

PLAYBILL

SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE

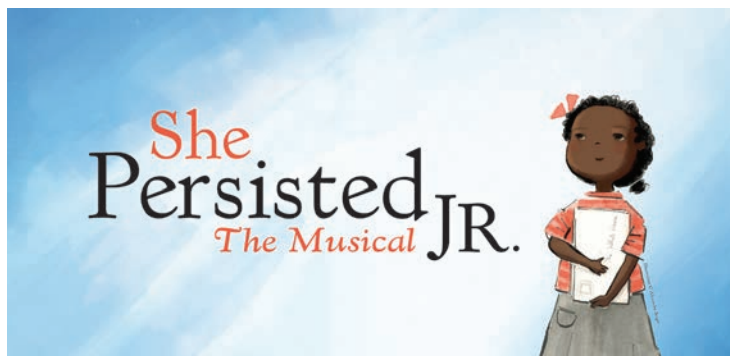


She Persisted JR. *The Musical*



10620 N. 43rd Avenue • Glendale, AZ 85304 • (602) 843-8318 • syfz.org

Spotlight Youth Theatre Proudly Presents



Script and Lyrics by **Adam Tobin**

Music by **Deborah Wicks La Puma**

Adapted from the book written by **Chelsea Clinton** and illustrated
by **Alexandra Boiger**. Published by **Philomel Books**

She Persisted The Musical was commissioned and first produced by
Bay Area Children's Theatre during the 2018/2019 season

Director: **Meribeth Reeves**

Musical Director: **Heather Walker**

Choreographer: **Bella Swope**

Stage Manager: **Theo McComb**

Costume Designer: **Heather Riddle**

Assistant Costume Designer: **Aleezeh Siddiqui**

Hair and Makeup Designer: **Griffin Wilbur**

Set Designer: **Rob Adams**

Media Designer: **Meribeth Reeves**

Properties Designers: **Kenny & Vicki Grossman**

Sound & Lighting Designer: **Sarah Ray**

Assistant Sound Designer: **Izzi Haber**

Assistant Lighting Designer: **Megan Brooks**

Dance Captain: **Vada Sorby**

Techies: **Dasia Thetford-Davenport, Sapphire Triolo, Valentina Rodriguez**

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

SHE PERSISTED THE MUSICAL JR

is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

www.MTIShows.com

The Cast of *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Naomi.....	Triss Stovall
Time 1	Alyza Gabbay
Time 2	Ingrid Neilson
Time 3	Mischa Cavazos
Sonia Sotomayer	Eliana Lopez-Ball
Dr. Virginia Apgar	Quinn Strait
Harriet Tubman.....	Charli Brooks
Florence Griffith Joyner	Lilah Shaffer
Sally Ride.....	Dagny Knoell
Ruby Bridges.....	Olivia Carey
Young Sonia, Forest Ensemble, Crowd / Runner Ensemble.....	Noelia Castillo
Juno, Bronx Local 1, Hospital Ensemble.....	Reese Lai
Alex, Bronx Local 2, Hospital Ensemble.....	Lilly Rundle
Bailey, Bronx Local 3, Hospital Ensemble.....	Haskell Fagan
Skyler, Bronx Local 4	Sydney Underwood
Ms. Chan, Forest Ensemble	Lily Spears
Tour Guide, Forest Ensemble, Dr. Fisher	Va’Nessa Madden
Museum Goer, Sonia’s Mother, Run Ensemble, Forest Ensemble.....	Lucy Salari
Sonia’s Father, Museum Ensemble, Dr. Whipple, Princeton President, Astronaut Trainer	Liam Davenport
Museum Ensemble 2, Dr. May	Amelia Geraci
Crowd / Run Ensemble, Museum Ensemble 3, Nurse.....	Annie Wolfley
Museum Ensemble 4, Race Announcer.....	Mikey-Raby Rodriguez
Classmate 1, Forest Ensemble, Cadet 3.....	Violet Sorby
Classmate 2, Forest Ensemble, NASA Employee.....	Eloise Kennedy
Classmate 3, Cadet 1, Bronx Local, Princeton Student, Dance Captain.....	Vada Sorby
Forest Ensemble, Cadet 2, Bronx Local, Museum Goer 5.....	Valorie Nelson

She Persisted The Musical JR Musical Numbers

Perfect / Not	Naomi, Ms. Chan, Classmates, Ensemble
They Changed the World	Ms. Chan, Tour Guide, Classmates
Perfect/Not (Reprise)	Naomi, Time, Sonia Sotomayor
Another Solution (Part 1, 2, 3).....	Young Sonia, Bronx Locals, Sonia's Parents, Dr. Fisher
That's the Score	Dr. Apgar, Hospital Ensemble
Hope.....	Harriet Tubman, Ensemble, Naomi
Another Solution (Reprise).....	Adult Sonia, Princeton Students
Run My Race.....	Florence, Running Ensemble, Naomi
Isn't It Cool.....	Sally, Ensemble, Cadets, Naomi, Reporters
Walk On.....	Ruby, Naomi, Ensemble
Perfect/Not (Reprise 2)	Naomi
Walk On (Finale)	Naomi, Florence, Adult Sonia, Ruby, Dr. Apgar, Sally, Harriet, Ensemble, Ms. Chan, Classmates

She Persisted The Musical Jr. is performed with **no intermission.**

Run time: **75 minutes**

Setting and Time for *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Time: **Now**

Place: **Women's History Museum**

A Note From the Director of *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Whenever I direct a play, the first questions I ask of the work and the process are... “Why this work? Why now?” For *She Persisted* the answers to those questions came immediately.

Why this work? Because it highlights the stories of some incredible women in American History and is a great opportunity for the young actors to learn about them.

Why Now? This period in history feels particularly heavy. The news can be filled with stories of rights we thought were guaranteed being ignored or taken away, and it is easy to feel too insignificant to bring about any change. During these times, it can be helpful to look back at people in our history who overcame extraordinary obstacles to make a difference.

Through this lens we can see that progress is not linear. It can often feel like we are taking a step back, but when explored through the lens of history we can remind ourselves of the progress that we have made and find the courage to continue to push for what is right. The women in this story lived in different times and faced very different challenges, but each found a way forward. Their stories are not simply stories of achievement. They are stories of the determination, curiosity, hope, bravery, and adaptability that made those achievements possible.

What interests me most is not just what these women accomplished, but what Naomi discovers as she encounters them. She begins her journey with self-doubt. As she moves through the museum and into the worlds of these women, she begins to recognize something in them that she can also find in herself. They do not hand her a set of instructions. They give her something more personal: the possibility of seeing herself differently.

As we developed our concepts for this musical, we imagined a world in which the audience experiences these discoveries rather than simply watching history happen. A museum can preserve history, but theatre allows us to step inside it. We can feel the uncertainty of Harriet Tubman’s world, the hostility Ruby Bridges encountered, the exhilaration of Florence Griffith Joyner’s victory, and the wonder of Sally Ride’s journey into space. We can move beyond the portrait and encounter the person. Together as an artistic team we explored how we can transform a space, how an ensemble can create entire worlds, and how the stories of people who lived before us can feel immediate and human. I hope you will find yourself exploring alongside Naomi, making connections, asking questions, and perhaps discovering something unexpected.

The women in *She Persisted* changed the world in ways large and small. Their stories remind us that we do not have to know exactly how our own journeys will unfold before we begin. It seems wholly appropriate that Spotlight Youth Theatre, an organization committed to bringing acceptance and creativity into the lives of young artists, would choose this work and present its Arizona premiere.

I hope when you leave the theater after the show tonight you will take with you a little more curiosity, a little more hope, and a renewed belief in the possibilities that persistence can open—not only for ourselves, but for those who come after us.

Meribeth Reeves
Director, *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Coming Soon to Spotlight Youth Theatre

THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

Performed by "The Worst Kids in the History of the World!"



THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER

THE MUSICAL

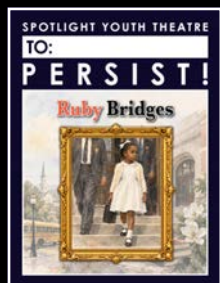
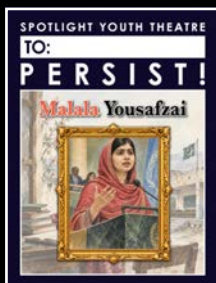
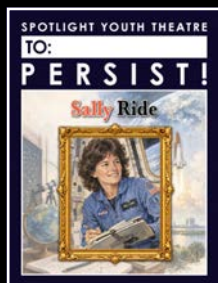
DECEMBER 4-20, 2026

Fridays & Saturdays at 7PM, Sundays at 2PM
additional 2PM matinees on December 12 & 19

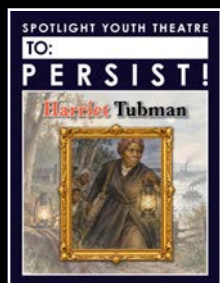
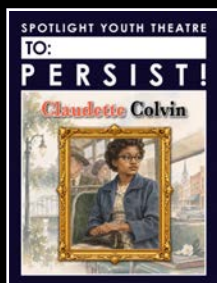
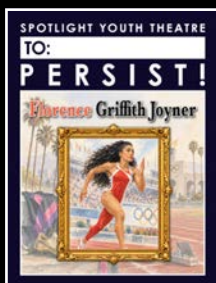
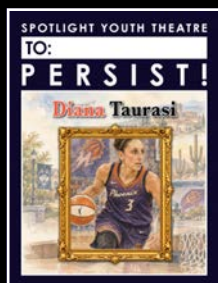
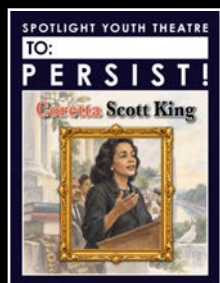
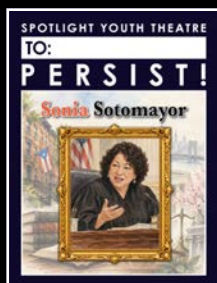
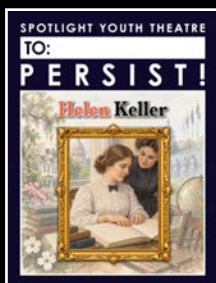
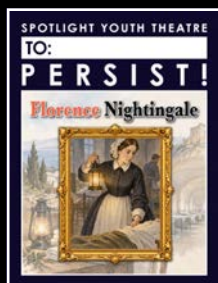
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Give Your Favorite Actor, Crew Member, or Director a Break-a-Leg!



For only \$5.00 you can send a personalized Break-a-Leg to your favorite actor or crew member!



The actors, crew members, and directors love it, and all proceeds are channeled directly back into the theatre to support amazing programs such as this one. Stop by the Break-a-Leg Table in the theatre lobby to brighten someone's day!

SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE

FROM CURTAIN CALL TO CANDY HAUL

SYT'S ANNUAL TRUNK-OR-TREAT!

SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 31, 2026



IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE EVENING PERFORMANCE OF

SHE PERSISTED THE MUSICAL, JR

SYT PARKING LOT • FREE AND OPEN TO ALL! • JOIN THE FUN!
EVERYONE IS INVITED TO DECORATE THEIR VEHICLES AND HAND OUT CANDY!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Charli Brooks • Harriet Tubman

Charli Brooks is a 15-year-old aspiring actress who is so excited to be playing Harriet Tubman! She previously took the stage as Elsa in *Frozen Jr.* and as part of the Ensemble in *13: The Musical*. Charli loves singing, acting, and making new memories with the people she gets to perform with. She is incredibly grateful for this opportunity and can't wait to bring Harriet's story to life on stage! When she's not performing, Charli enjoys spending time with friends and family and finding new things to be creative about. She hopes to keep growing as an actress and take on many more exciting roles in the future!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Olivia Carey • Ruby Bridges

Olivia Carey, 10, is a 5th grader at Basis Goodyear and is excited to be part of such an inspirational show here at SYT! Her favorite roles have included Molly in *Annie*, Violet Beauregarde in *Willy Wonka Jr.*, Yellowbeard in *Pirates the Musical*, a Schoolgirl in *Matilda Jr.*, and Young Coalhouse in *Ragtime*. Olivia enjoys performing, playing tennis, skating, swimming, and is actively involved in NEHS. She would like to thank Renee and her parents for always inspiring and encouraging her.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Noelia Castillo • Young Sonia, Forest Ensemble, Crowd/Runner Ensemble

Noelia Castillo is honored to be playing Young Sonia Sotomayor and ensemble roles! Most recently, Noelia has been seen in the VYT productions of *Matilda the Musical* as a Big Kid and *Shrek the Musical* as Young Fiona, as well as Spotlight Youth Theatre productions *Beetlejuice Jr.* as Lydia Deetz and *13 the Musical* as Cassie. Noelia is a sophomore at Cactus High School where she participates in Performance Dance Company and National Honor Society. She would like to thank Kenny, Meribeth, Izzy, Bella, Theo, and the whole production team for their work on this show, along with her family and friends who support her on this journey.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Mischa Cavazos • Time 3

Mischa is so excited to be in another Spotlight show. She was last seen in *Seussical Jr.* as a Wickersham Brother. Mischa is in NJHS and she strives to be the best she can be and she hopes to put a smile on others faces when she goes on stage.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Liam Davenport • Sonia's Father, Museum Ensemble, Dr. Whipple, Princeton President, Astronaut Trainer

Liam is a student at The Hilltop School of the Arts. He has been doing theater for years and some of his favorite roles include Otho in *Beetlejuice JR* (SYT), Zeke Matthews in *Goosebumps the Musical: Phantom of the Auditorium* (SCT), Hugo in *Tuck Everlasting* (SYT), and many more. He is incredibly grateful for this opportunity and he is excited for you to see the show. Just sit back, relax, and enjoy the show!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Haskell Fagan • Bailey, Bronx Local 3, Hospital Ensemble

Haskell Fagan is thrilled to make his Spotlight stage debut as Bailey and assorted ensemble in *She Persisted*!! Credits to date are Dirt the Chicken in *Picture Book Mystery Theater*; Wickersham Brother in *Seussical Jr* and Bruce Bogtrotter in *Matilda Jr*. Haskell is an internationally and nationally ranked diver on springboard, platform and high dive, and a lead performer on the YMCA SilverFins show dive team. When he is not on the stage or boards, he enjoys building and creating with Legos and hanging with his siblings.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Alyza Gabbay • Time 1

Alyza Gabbay is thrilled to be returning to Spotlight for her second show! With ten years of performing experience, Alyza has taken on some memorable roles. These include Elle Woods, Ensemble in *Tuck Everlasting*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Juno in *Beetlejuice Jr.*, and a featured dancer in *Hadestown Teen Edition*. She loves the inspiring storyline of this show, and she would like to thank her family and the creative team of this wonderful production!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Amelia Geraci • Museum Ensemble 2, Dr. May

Amelia Geraci is 12 years old and is excited to continue growing as a performer at Spotlight Youth Theatre (SYT). She began her theatre journey at SYT in July 2025, participating in summer camp and discovering her love for the stage. During her first season, Amelia performed in two productions, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* and *Seussical Jr.*, where she was proud to be part of the ensemble. This season, Amelia is excited to continue developing her skills as an actress, dancer, and singer while taking on new challenges and opportunities to grow. Amelia loves calling Spotlight Youth Theatre home and is grateful for the friendships, experiences, and memories she has made along the way. When she isn't on stage, Amelia is also a dedicated scholar. She was recognized by the State of Arizona with a Top 10% certificate for her academic achievement in ELA on the AASA state assessment. Whether she is performing under the lights or working hard in the classroom, Amelia brings enthusiasm, determination, and a love of learning to everything she does.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Eloise Kennedy • Classmate 2, Forest Ensemble, Nasa Employee

Eloise is thrilled to be part of *She Persisted The Musical Jr.*! She has been performing with Spotlight Youth Theatre for several years, and some of her favorite roles include Ollie in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, a Blind Mouse in *Cinderella: A Rock and Roll Fairytale*, and a Dwarf in *Snow White and the 8 Dwarfs*. Most recently, she appeared in *Seussical Jr.* on the SYT Mainstage and in *Dragon Training: A "How-To" Musical* this summer. Eloise is so excited to share the stage with this amazing cast! She would like to thank her family for their endless love and support, and the SYT staff for helping her shine. Enjoy the show!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Dagny Knoell • Sally Ride

Dagny is honored to be working with Spotlight Youth Theatre in *She Persisted The Musical Jr!* As a 10th grader at University High School in Tolleson, she recently played Mrs. Soames in *Our Town*, and has participated in SYT's performance troupes for many years. She has also been in the casts of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Last Chance Angels* at SYT. She is involved in Tolleson's honor choir, loves to spend time with her friends, and play her guitar. She would like to thank her parents and friends for being her encouragement and hopes you enjoy the show!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Reese Lai • Juno, Bronx Local 1, Hospital Ensemble

Reese (12 years old) is so excited to be back on the Spotlight stage for *She Persisted*! You may have seen her in *Seussical Jr.* (SYT), and she's also performed with Valley Youth Theatre and Arizona Broadway Theatre. She's had a blast singing, dancing, and goofing around with this awesome cast. Huge thanks to the creative team, her castmates, and her family for all the rides. Enjoy the show!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Eliana Lopez-Ball • Sonia Sotomayor

Eliana Lopez Ball is excited to play Adult Sonia Sotomayor. When not acting, she loves to travel, crochet, bake, & hang out with friends. Her favorite past role was Florence in *The Curious Savage*, and she enjoyed being Assistant Director of an 80's version of *Romeo & Juliet* this summer. She's thrilled to be part of this amazing cast and is grateful for the love and support of her friends and family.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Va'Nessa Madden • Tour Guide, Forest Ensemble, Dr. Fisher

Va'Nessa is an actress, model, former pageant queen (Pre-Teen USA Million Dollar Diamond), and community support volunteer. She spends her time on the stage performing theatre plays at her home theatre (Spotlight Youth Theatre), on movie and commercial sets, walking the runway for fashion designers, and is an affiliate for Fabula. She sings Soprano and Alto on stage and for her church. During her free time, 'Nessa likes to hang out with family, create inventory for her bracelet business ('Nessa's Bracelets) and volunteer for nonprofit organizations. She is Co-President of Kids Swag It Out, which is a student-led volunteer program for kids K-8, where they give to the community twice a year. She lives with her mom, older sister, and furbaby (Theo). 'Nessa sees herself on the big screen, in the future. One of her biggest goals is to act in a Tyler Perry production.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Ingrid Neilson • Time 2

Ingrid Neilson is an 8th grader at Madison Meadows Middle School. They grew up reading *She Persisted* and are thrilled to be a part of this show! A few of Ingrid's favorite roles include Cat in the Hat in *Seussical Jr* at Spotlight, Lord Farquaad in *Shrek Jr* at Madison Meadows, Hannah (etc.) in *Puffs* at Actor's Playground, *Playfest* 2025/2026, and Beetlejuice Clone/ Ensemble in *Beetlejuice Jr* at Greasepaint Youth Theatre. Ingrid loves to bake, crochet and read all sorts of books. Big thanks to Kenny, the *She Persisted, Jr.* team and everyone at Spotlight Youth Theatre!

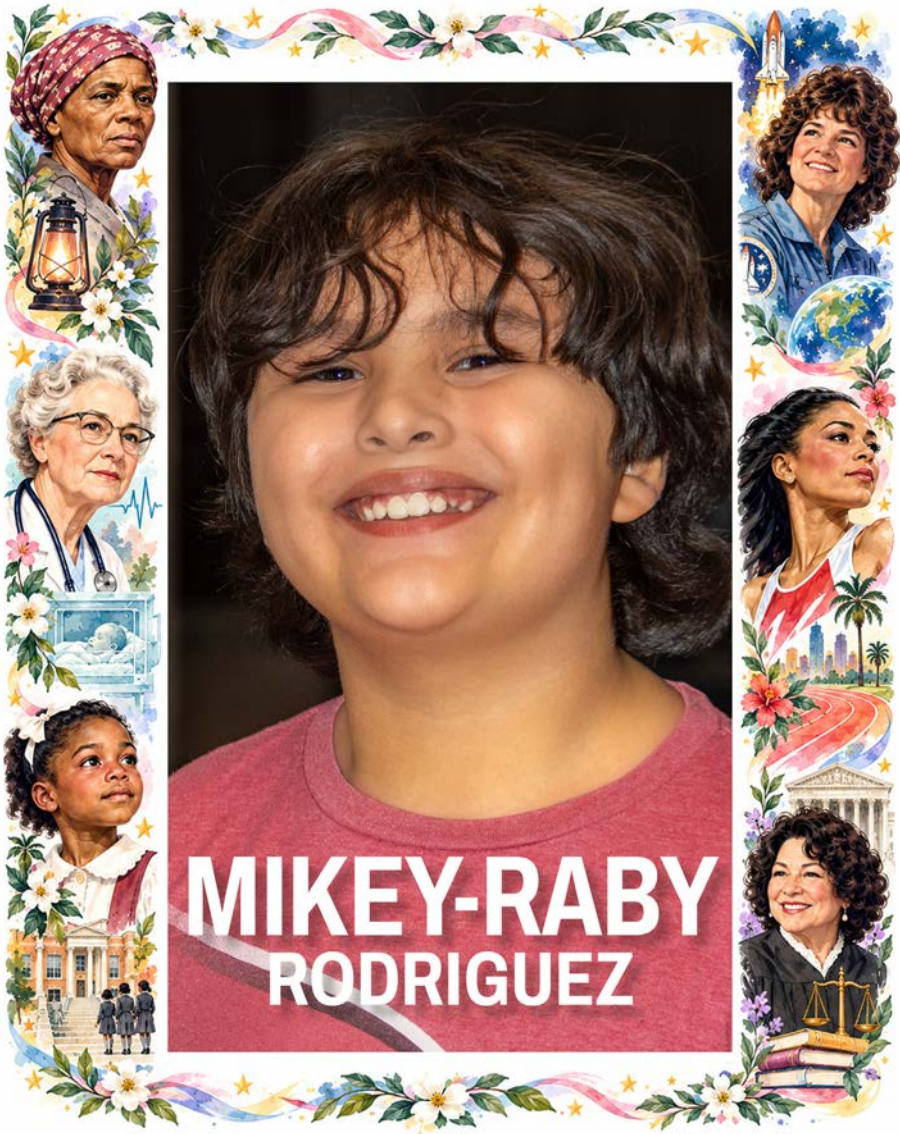
Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Valorie Nelson • Forest Ensemble, Cadet 2, Bronx Local, Museum Goer 5

Valorie is so excited to be back at Spotlight for her fourth production! She is having a blast. An eighth grader at Desert Shadows Middle School, Valorie loves musical theatre, singing with Bravo & Desert Harmony, and any excuse to be onstage. Recent credits include *Tuck Everlasting*, *Seussical Jr.*, & *13 the Musical*. When she isn't rehearsing, you can usually find her singing, spending time with friends, participating in pageants, or dreaming about the next show. Valorie would like to thank her parents for always supporting and encouraging her, and her directors for believing in her and giving her the opportunity to be part of this special production. She is so grateful to everyone who continues to cheer her on and remind her to keep dreaming big - and, of course, to persist!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Mikey-Raby Rodriguez • Museum Ensemble 4, Race Announcer

Mikey-Raby is so excited to be part of the cast of *She Persisted* and to share the empowering message it delivers! This is his very first musical theatre performance, and he cannot wait to perform on stage. He wants to extend a huge thank you to the Director, Theo, Izzy, Bella, Ms. Meribeth, Kenny, the entire cast, and everyone involved for welcoming him so warmly and for all their encouragement. Kudos to his dad and stepmom for inspiring him to get into theatre and thank you to his mom for letting him participate in this musical. A big thank you as well to his sisters and brother for all your love and support! Free Palestine!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Lilly Rundle • Alex, Bronx Local 2, Hospital Ensemble

Lilly is 12 years old and is so excited to be a part of this amazing cast. She has a passion for storytelling and can't wait for you to experience *She Persisted!* Previous credits include Spider in *James and the Giant Peach*, Cinderella in *Cinderella: A Rock-n- Roll Musical*, Piglet in *Winnie the Pooh Jr.*, Bunny in *A Murder is Announced* and others. Lilly loves performing and sharing creativity with audiences everywhere. She would like to thank her fellow cast-mates, crew and Miss Meribeth for letting her be a part of this amazing production. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Luci Salari • Museum Goer, Sonia's Mother, Run Ensemble, Forest Ensemble

Lucy is an 8th grader at Copperwood Elementary and is very excited to be in her 4th show at Spotlight. Some of her previous roles include Bird Girl in *Seussical Jr* (SYT), Ensemble in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (SYT), Oompa Loompa in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Starlight Community Theater), and more. Along with theater, Lucy enjoys playing the cello, hanging out with her friends, and playing with her three cats. Lucy would like to thank her family and the production team for this opportunity. Enjoy the show!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Lilah Shaffer • Florence Griffith Joyner

Lilah Shaffer is excited to be part of *She Persisted*! She has previously performed with MoezArt Productions in *The Jungle Book*, *Peter Rabbit*, *The Enchanted Bookshop*, and *Red-wall Abbey*. Lilah has also continued developing her love for theatre through musical theatre, dance, and audition workshops with Patriot Productions. She enjoys singing, acting, and bringing characters to life on stage. Lilah is grateful for the opportunity to be part of this production and hopes the show inspires others to follow their dreams and never give up

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Vada Sorby • Classmate 3, Cadet 1, Bronx Local, Princeton Student, Dance Captain

Vada is super excited to be a part of this fun cast! She loves being a part of this theater and has been in other productions, such as *Mary Poppins*, *Finding Nemo*, *Christmas Pageant*, and *Tuck Everlasting*. She has learned so much and wants to thank the cast and crew for making this experience amazing. She would also like to thank her family and friends for always supporting her dreams!!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Violet Sorby • Classmate 1, Forest Ensemble, Cadet 3

Violet is super excited to be a part of this fun cast! She loves being a part of this theater and has been in other productions, such as *Finding Nemo*, *Christmas Pageant*, and tech for *Tuck Everlasting*. She has learned so much and wants to thank the cast and crew for making this experience amazing. She would also like to thank her family and friends for always supporting her dreams!

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Lily Spears • Ms. Chan, Forest Ensemble

Lily is a 14-year-old freshman at Greenway High School. For nearly nine years, Spotlight Youth Theatre has given her the opportunity to pursue her passion for singing, performing, and being on stage. She is grateful for the opportunity to play Mrs. Chan in this production and to be part of a show that celebrates the stories and accomplishments of important women throughout history.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Triss Stovall • Naomi

Triss Stovall is so excited to be in her third Spotlight show! She's an avid reader and loves the *She Persisted* book. She's so excited to play the role of Naomi & help show everyone how amazing these women are! Triss is 9 years old & has been dancing & singing since she was 3. Being on stage is her happy place! Previous credits include Gladys in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (SYT), Lollipop Guild in *Wizard of Oz* (TW) ensemble in *Seussical JR* (SYT) & Judy in *Judy Moody & the Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt* (AP).

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Quinn Strait • Dr. Virginia Apgar

Quinn is excited to be making her Spotlight Theatre debut! She is a high school freshman and a member of HYREV at Arizona Broadway Theater. Some of her favorite roles include Barbara Maitland in *Beetlejuice Jr.*, Hannah in *Puffs*, and Gil in *Finding Nemo Jr.*, at Arizona Broadway Theater Academy, as well as Carlotta in *The Little Mermaid Jr.* at Bender Performing Arts. She has also been part of the ensemble in multiple productions at both Arizona Broadway Theater Academy and Bender Performing Arts. Quinn would like to thank her family and friends for encouraging her and supporting her. She would also like to thank everyone at Spotlight Theater for all the hard work they put into making these productions happen.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Sydney Underwood • Skyler, Bronx Local 4

Sydney is thrilled to be performing in *She Persisted* with Spotlight Youth Theatre - a theater that has become a home away from home for her! From the moment she first stepped onto the stage, Sydney immediately fell in love with performing. Since then, she has had the opportunity to perform in several productions, including roles such as Gladys Herdman in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, Junie B. in *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook*, and a Matilda in *Matilda Jr.* in her home state of Vermont. Sydney is grateful to be part of another show at Spotlight Youth Theatre and has loved bringing *She Persisted* to life with this incredible cast and creative team. When she's not on stage, Sydney enjoys soccer, singing, dancing, adventuring, and spending time with her family and friends. Sydney would like to thank her parents, family, friends, and everyone who continues to support and encourage her on her acting journey.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Annie Wolfley • Crowd/Run Ensemble, Museum Ensemble 3, Nurse
Annie is excited to return to the Spotlight Youth Theatre stage! Her previous Spotlight productions include *Finding Nemo* and *Seussical the Musical*. When she's not at rehearsal, Annie loves reading, crocheting, heading to the mountains, and spending as much time as she can squeeze in with her dog, Roxy. She also enjoys being involved at school and, of course, being part of the theatre community. Annie is so happy to be part of *She Persisted* and hopes you enjoy the show!

SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE PRESENTS

TRUNK^{OR} TREAT!

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 31, 2026**

Immediately following the performance of
She Persisted The Musical JR. (8PM-ish)

Spotlight Youth Theatre parking lot.

• Free & open to all! •

**PRIZES FOR THE BEST COSTUME &
BEST DECORATED TRUNK!**

Everyone is invited to decorate their
vehicles and hand out candy!

• Join the Fun! •



SPOTLIGHT
YOUTH
THEATRE
ARIZONA

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Virginia Apgar



Dr. Virginia Apgar (1909–1974) was a pioneering American anesthesiologist and medical researcher who revolutionized neonatal care by developing the Apgar score in 1952. As the first female full professor at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, she created the quick, 10-point evaluation system—measuring a newborn's heart rate, respiration, color, muscle tone, and reflexes at one and five minutes post-birth—to rapidly identify infants needing immediate resuscitation and drastically lower infant mortality worldwide. Later

in her career, she joined the March of Dimes Foundation, where she spearheaded research into birth defects and laid the groundwork for modern perinatology.

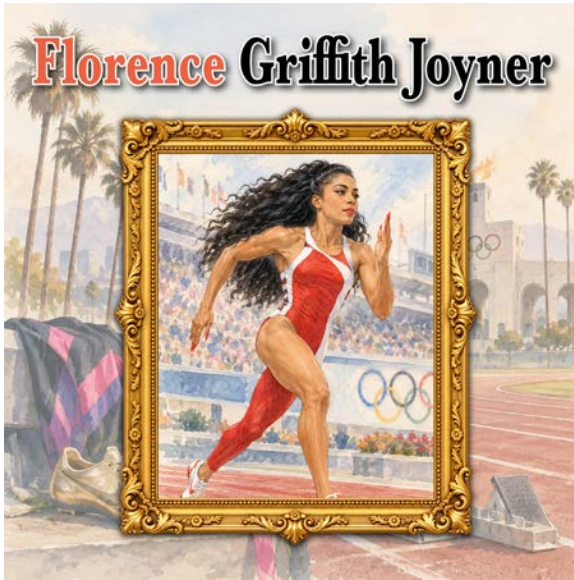
Ruby Bridges



Ruby Bridges is an American civil rights activist who became a historic symbol of courage and school integration. On November 14, 1960, at just six years old, she became the first Black child to integrate the all-white William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans, Louisiana, after federal courts ordered desegregation following the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Escorted through a hostile crowd of protesters by U.S. Marshals, she spent her entire first-grade year as the sole student in a classroom taught by courageous educator

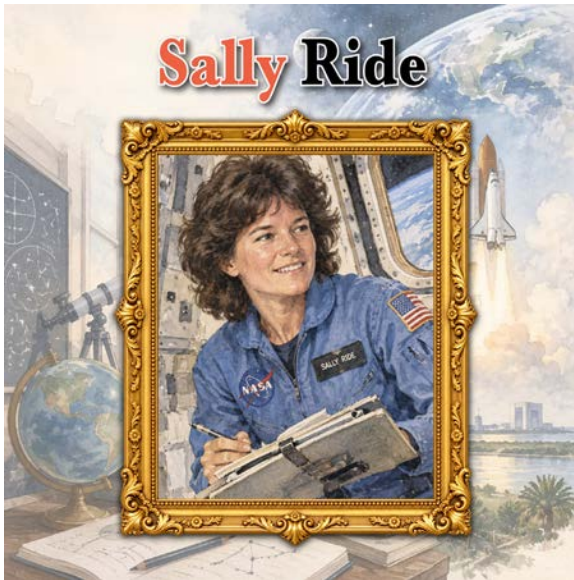
Barbara Henry. Her bravery was immortalized in Norman Rockwell's 1964 painting *The Problem We All Live With*, and she later founded the Ruby Bridges Foundation to promote tolerance, unity, and educational equality.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*



Florence Griffith Joyner, widely known as “Flo-Jo,” was an American track and field sprinter who remains the fastest woman in history. Born on December 21, 1959, in Los Angeles, California, she rose to global fame during the 1988 Seoul Olympics, where she won three gold medals and a silver medal. During that historic year, she set world records in the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes, both of which still stand today. Beyond her unmatched speed, Flo-Jo captivated the world with her bold fashion sense, featuring asymmetric one-legged race suits, flowing hair, and long, brightly painted acrylic nails. After retiring

in 1989, she worked as a fashion designer, author, and co-chair of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports before her tragic passing in 1998 at the age of 38.

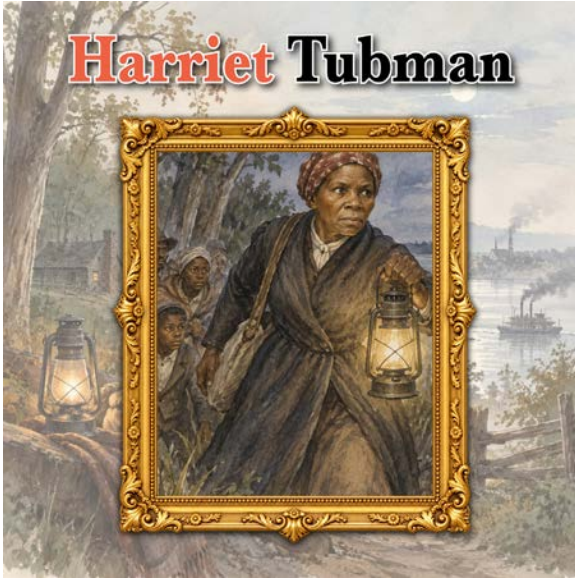


Dr. Sally Ride was an American physicist and astronaut who made history on June 18, 1983, when she became the first American woman to travel into space aboard the space shuttle Challenger. Born in 1951 in Encino, California, she earned a Ph.D. in physics from Stanford University before joining NASA’s first astronaut class to include women in 1978. After completing two shuttle missions, she served on the investigation boards for both the Challenger and Columbia disasters. Later in life, she taught physics at UC San Diego and co-founded Sally Ride Science to encourage

young girls to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Harriet Tubman



Combahee River Raid—which liberated more than 700 enslaved people. Later in life, she settled in Auburn, New York, where she fought for women's suffrage and opened a home for aged and indigent African Americans.

Sonia Sotomayor



judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Harriet Tubman (born Araminta Ross, c. 1822–1913) was a famous American abolitionist, humanitarian, and Underground Railroad “conductor” who escaped slavery in Maryland in 1849. Known by the nickname “Moses,” she risked her life to make roughly 13 missions back to the South, guiding around 70 enslaved people—including her family and friends—to freedom. During the American Civil War, she served the Union Army as a cook, nurse, armed scout, and spy, and made history as the first woman to lead a major military operation—the

Sonia Sotomayor is an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and she is the first Hispanic and third female justice to serve on the high court. Born on June 25, 1954, in the Bronx, New York, she was raised by Puerto Rican parents in a public housing project. She graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University in 1976 and earned her law degree from Yale Law School in 1979. Prior to her 2009 appointment by President Barack Obama, she worked as a Manhattan assistant district attorney, a corporate attorney, a U.S. District Court judge, and a

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Rob Adams (Set Designer)

Rob is thrilled to return to Spotlight Youth Theatre for *She Persisted Jr.*, his ninth show. None of it would happen without his family, who pitch in on every build and work harder than anyone should have to for a set that will be struck in a weekend. What began as a love of building things has grown into a full-on passion for designing and constructing sets that bring stories to life, usually with a little sawdust and a lot of problem-solving. Away from the theater, Rob can be found building and refurbishing furniture or sketching out his next design challenge. He's grateful to be part of the Spotlight community, and to Artistic Director Kenny Grossman and Director Meribeth Reeves for trusting him with power tools and a budget. Thanks for being here, and enjoy the show!

Megan Brooks (Assistant Lighting Designer)

Megan is a senior in high school, as well as a National Honor Thespian and President of her school's International Thespian Society. Previous credits include *Flash Mob* (Lighting Designer), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Stage Manager), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Assistant Lighting Designer, Stage Manager), *Shrek: The Musical* (spotlight operator), *Tuck Everlasting* (Assistant Lighting Designer) and now *She Persisted*. Special thanks to Sarah and Kenny for the opportunity! Additional thanks to the Thespian Citizens, her parents, Molly Brooks and her bug, and the talented cast and crew! Enjoy the show!

Kenny & Vicki Grossman (Properties Designers)

Kenny and Vicki have been with Spotlight Youth Theatre from the very beginning and are excited to be a part of this amazing production. They are looking forward to all the productions in this incredible season. Kenny still loves eggs. To Jamie and Carly, "We love you and miss you." Thank you to the cast, crew, directors, designers, families, volunteers, and board members.

Theo McComb (Stage Manager)

Theo McComb is thrilled to be doing his second show as stage manager at Spotlight! He has done plenty of spotlight shows as an actor, but this is his first mainstage stage management gig. He hopes to continue stage managing as well as acting. Enjoy the show!

Meribeth Reeves (Director)

Meribeth Reeves has worked in theater for more than 35 years as administrator, director, stage manager, writer, and producer. Manager, Tempe Center for the Arts, former Managing Director of the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, Executive Director of Desert Foothills Theater. Currently pursuing a Masters in Theater Direction through Roosevelt University in Chicago, President of the Arizona Presenters Alliance Board of Directors, Past President of the ariZoni Theater Association Board of Directors, OnMedia Arts Hero (March 2018), alumni ASU Lodestar American Express Leadership Academy. Most recently she directed *The Addams Family* for Scottsdale Community Players/Greasepaint, *Junie B. Jones*, *Disney's Frozen Jr.* and *Moana, Jr.* for TheaterWorks, assistant directed *Antigone* at Cactus Shadows High School and taught/directed in the ASU/Gammage Disney Musicals in Schools program for four years. Thank you to the amazing team at Spotlight Youth Theatre and Kenny Grossman for his friendship and leadership. Thank you to my directing teammates, Heather, Bella and Izzy, and the great production team; directors collective member Andrew Cupo; and my amazing children, Mattaea and Mason who both inspire me every day. Deep appreciation for my supportive, loving husband and biggest fan, Matt.

Who's Who in *She Persisted The Musical JR*

Sarah Ray (Lighting & Sound Designer)

Sarah is the lighting and sound designer for *She Persisted*. Sarah has done design for Spotlight Youth Theatre for the last three years and is excited for everyone to see this show! He thinks that this show is fabulous in every regard and really showcases influential women figures.

Heather Riddle (Costume Designer)

Heather is a stay-at-home mom of five kids, part time registered nurse, piano teacher and business owner. She is an AriZoni award winning costume designer and is grateful for the opportunity to work with Kenny, Meribeth and all the amazing youth at Spotlight again. She is also grateful for her super supportive husband who is always encouraging and to her kids who step in to be her mannequins and costume assistants.

Aleezeh Siddiqui (Assistant Costume Designer)

This is Aleezeh's second time costuming for theater, but she has been sewing for over a decade. Her love for theater comes from her time in stage crew in high school, and she's always picking show tunes to sing at karaoke. She's passionate about researching fashion history and wrote her undergraduate thesis on the development of the Pakistani textile industry from the 1970s to 2020s. Aleezeh has loved working with Spotlight and can't wait to work on more shows with the team!

Bella Swope (Choreographer)

Bella Swope is a Phoenix based choreographer who grew up doing theater around the valley. She is beyond thrilled to be making her way back to Spotlight to choreograph this production. Some of her past credits include *13 The Musical*, *Finding Nemo Jr.* (Spotlight Youth Theatre) and *The Lightning Thief Musical* (Starlight Community Theater) and *Something Rotten* (Spotlight Youth Theatre). She would like to thank Kenny Grossman for giving her this opportunity, as well as Meribeth Reeves, Heather Walker and Theo McComb for their help and encouragement through this process. She would also like to thank the cast and crew for their devotion to Spotlight as well as this show.

Heather Walker (Music Director)

Heather is so happy to have had the privilege of directing music for *She Persisted*! Heather has been involved with shows at Spotlight for almost 15 years. She has also taught many theatre camps, directed Confetti troupes, and is currently the director of SYT Company. Heather thanks her family for their continuous support and this amazing cast, crew, and production team for their hard work!

Griffin Wilbur (Hair & Make-Up Designer)

Griffin Wilbur is excited to be a part of *She Persisted*. He has been an assistant hair and makeup designer for several shows and camps around the valley, but this is his first time as the lead designer. He is so excited for you to experience this important historical show.

SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE PROUDLY PRESENTS
SPRING BREAK CAMP 2027

SYT'S
GOT
Talent
SPRING BREAK CAMP 2027

Join host Theresa Crews and judges Simone Scowel, Sofia Las Vegas, Showie Mandel and Mel-o-D for this year's ultimate singing, dancing and acting camp. Everyone's welcome and everyone's a winner.

March 15–19, 2027

Monday–Friday • 9 AM–4 PM

Show Finale: Friday, March 19, at 5 PM

Tuition: \$200 • Ages 7 to 17
Extended care is available

Spotlight Youth Theatre

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(602) 843-8318 • sy taz.org





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Spotlight Youth Theatre
Gala 2026



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World Wildlife Zoo
TLC Catering
Majestic Cinema Grill
Heard Museum
CookienGenie
Chicken N Pickle
Lou Malnatis
PRP Wine International
Bro Baskets
Tempe Improv
Elite Certificates
The Keg

Spotlight Youth Theatre Administrative Team

Artistic Director for Spotlight Youth Theatre	Kenny Grossman
Managing Director for Spotlight Youth Theatre.....	Deb Czajkowski
General Manager for Spotlight Youth Theatre.....	Jack Taylor
Graphic Designer, Headshot Photographer, & Webmaster.....	Robert Waller
Social Media Specialist.....	Jack Taylor
Promotional & Production Photos	Audra Little
Break-a-Leg Table Coordinator	Tammy Waller
Fundraising Committee	Sara Bader, Shelly Boucher, Karen Dolyniuk, Audra Little, Kelly Swope, & Tammy Waller

Special thanks to **Doug Novotny**, the **Spotlight Youth Theatre Board of Directors**, and the **friends & family members** who volunteered to make this show so successful.

How Are We Doing?

WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK

Please take a moment to complete our online survey. Your responses are greatly appreciated.

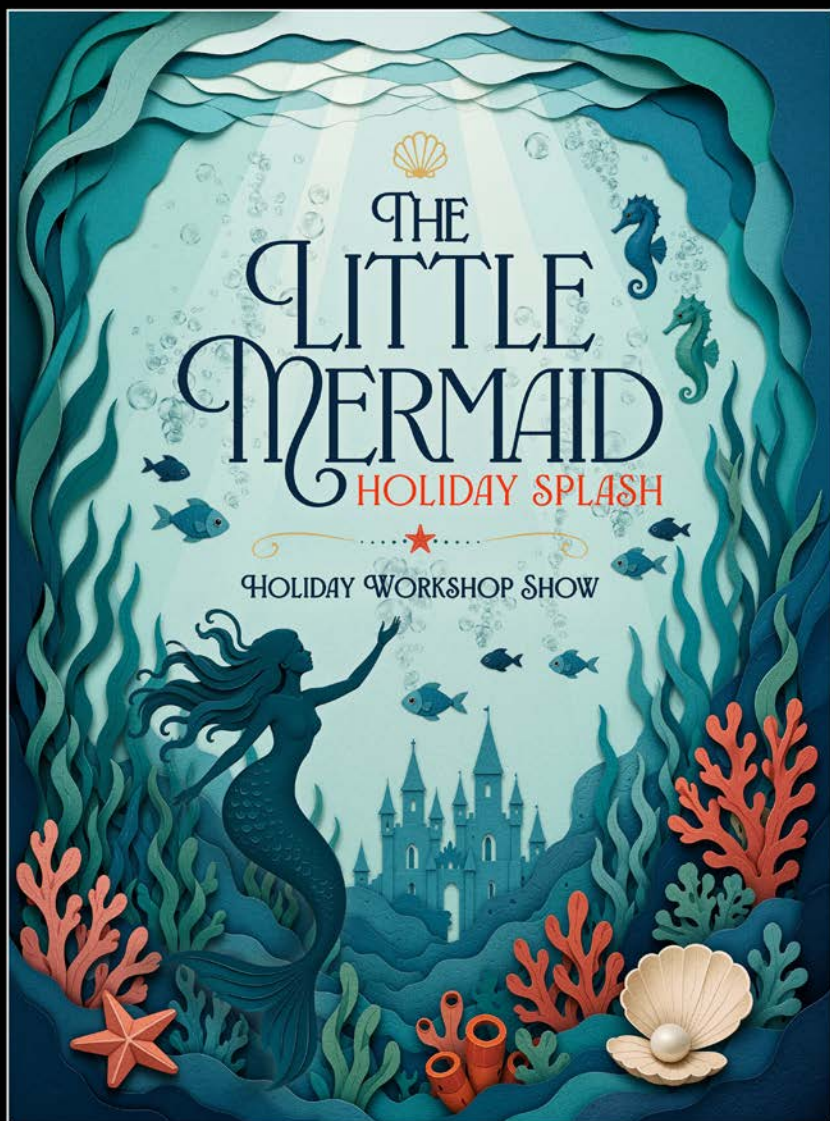
Please scan the code or type the link into any internet browser.

<https://bit.ly/SYTSurvey>



SCAN ME

Coming Soon to Spotlight Youth Theatre



SPOTLIGHT HOLIDAY WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 21, 2026 – JANUARY 1, 2027

Performances: January 1 & 2, 2027

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SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE'S **LITTLE ACTORS ACADEMY**

WINTER & SPRING BREAK CAMPS

DEC 28, 2026 – JAN 1, 2027



FROZEN FUN

Step into a winter wonderland for a Frozen-inspired camp filled with acting, music, dancing, games and frosty fun!

MARCH 15–19, 2027



BLUEY'S BACKYARD ADVENTURES

Join Bluey and friends for a week of imaginative play, acting, music, movement and backyard adventures.

Designed specifically for toddlers ages 3–7, SYT's Little Actors Academy combines the joy of music, movement, and imagination to create an unforgettable theatrical experience!

Little Actors Academy classes are one-week in length, Monday through Friday, 9AM - Noon.



Tuition for each one-week class is \$175. For more information or to register, please call the SYT Box Office or visit sy taz.org.

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SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE'S

LITTLE ACTORS ACADEMY

HOLIDAY WINTER BREAK CAMP

December 28 – January 1



FROZEN FUN

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Spotlight Youth Theatre

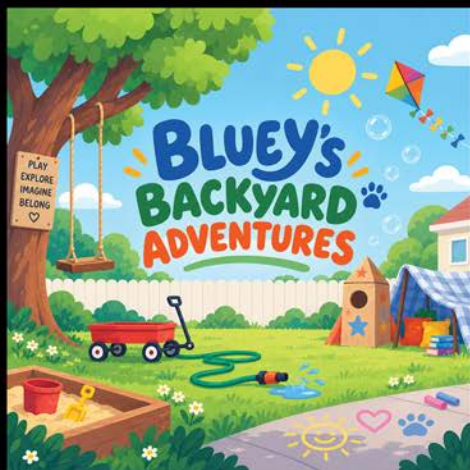
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SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE'S

LITTLE ACTORS ACADEMY

SPRING BREAK CAMP

MARCH 15-19, 2027



BLUEY'S BACKYARD ADVENTURES

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Spotlight Youth Theatre

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SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE AUDITIONS



NEXT TO NORMAL

An unflinching look at a suburban family struggling with the effects of mental illness.

Content Warnings: Please note the show includes various depictions of mental health conditions and disorders including bipolar disorder, anxiety, and grief. This production also includes depictions and discussions of drug use, self-harm, death, and medical trauma. You know, normal youth theatre content.

Production Dates: **January 15—31, 2027**

Ages: **14–21**

Audition dates: **Sunday, November 8, & Monday, November 9, at 6:00 PM**

Callbacks: **Tuesday, November 10, at 5:30 PM**

Parent Meeting: **Saturday, November 14, at 5:00 PM**

Requirements:

- Complete the online audition form.
- Please come prepared to sing 32 bars of a contemporary song of your choice (no a cappella) and perform a one-minute character-driven monologue of your choice.
- Headshot and résumé required.

Video auditions:

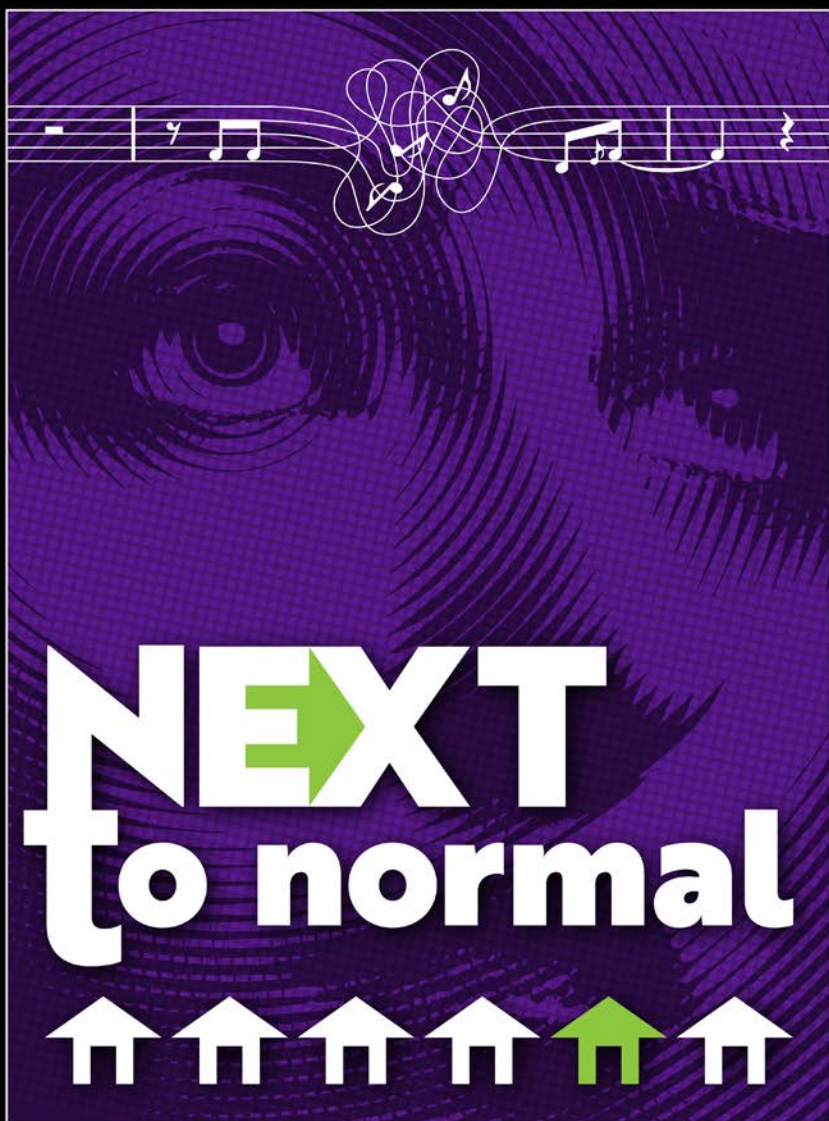
- Complete the online audition form.
- Email **kenny@syta.org** by **8:00PM on Sunday, November 8, 2026**.
- Include your name and attach or link the audition video.
- In-person callbacks are mandatory.

We are looking for young people of all ethnicities, body types, and gender identifications.

See complete audition requirements and registration link at:
syta.org/auditions

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Coming Soon to
Spotlight Youth Theatre



JANUARY 15–31, 2027

Fridays & Saturdays at 7PM, Sundays at 2PM
additional 2PM matinees on Jan. 23 & Jan. 30

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Coming Soon to Spotlight Youth Theatre

A TRAGEDY BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SOMETHING
IS ROTTEN
IN THE
STATE OF
DENMARK

HAMLET

FEBRUARY 19–28, 2027

Fridays & Saturdays at 7PM

Saturdays & Sundays at 2PM

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spotlight youth theatre

YOUNG ACTORS THESPIAN COMPANY

a theatrical adventure for aspiring young performers



FEB 6 – APR 24, 2027
Every Saturday from 10AM–Noon

Ages 5 to 10

All kids and experience levels are welcome!

Tuition: \$250

It is never too early to start musical theatre!

This program will teach kids the core elements of Musical Theatre including singing, dancing and acting.

It will encourage kids to explore their creativity, imagination and give them an appreciation and understanding of the theatre stage.



Disney Frozen KIDS

Do you want to build a snowman? **Frozen KIDS** is a 30-minute adaptation of the 2018 Broadway musical, which was based on the 2013 Walt Disney Animation Studios film.

Join Anna, Elsa, Olaf, Sven, and all of your favorite characters as they embark on an epic, ice-filled journey of self-discovery, camaraderie, and the real meaning of true love.

Rehearsals will be held every Saturday in the Spotlight Studio, 10AM–Noon.
Final performances on Saturday and Sunday, May 1 and 2, 2027, at Noon.

For more information or to register, please call the SYT Box Office or visit our website.
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Coming Soon to
Spotlight Youth Theatre

DEAR EVAN HANSEN

THE TONY AWARD-WINNING BEST MUSICAL

MARCH 26–APRIL 11, 2027

Fridays & Saturdays at 7PM, Sundays at 2PM
additional 2PM matinees on April 3 & 10

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SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE

PRIDE

LOVE WINS

April 11 to June 13, 2027

Sundays • 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. • Spotlight Studio
Performances on June 18, 19, & 20

Tuition: FREE!

SYT Pride provides a safe, affirming space for LGBTQIA+ youth in the Phoenix area to explore their identities, collaborate with peers, and create original, transformative theater.

Participants share and develop personal stories rooted in their lived experiences. As an ensemble, they shape these stories into a cohesive theatrical production for community performance - amplifying LGBTQ+ visibility, equity, and youth voice through the arts.

Who can participate?

- LGBTQIA+ youth and allies
- Ages 13 - 21
- No prior theater experience required – just curiosity, creativity, and a willingness to collaborate

For more information or to register: sytaaz.org

SPOTLIGHT STUDIO

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Coming Soon to Spotlight Youth Theatre

SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE



**Award-winning one-act plays written
and directed by Spotlight Superstars!**

APRIL 16–25, 2027

Fridays & Saturdays at 7PM

Saturdays & Sundays at 2PM

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Coming Soon to Spotlight Youth Theatre



MAY 21–JUNE 6, 2027

Fridays & Saturdays at 7PM, Sundays at 2PM
additional 2PM matinees on May 29 & June 5

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Theatre's
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Spotlight Youth Theatre's mission is to provide youth and their families a safe, welcoming environment where the individual is supported, teamwork is embraced, and creativity is encouraged through high quality performing arts and educational programs that enrich and strengthen our community.

Spotlight Youth Theatre's vision:

1. A program grounded in the belief that every child deserves a chance to shine, a place that is safe and free from negativity, and an environment where fun and hard work combine into amazing experiences, both on and off stage.
2. A theatre program that is as diverse as the community we serve and where all members of the family can join in the endeavor to produce high quality theater productions that amaze and entertain.
3. A place where a child can be their authentic self, exploring the creative arts without fear, and be embraced and encouraged to grow and flourish.

Spotlight Youth Theatre is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Community Youth Theatre

Spotlight Youth Theatre would very much like to thank our community partners and benefactors. Please support the kind and generous people who support SYT by patronizing our sponsors. To learn more about sponsoring or donating to Spotlight Youth Theatre and making a difference in the lives of today's youth, please call (602) 843-8318.

Partial Funding of Spotlight Youth Theatre's Programs Provided by:



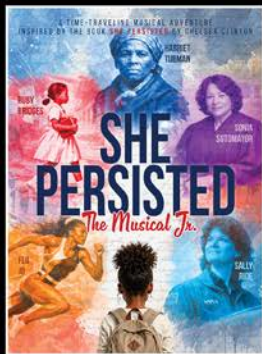
Spotlight Youth Theatre would like to thank these funders for their generous support. They play an essential role in helping us create a safe, welcoming space where youth can learn and grow.

SPOTLIGHT YOUTH THEATRE

2026-2027 SEASON



Tuck Everlasting
SEPTEMBER 11-27



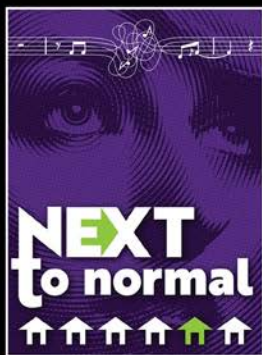
She Persisted, The Musical JR
OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 8



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever
DECEMBER 4 - 20



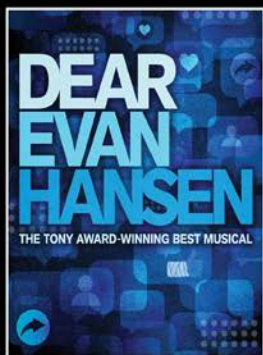
Spotlight Holiday Workshop
DECEMBER 21 - JANUARY 1



Next to Normal
JANUARY 15 - 31



William Shakespeare's Hamlet
FEBRUARY 19 - 28



Dear Evan Hansen
March 26 - April 11



Playfest 2027
APRIL 16 - 25



How to Train Your Dragon, The Musical JR.
MAY 21 - JUNE 6

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