



HIGHWOOD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Kevin Kearney

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Matthew Nicola

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Highwood Theatre Expanding

Announces Campaign to Expand Local Art Incubator Efforts with Affordable Rehearsal and Performance Studio in Silver Spring Area

Highwood Theatre's 2017 **Creating Our Future** campaign is a three-phased project designed to expand the theater's local art incubator efforts by doubling the size of its existing performance venue and other work spaces in downtown Silver Spring. With the addition of a larger theatre welcoming twice the number of audience members, a brand-new workshop, a second rehearsal room, and improvements in functionality of its current space, Highwood will expand its arts programming and be able to serve thousands more students, families, and schools in the DMV area.

Executive Director Kevin Kearney stated, "Highwood is thrilled to be able to expand so dramatically this year and offer the DMV area a fully integrated campus that will support the arts community and local artistic projects as well as welcome thousands more students and adults into the community. We expect this space to attract artists of all backgrounds and interests and serve as a hub for them as they explore and create their art - from performance art to visual art, and staged readings to improv classes."

Specifically, Highwood's intimate 35-seat black box theatre will be renamed and repurposed to become the *Open Source Studio*. Since 2013, Highwood has produced annual Open Source Theatre Projects in support of the development and creation of unique artistic endeavors, ranging from an audience-immersive murder mystery to this year's Wheaton Arts on the Road Project with Loiederman Middle School. Highwood will make the **Open Source studio available to all in the community who need affordable performance space**.

In addition, the Creating Our Future campaign will raise a total of \$150,000 for renovating Highwood's space. With much already in operation and renovations ongoing, the project's three phases will: **(1) create a new black-box theatre**, seating up to 70; **(2) create a larger workshop** adjacent to the new theatre, not only doubling the size of the current workshop space but also allowing construction of larger set pieces for Highwood and school productions; **(3) provide additional rehearsal space**; and **(4) increase accessibility** to more restrooms and concession service areas.

"This is an exciting time for Highwood," said ED Kearney. "Local artists tell us all the time that space for rehearsals and performances is scarce and unaffordable. Our expansion will provide space for artists to practice their craft and

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create their projects.”

The project will also modify existing space to increase flexible community use and enable Highwood to provide more services to the community. Creating **new costume and dressing rooms**, and **expansion of existing rehearsal space (adding mirrors and a new dance floor)** will permit Highwood to offer more classes and accommodate more participants and larger casts, while maintaining its trademark individual and small group focus.

About The Highwood Theatre

The Highwood Theatre is a nonprofit organization dedicated to building community through theatre. Highwood was founded in 2004 and has developed innovative, engaging programming for artists of all ages through professional and student productions, classes, and programs in schools and for home schooled students.

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