



HIGHWOOD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Kevin Kearney

HIGHWOOD DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
Sarah Scott

LOIEDERMAN ARTS MAGNET COORDINATOR
Royce Wallace

LOIEDERMAN DIRECTOR OF THEATRE PROGRAMS
Robyn Paley

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Contact: Sarah Scott, Director of Marketing and Communications
sscott@thehighwoodtheatre.org | 301-587-0697; 202-495-9524

Groundbreaking Partnership between The Highwood Theatre and A. Mario Loiederman Middle School for the Creative and Performing Arts Launches Exciting New Project ***Wheaton Arts on the Road***

Sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County

The Highwood Theatre and A. Mario Loiederman Middle School for the Creative and Performing Arts are thrilled to announce their collaboration “Wheaton Arts on the Road,” designed to increase access to theatre and the arts for Wheaton elementary and middle school students. Funded in part by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County through the Wheaton Cultural Arts Grant, this project will expose thousands of young students to the performing arts and the substantial academic and social benefits that accompany arts experiences, while raising Wheaton’s visibility in the local arts community. Highwood’s Executive Director Kevin Kearney describes the anticipated impact of the project: “Our goal is to expose Wheaton area students and their families to the power of theatre to impact individuals and the ways we interact with others and our community. This innovative collaboration will allow a large number of Wheaton students to experience and appreciate the wonder and excitement of theatre, and we hope it will encourage them to incorporate art into their education and their lives.”

This Fall, eight theatre arts professionals from the Highwood Theatre staff will work alongside teachers at Loiederman Middle School to guide teams of students as they create all of the design and production elements for their fall musical, *James and the Giant Peach, Jr.* From acting, singing, and dancing, to set, lighting, costume design, stage managing, publicity, and more, students will provide the creative vision and do it all. In November, over 1,600 students in grades 2 and 3 from eight Wheaton elementary schools will be transported by bus to Loiederman to watch free daytime performances of the show. Participating elementary schools include Brookhaven, Georgian Forest, Harmony Hills, Sargent Shriver, Strathmore, Viers Mill, Weller Road, and Wheaton Woods. The families of more than 5,000 students at these schools will be able to see additional public performances of the show at Loiederman at a discounted price.

OFFICES AND STUDIOS
914 Silver Spring Avenue, Suite 102
Silver Spring, MD 20910



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Elementary school students at these schools in grades K-2 will also get the chance to make theatre themselves. Loiederman students will design hands-on theatre workshops, based on their experiences, and travel to the Wheaton elementary schools to bring those workshops to the younger students. Robyn Paley, the Loiederman Theatre Teacher, is excited about the project: "The 'Wheaton Arts on the Road' Project is offering the children of Wheaton an extraordinary experience. Not only will we be able to provide a means for the local elementary schools to experience the arts, but the Loiederman middle school students will have the benefit of direct training with theatre professionals. With the support of the grant, our students will take part in all steps of the creative process, and I am ecstatic to have the opportunity to work with The Highwood Theatre in making this project a success."

Due to its unique combination of arts education and theatrical performance, The Highwood Theatre has added "Wheaton Arts on the Road" to its 2016 - 2017 Season of Productions – the project will serve as Highwood's 4th annual Open Source Theatre Project, which emphasizes innovative collaborations to explore nontraditional theatre experiences. "Wheaton Arts on the Road" will also be part of The Highwood Theatre's "The Students' Art Collaborative" Millennium Stage performance at the Kennedy Center's 2016 Page-to-Stage Festival on Saturday, September 3rd from 1:00 - 2:30 pm. Students from The Highwood Theatre and Loiederman Middle School will perform a collection of short scenes, monologues, songs, and previews of the upcoming season, including some from *James and the Giant Peach, Jr.*

About The Highwood Theatre

The Highwood Theatre is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing the community together through theatre. Now in its 14th Season, Highwood's guiding principle is "anyone can do theatre." Highwood was founded in 2004 and began executing its mission through seasons of professional quality theatre featuring all-student casts, design teams, and production staff. In 2013, in conjunction with its relocation to the heart of downtown Silver Spring, The Highwood Theatre expanded to more fully carry out its mission and develop innovative, engaging programming for artists of all ages through professional and student productions, classes, and programs in schools and for home schooled students.

Contact Information

The Highwood Theatre Office: 301-587-0697
General Information: info@thehighwoodtheatre.org
Website: www.thehighwoodtheatre.org

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