of the blind and deaf woman who rose above her physical disabilities to international renown and who helped other handicapped persons to live fuller lives.

#### ***Who was Helen Keller?* by Gare Thompson**

Part of the "Who, What, Where" series that highlights the woman who achieved success and fame while being both blind and deaf.

#### ***Louis Braille, the Boy Who Invented Books for the Blind* by Margaret Davidson**

A poignant story of the man who developed the Braille system of printing for the blind.

#### ***Helen Keller: Rebellious Spirit* by Laurie Lawlor**

Lawlor's use of liberal quotes from Keller's own writing and objective analysis of both Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan, offer insight into Keller's character and experience.

#### ***Helen Keller: The World in Her Heart* by Lesa Cline-Ransome**

A husband-and-wife team pay tribute to a true American hero in this textured, provocative narrative with sensory details to evoke Helen Keller's rich perception of the world around her.

### Teen Books

#### ***Show Me a Sign* by Ann Clare LeZotte**

It is 1805 and Mary Lambert has always felt safe among the deaf community of Chilmark on Martha's Vineyard where practically everyone communicates in a shared sign language. But recent events have shattered her life: land disputes between English settlers and the Wampanoag people are becoming increasingly bitter, and a scientist determined to discover the origins of the island's widespread deafness has decided she makes the perfect "live specimen".

#### ***The Silence Between Us* by Alison Gervais**

After moving to Colorado, deaf seventeen-year-old Maya is forced to attend a hearing school, where she must navigate a new life and prove that her lack of hearing will not stop her from pursuing her dreams.

#### ***Miss Spitfire* by Sarah Miller**

At age twenty-one, partially blind herself, lonely but spirited Annie Sullivan travels from Massachusetts to Alabama to try and teach six-year-old Helen Keller, deaf and blind since age two, self-discipline and communication.

## SUGGESTED READING LIST

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### ***No Barriers* by Erik Weihenmayer**

Born with a rare condition that blinded him as a teenager, Erik Weihenmayer never let his diagnosis hold him back from a full life. In 2001, he became the first blind man to climb Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth.

### ***Helen and Teacher* by Joseph Lash**

At the heart of this wonderful biography is the relationship between two great American women whose lives were bound together for all time.

### ***Helen Keller: Her Life in Pictures* by George Sullivan**

Accompanied by a brief commentary from Sullivan, this suite of photos portrays Keller from early childhood into her 80s.

### **Adult Books**

#### ***The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson**

Based on the remarkable true story of Helen Keller and her teacher Annie Sullivan, this inspiring and unforgettable play has moved countless readers and become an American classic.

#### ***The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller**

The autobiography, written by Helen Keller at 22 years old, is about her life being deaf and blind, and her triumph over these tribulations. Within the book, she details her educational achievements and her introduction to the world through her breakthrough into communication.

#### ***Teacher: Ann Sullivan Macy* by Helen Keller**

A tribute written by Keller about her life-long friend and teacher, Anne Sullivan Macy.

#### ***Beyond the Miracle Worker* by Kim E. Nielson**

Beyond the *Miracle Worker*, the first biography of Annie Sullivan Macy in nearly fifty years, complicates the typical Helen-Annie “feel good” narrative in surprising ways. By telling the life from Macy’s perspective- not Keller’s- the biography is the first to put Macy squarely at the center of the story. It presents a new and fascinating tale about a wounded but determined woman and her quest for a successful, meaningful life.

#### ***Helen Keller: A Life* by Dorothy Herrmann**

Dorothy Herrmann’s biography of Helen Keller takes us through Helen’s long, eventful life, a life that would have crushed a woman less stoic and adaptable—and less protected.

#### ***Demystifying Disability* by Emily Ladau**

An approachable guide to being a thoughtful, informed ally to disabled people, with actionable steps for what to say and do (and what not to do) and how you can help make the world a more inclusive place.

#### ***Being Seen* by Elsa Sjunneson**

A Deafblind writer and professor explores how the misrepresentation of disability in books, movies, and TV harms both the disabled community and everyone else.

#### ***There Plant Eyes: A Personal and Cultural History of Blindness* by M. Leona Godin**

From Homer to Helen Keller, from Dune to Stevie Wonder, from the invention of braille to the science of echolocation, M. Leona Godin explores the fascinating history of blindness, interweaving it with her own story of gradually losing her sight.

*(Descriptions condensed and edited from Amazon.com, Wikipedia, and GoodReads)*

# Do you believe live theatre can change the world?

Prime Stage Theatre does. And every time we step on stage, we *do*.

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PITTSBURGH

**Tuesday, November 28, 2023**

Each year GiveBig Pittsburgh and the global Giving Tuesday initiative offer supporters of nonprofits around the world the chance to make a personal contribution close to their hearts.

Please mark your calendar for November 28th and make your donation to Prime Stage Theatre.

More information will go out through our newsletter, social media, and posted on our website with a link to our special online Giving Page.



- Since 1996, Prime Stage Theatre has presented more than 100 inspiring plays for audiences of all ages throughout Western Pennsylvania ... plays that convey themes of empathy, hope and transformation and help bring our community together to share common bonds.
- Each year, we sponsor unique classroom programs for students and teachers that show the power of theatre in stimulating new ways of thinking, learning, and problem-solving.
- Your support helps us continue our literacy workshops ... develop new sensory-inclusive programming for special needs students ... grow our Prime Stage Sprouts plays for elementary-age audiences.
- We can serve more patrons with our accessibility outreach on the last Sunday of each production with our Audio Description, ASL Signed interpreted, and Real Time Live Caption performances.

On Tuesday, November 28th you can make a Giving Tuesday donation that will help Prime Stage reach more students, educations, families, and theatregoers with the kind of meaningful theatre you can be assured makes a major difference in their present and future.

**Prime Stage Theatre Brings Literature to Life ...**

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## FLEX PLAN MEMBERSHIP

Prime Stage Flex Plan Membership gives you a total of five tickets to our 2023/2024 season!

- Use your tickets in any combination that works best for you with our four productions
- This plan includes one extra ticket to "Bring a Friend" for a total of five tickets
- Exchange Tickets at any time with no additional cost!

**OVER \$50  
IN  
SAVINGS!**



## FUNDERS

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**WE OFFER OUR SINCERE THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS WHO SUPPORT OUR MISSION WITH THEIR GENEROSITY**

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Dollar General Literacy Foundation  
Downtown Pittsburgh Lions Club  
Eden Hall Foundation  
The Fine Foundation  
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The Grable Foundation  
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## INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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Maryna & Samuel Alt	Liz Fager	Kenneth Loshelder	Ed Simon
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Dr. & Mrs. David English	Ashley London	Howard Seamens	Teen Board Fundraisers
Lisa Erb	Wendy Lomicka	Mike & Marla Sharkey	Perseverance Books

## PRIME STAGE THEATRE

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### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Wayne Brinda, Ed.D.....	Producing Artistic Director
Connie Brinda.....	General Manager
Linda Haston.....	Education Director
John Dolphin.....	Education Consultant and Drama Awards Director
Cindy West.....	Education Box Office Manager
Debra Sciranka.....	Public Relations Director
Matt Henderson.....	Social Media Director
Sophie McClung.....	Marketing Coordinator
Bob Neu.....	Fundraiser Consultant
Jason Kmetic.....	Prime Stage Rehearsal Studio Manager
Veda Laine.....	Data Base Manager
Michael R. Petyak.....	Intimacy Coordinator
Nathan Ruggles.....	Audio Describer
John Clark.....	Web Designer

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*The mission of Prime Stage Theatre is to entertain, inspire and enrich families, students, educators, and theatergoers through professional theatre by bringing literature to life. Our vision is enriching lives through theatre and literacy with programs that deliver quantifiable results and benefits to the region.*

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Mary Lou Ellena, Vice President  
Deborah Wirth, Treasurer

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Connie Brinda, Ex officio	Mary E. Gibson, Esq,	Shane Valenzi, Esq.
Wayne Brinda, Ed.D.	Lawrence McCullough, Ph.D.	Sueanne Zoratto
John Dolphin	Cara Nagel	

### TEEN ADVISORY BOARD

*The Prime Stage Teen Advisory board is a group of young adults who are passionate about theatre and the arts, who have the desire to uphold the mission of Prime Stage, to serve and engage the Pittsburgh community, to connect to and encourage the minds of youth, and prioritize social relevance in the arts.*

### TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL

*We believe that literacy and the theatre can lift people up, inspire opportunities, and present new ways of seeing the world in positive ways. Effective teachers help students connect literature to their own world. Students discover literature, enjoy reading and vicariously "live in" the literature. Talented artists bring stories from the pages to life by providing multi-sensory experiences. Our adaptations of literature and historical figures and programs are selected and produced to meet those goals.*

### AMBASSADORS

*They encourage conversations with patrons which will result in continued patronage and support and promote Prime Stage Theatre throughout the Pittsburgh region.*

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27th Season of "Courage and Discovery"!



# Rosa Parks

and the Montgomery Bus Boycott

Written by Sue Greenberg

Directed by Linda Haston

January 19 - 28, 2024



AND THEN

# THEY CAME FOR ME

REMEMBERING THE WORLD OF ANNE FRANK

Written by James Still

Directed by Art DeConciliis

March 1 - 10, 2024



WHITEFORD

# WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION

Written by Agatha Christie

Directed by Ponny Conomos Jahn

May 3 - 12, 2024



All performances are located at the  
New Hazlett Center for Performing Arts,  
6 Allegheny Square East, Pittsburgh, PA 15212

