



RALEIGH
LITTLE
THEATRE

DIVAS!



SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025

PRESENTED BY



**DIRECTED BY
ALISON LAWRENCE**

MUSIC DIRECTOR: JEFF WHICKER
CHOREOGRAPHER: LISA PFUHL
EVENT CHAIR: SUZANNE RUGGLES

COMING SOON



Scan for tickets
& more info!



ALL SMILES

THEATRE FOR THE VERY YOUNG

RETURNING APRIL 23 - MAY 4!



SCHOOL HOUSE ROCK LIVE!

May 3-11

THE COLOR PURPLE

JUNE 6-29



HADESTOWN

TEEN EDITION

JULY 25 - AUGUST 10

Art © by SpotCo



**RALEIGH
LITTLE
THEATRE**

Presents

Divas! 2025

Saturday, April 12, 2025

Directed by Alison Lawrence

Music Directed by Jeff Whicker

Choreographed by Lisa Pfuhl

Event Chair: Suzanne Ruggles

Good Evening Friends!

Welcome to our annual fundraiser at Raleigh Little Theatre – a night where the spotlight isn't just on our Divas but on all of **YOU** who help keep this incredible theatre alive and thriving!

For almost 100 years, Raleigh Little Theatre has been a place where stories come to life, where talent is nurtured, and where lasting friendships are formed. But here's a fact: ticket sales alone are not enough to sustain our productions, maintain our historic space, and provide opportunities for aspiring artists. It's your support—through donations, sponsorships, and volunteer efforts—that allows us to effectively engage the community we have been charged to serve.

Tonight, as we come together in celebration, we ask you to consider the role you play in keeping **YOUR** community theatre alive. Every contribution, big or small, makes a lasting impact. Your generosity ensures that our community continues to have a cultural hub to call its own.

So let's raise our glasses, enjoy an evening of entertainment, and invest in the future of Raleigh Little Theatre. Because this isn't just a theatre—it's a home. And with your help, it will continue to be for years to come.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'M' being particularly large and stylized.

Michele Weathers
Executive Producer





NCFL#7452

Auctioneers of Quality Objects & Collections

Leland Little

LelandLittle.com
919.644.1243
Hillsborough, NC

Medlin-Davis Cleaners proudly support.



Raleigh Little Theatre

Cast

Dustin Bowles

DaNiesha Carr

Autumn Clark

Saphfire Cook

Taneka Craig

Ian Do

Devin Lackey

River Mann

Arushi Majumdar

***Divas!* 2025 Committee**

Suzanne Ruggles (Chair)

Judy M. Dove

Michael Dunavan

Marquita Robertson

Production Team

Director	Alison Lawrence
Music Director	Jeff Whicker
Choreographer	Lisa Pfuhl
Scenic Designer/Production Manager/ Technical Director	Dennis R. Berfield
Lighting Designer/ Assistant Technical Director	Ali Wood
Sound Designer	Todd Houseknecht
Costume Shop Manager	Jenny Mitchell
Stage Manager	Elaine Petrone
Assistant Stage Manager	Sarah Gendron
Musicians	Joe Wimberley Tim Wall
Production Liaison	Dee Penven-Crew
Cashiers	EisnerAmper
<i>Divas!</i> 2025 Campaign Videos	Rod & Nancy Rich
<i>Divas!</i> 2025 Headshot Photographer	Jeannine Borzello
Master of Ceremonies	Clay Aiken

Welcome letter from *Divas!* Committee Chair

Dear RLT Family and Friends,

Welcome to *Divas!* 2025! I am thrilled to be among the many people hosting you tonight for the 19th anniversary of Raleigh Little Theatre's annual fundraising event – *Divas!*

It is sure to be a magnificent evening. We have an exceptional group of nine Divas – talented singers and actors (and fundraisers!) who will perform and entertain you. And, all the while competing to raise the most money for RLT and receive the coveted *Divas!* Crown for 2025!



Show your support and love by opening your hearts and wallets. "Vote" generously for your favorite Diva. Every dollar spent is a vote for a Diva, and one more opportunity for RLT to continue realizing its mission to use "theatre to enrich, educate, entertain and engage volunteers, students and audiences of all ages."

So many people are pivotal to tonight's production – both onstage and off. I would like to thank our ever-so-talented and dedicated Director, Alison Lawrence. She has worked tirelessly to, once again, make this an entertaining and magical night. I also want to thank our Music Director, Jeff Whicker, who you'll see bring out the very best in our singers; Choreographer, Lisa Pfuhl, who designed the movements and sequences you'll see our Divas perform across the stage; Production Manager and Technical Director, Dennis Berfield, who is truly the wizard behind tonight's production magic; and Stage Manager, Elaine Petrone, without whom there would be no entrances and exits; and our dedicated village of volunteers.

Our tireless staff at RLT includes Executive Producer Michele Weathers and Development Manager Kiran Baucom, who each year provide guidance and expertise, all while ensuring other wheels keep turning at RLT. Many thanks to the RLT Board of Directors and the Advisory Board, who selflessly contribute their time keeping RLT the shining star of theatre here in Raleigh.

A very special thank you to *Divas!* Committee Members Judy Dove, Marquita Robertson and Michael Dunavan, who have been working weekly since early December to make tonight a financial success. Every dollar that you spend tonight acknowledges their hard work.

Lastly, a standing ovation to our 2025 Divas who have given of their time, their talent, and their fundraising skills to us tonight. Each and every one of you is a big winner!

Break a leg tonight, Divas! And to you, our special guests, please be generous tonight!

Best,

Suzanne Ruggles

Divas! Committee Chair

History of Divas!

In 2004, the idea for a fundraiser for RLT originated from a small group of volunteers that wanted to help Raleigh Little Theatre raise funds for the new year. Knowing that actors are often in competition for roles, they came up with the idea to start a fake fight between a group of actors and spin this drama into a night of glitz, glamor, and celebration of all-things RLT.

The volunteers realized that by providing their own costumes, performing without a set, and using basic lighting and minimal rehearsals, the money from ticket sales for the evening would all be profit for RLT. At the end of an evening of celebration and performance, the audience could vote to crown the winning Diva of the night. One original Diva took it a step further: "Why not let the audience vote with their dollars?" That idea was the final touch - *Divas!* as we now know it was born.

Since 2004, *Divas!* has been raising money for the theatre every year with the exception of 2009, 2011, and 2014, making 2025 the 19th anniversary. In that time, *Divas!* has raised over \$850,000 for RLT programs, including a record-breaking \$100,000 year in 2021, making it the most successful fundraiser ever at RLT!

Past Divas

2004 Rebecca Johnston

2005 Yolanda Rabun

2006 Staci Sabarsky

2007 Katherine Anderson & Don Smith

2008 Martie Todd Sirois

2010 Katie Hennenlotter

2012 Greg Moore & Kevin O'Barr

2013 M. Dennis Poole

2016 Rebecca Johnston

2017 Jess Barbour

2018 Emily Spain

2019 Dee Penven-Crew

2020 Emily Steinhoff James

2021 Alec Donaldson

2022 Tina Morris-Anderson

2023 Benaiah Adesoji

2024 Aya Wallace

Sponsors

Title Sponsor

Coastal Credit Union

Diamond Sponsors

**John, Amy & Leah Bason
Alec & Georgia Donaldson
Rebecca Johnston
Dee Penven-Crew - 2019 Diva
David & Elaine Petrone
Victoria Wheeler
Williams Mullen
Steve & Lisa Zaytoun**

Gold Sponsors

**Cindy & Ken Denison
Natasha Gore & D.A. Oldis
Leslie Ann Jackson & Chris Locascio
Kopp Management
Leland Little Auctions
Medlin-Davis Cleaners
Poyner Spruill LLP
Debbie & Larry Robbins
Pamela Mason Swanstrom**

Silver Sponsors

**Baker Roofing Company
Dawson Consulting
Judy & Kent Dove
Rudra Dutta & Amrapali Bose
Gangoy Consulting Group
Chris Inhulsen
Betsy & Warren Ludwig
MadebyMarsi**

**Thomas Mauney
Andrea Nixon & Brent
Friedenberg
Charles & Emily Phaneuf
Yolanda Rabun
Suzanne Ruggles &
Rod Abernathy**



The more we all give, the more the community gives back.

At the Coastal Credit Union Foundation, we're proud of the fact that we've provided more than \$3 million in community grants. If you look around at the organizations doing great things for the people in this area, it's clear it's the best investment we've made.

Coastal is proud to support the Raleigh Little Theatre in their production of *Divas!*



bankbetter.org

Letter from the Director

It is always a challenging and exciting time when the new crop of RLT Divas starts rehearsals. This year, the theme I chose is \$how\$toppers! When this year's Divas auditioned, I didn't know any of the people I cast, but they seemed like a group that could take on the challenge of not only singing their hearts out but also raising some BIG bucks for RLT. They are all "Show Stoppers," as you will see tonight.



We have nine (9) Divas this year, and here are some interesting numbers about them:

- Two (2) performed in their first RLT show this past December in *Cinderella*
- Two (2) took RLT's Auditioning for Musical Theatre class earlier this year
- Two (2) have very recently moved to NC from other states
- Six (6) have never done a show at all before this
- One (1) has worked tech here at RLT for eight (8) years
- None (0) have ever been a Dival!

I want to thank all of the Divas for being so "game" in committing their time, their minds, their bodies and souls to rehearsals, the added task of fundraising, and creating a very entertaining show for you tonight, so that you can see the importance of theatre in our community. Not only for the ART that it brings to our community, but the teaching of culture and history, literature and communication, social skills and self-confidence... skills that are the necessities of living a long and fulfilling life.

The Divas you see tonight have a passion for the arts and all it brings to our lives, our towns, our states and our world. This year, we are very excited to have a world-famous performer, a huge supporter of the arts and community theatre, and a RLT alumnus to join us as our Master of Ceremonies – Clay Aiken.

Please donate generously and often tonight to support the work of these artists and all who work and play at Raleigh Little Theatre. Help us get to our 100-year anniversary in 2036! ENJOY!...and DONATE!

Alison Lawrence

Director & Writer (19 years of DIVAS and proud three-time loser)

Divas! 2025 - Song List

ACT 1

Money, Money (from <i>Cabaret</i>)	<i>Divas! 2025 Company</i>
Bring On the Men (from <i>Jekyll & Hyde</i>)	DaNiesha Carr
The Thrill of First Love (from <i>Falsettos</i>)	Devin Lackey & River Mann
Being Alive (from <i>Company</i>)	Ian Do
Independently Owned (from <i>Shucked</i>)	Saphfire Cook
Take Me or Leave Me (from <i>Rent</i>)	Autumn Clark & Arushi Majumdar
I, Who Have Nothing (from <i>Smokey Joe's Café</i>)	Taneka Craig
Another Round (from <i>Bright Star</i>)	Dustin Bowles & DaNiesha Carr

Intermission

THE SILENT AUCTION WILL CLOSE AT THE END OF INTERMISSION.
BID GENEROUSLY AND BID OFTEN!

ACT 2

Pure Imagination (from <i>Charlie & the Chocolate Factory</i>)	Dustin Bowles
Memory (from <i>Cats</i>)	Autumn Clark
This Is the Moment (from <i>Jekyll & Hyde</i>)	Devin Lackey
What You Don't Know About Women (from <i>City of Angels</i>)	DaNiesha Carr & Saphfire Cook
I'm Breaking Down (from <i>Falsettos</i>)	Arushi Majumdar
My Green Light (from <i>The Great Gatsby</i>)	Ian Do & Taneka Craig
Gethsemane (I Only Want to Say) (from <i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i>)	River Mann
Great Adventure (from <i>Kimberly Akimbo</i>) with Ukulele Accompaniment by	<i>Divas! 2025 Company</i> Ian Do
I Got Love (from <i>Purlie</i>)	Aya Wallace, 2024 Diva

Crowning of RLT's 2025 Diva!

Cast Biographies

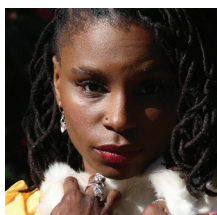


ARUSHI AJUMDAR is excited to make her RLT debut with this year's *Divas!* Performing has been an integral part of her life since elementary school, from musicals and music lessons to a cappella at UNC Chapel Hill. Although her theatre credits are limited, she is excited to share the stage with all these wonderful Divas, and share her love of the stage with you!



DUSTIN BOWLES has been volunteering at Raleigh Little Theatre since 2018 and it has become his second home. Since stepping through the shop door for the first time roughly 7 years ago, he has built and painted many set pieces; he has been a part of countless deck, sound, and lighting crews; he has provided lighting and sound design assistance for multiple shows; and this past December he was cast in his very first on-stage role as Ensemble in *Cinderella 40*. While at RLT, he has also received two volunteer awards

including the Ed Bodell Rookie of the Year Award and most recently the Glenn Amos Miller Technical Service Award. He is now stepping from behind the spotlight to center stage and is competing to help raise as much money as possible for the theatre that is so near and dear to him. He hopes that you will consider donating or becoming a sponsor to support him and the theatre that he loves!



DANIESHA CARR is thrilled to make her Raleigh Little Theatre debut! This Diva has dazzled audiences nationwide, leaving a trail of standing ovations. Her resumé sparkles with leading roles and unforgettable performances, each more fabulous than the last. With a passion for storytelling, she brings her experience and energy to this new stage, hoping to make RLT her creative home. She's grateful for the opportunity and, in true Diva fashion, offers a warm "You're welcome!"—before the show even begins.



AUTUMN CLARK is a soon-to-be graduate of Meredith College with a degree in Theatre and a concentration in Musical Theatre. She's seen shows at Raleigh Little Theatre, but she hasn't worked with them until now. In a time of budget changes and spending wisely, Autumn would love for you to contribute some of your spending to RLT. Aside from being a fundraiser, she is also a cat mom, a girlfriend, a daughter, and a performer of flair. Thank you to all and enjoy the show!



SAPPHIRE COOK is a rare gem (wink) that is making her stage debut as a 2025 RLT Diva! She started off working behind the scenes, ripping down lumber in the scene shop and sewing hook and eyes onto costumes. She has taken numerous classes under the wise tutelage of various RLT instructors and finally gained the confidence to audition for her first show, *Divas!* She's received so much encouragement from everyone she's interacted with, and she wants that experience to be open to any and all that walk

through RLT's doors. Your donation, no matter how big or small, will go toward programs that can help someone gain the confidence to take the stage. Thanks for your donation and enjoy the show!



TANEKA CRAIG is new to theater and to Raleigh Little Theatre, and to her, it is a place where she gets to explore storytelling in a way she never has before, and boy has it been a BLAST! Although she is a late bloomer, she is no stranger to the stage or to connecting with people through music. RLT is helping her cultivate NEW ways to connect to audiences AND build community with fellow artists. Being new to theater can be daunting, but RLT makes it feel like home—a place where passion and dedication bring people together. Every rehearsal, every performance, and every shared moment with fellow cast and crew members builds a sense of belonging, making RLT a significant part of her personal and artistic journey. Participating in *Divas! 2025* is her way of giving back to a community that has given the world so much. She invites you to join her in supporting RLT by donating in her name Taneka “Divine” for *Divas! 2025*.



IAN DO plays a range of different instruments, although he wouldn't say he's very good at any. Growing up, he was a huge fan of Disney musicals but he didn't accept his fate of being a theater kid until recently. He previously lived in California his whole life and wanted to try being somewhere new. So he took a job here in Raleigh and has really loved the city, especially after finding Raleigh Little Theatre. He's very excited that his first theater performance experience will be here at RLT among many talented people. His first goal is to raise \$1000 so please help reach that any way you can. Thank you!



DEVIN LACKEY is thrilled to be a part of this year's *Divas!* Devin has performed with multiple theaters in the Triangle, but this is his first production with Raleigh Little Theatre! Devin says that he is thankful for the theater community in the Triangle and hopes to be a contributor to its growth and success. Devin would also like to thank his parents, his partner Olivia, his brothers Drew and Christian, and the rest of his family for all of their support!



RIVER MANN is an emerging actor and performer from the Raleigh area. He is extremely passionate about theatre and the arts. Raleigh Little Theatre is very important to him - his connection to RLT includes portraying Prince Charming I in RLT's 40th production of *Cinderella* in 2024, as well as volunteering as a teaching assistant in one of the youth classes here. He has also appeared in other local productions such as Meredith College's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, as Claudio, and will be appearing in the upcoming production of *Parade* at NRACT. He is very excited to be part of *Divas!* this year, and is ever so grateful for our amazing director, Alison Lawrence, and everyone else involved.

Production Team Biographies

ALISON LAWRENCE (Director) is an award winning actress, director and voice teacher with over 30 years of experience. She lives in Raleigh with her four-legged family. She maintains a successful private Voice studio, The Singer's Art, here in Raleigh as well as teaching private voice lessons through The Temple Theatre in Sanford. Ms. Lawrence received her B. A. degree in Voice performance. Ms. Lawrence has been awarded 4 Cantey performance awards from Raleigh Little Theatre as well as being honored to receive the Haskell Fitz-Simons Distinguished Performer Award. She has also been the recipient of numerous FORSCOM Festival (Military Performance Awards) awards for her work as a performer, director and musical director while working on Ft. Bragg. Ms. Lawrence also had the honor of joining Clay Aiken's Joyful Noise Tour in 2005 as Beverly Leford and the community theatre liaison. She located and recruited community theatre actor/singers to perform as the chorus in the show in the 32 cities that were visited on the tour. Most recently Ms. Lawrence was seen on stage as Charity person/Laundress in *A Christmas Carol* at Temple Theatre in Sanford, Dr. Eve in NRACT's production of *Sordid Lives*, and as Erronius in *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum*. Ms. Lawrence was seen at PlayMaker's Repertory Theatre: Ensemble in *She Loves Me*, at RLT; Mother Superior in *Sister Act*, Gladys in *Memphis*, Stepmama in *Cinderella* (4 years), Director of 19 years of DIVAS! Fundraisers (and a three-time DIVAS! loser), Theatre in the Park as Florence Foster Jenkins in *Glorious: The True Story of Florence Foster Jenkins*, Judy Steinburg in *It Shoulda Been You*, NC State Theatrefest; Gerde in *The Hollow*, Actors Comedy Lab; Sister Acacios in *The Divine Sister*, NRACT with Actors Comedy Lab; *Love, Loss and What I Wore*. Justice Theatre Project; as Big Edie in *Grey Gardens*, and Emma Goldman in *Ragtime*. You can contact her through email: thesingersart@att.net or Facebook: The Singer's Art Vocal Studio. Adopt a pet! It will change you for GOOD.

JEFF WHICKER (Music Director) has served as a singer, pianist, and music director for a number of schools, churches, and community groups since moving to the Triangle in 1986. He is currently the accompanist for the Triangle Jewish Chorale, the Durham Children's Choir, and the Durham School of the Arts. He is also music director at Emerywood Baptist Church in High Point. For the last two years, he has studied voice with Dr. Daniel Collins of the UNC voice faculty, and accompanies 12 students there for their voice lessons. He received his BM and MM degrees in Music Education from UNC-G and taught chorus in the public school system for 16 years before leaving to concentrate on church music. He also graduated from the UNC Law School and practiced law for 7 years before returning to his first love, music. Thanks to Alison and RLT for the opportunity to work with *Divas!* for the second year in a row.

LISA PFUHL (Choreographer) is thrilled to join the production team for *Divas!* 2025. Most recently she was seen in Raleigh Little Theatre's *Something Rotten* as a dancer, Theater in the Park's *A Christmas Carol*, Cary Players' *Brigadoon*, and NRACT's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. She is excited to put her choreographer hat back on to create some group numbers for *Divas!*

ALI WOOD (Lighting Designer/RLT's Assistant Technical Director) could be found both on-stage and backstage while she was growing up. From skits her grandfather wrote for church to performing at the local community theatre, Ali was always involved. However, during her college years, she found lighting and swapped over to the dark side. After graduating, Ali worked as an Entertainment Stage Technician for Walt Disney World and now she continues her career as the Assistant Technical Director here at Raleigh Little Theatre where she hopes to continue spreading the love and joy of theatre with everyone she meets.

TODD HOUSEKNECHT (Sound Designer) has been very active in community theatre in the Raleigh area for 17 years, providing set construction, technical direction, and sound design/engineering assistance for organizations that include Raleigh Little Theatre, Cary Players, NRACT, Forest Moon, and others. Highlights include *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Hairspray*, *Legally Blonde*, *Spring Awakening*, *Cinderella*, *Spamalot*, *Hedwig*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Avenue Q*, *Sister Act*, and many many others. He hopes you enjoy the show!

ELAINE PETRONE (Stage Manager) appreciates all the opportunities that Raleigh Little Theatre has given her family to explore many roles backstage and on stage since her first backstage night in 2004. She is happy to Stage Manage *Divas!* again this year as her way to give back. Love and thanks to David and Alyssa for their patience while I go out and play.

DEE PENVEN-CREW (Production Liaison and 2019 Diva) has been involved in one way or another with RLT since 1979 when she was hired as the Secretary/Box Office Assistant. Serving this theatre for 10 years in that role, Dee also pursued volunteer opportunities with building costumes and props, assisting actors with quick changes during productions, selling concessions, house managing, ushering, heading the bi-annual Costume Sale (4 times – more than doubling previous revenues), assisting the director, as well as serving on the Board of Directors for several years after leaving her employment here. Dee also competed in *Divas!* in 2015 and missed the crown by \$120. She also became a well known actress in the area. Some of her favorite musical roles at RLT include Reno Sweeney (*Anything Goes*), Louisa (*Nine*), Marty Maraschino (*Grease*), Sally (*Me & My Girl*). TIP faves are Sheila (*Hair*) and Roxie Hart (*Chicago*). Some of her non-musical RLT faves are Suzette (*Don't Dress for Dinner* – PEP) and Liz Imbrie (*Philadelphia Story* – RLT), and twice playing multiple roles, but different sets (*The Dining Room* – RLT/PEP). She's a charter member, CEO and Chief Costume Designer of The Awesomettes (like us on Facebook). But Dee's lifetime favorite roles are as wife to Chris, Mom to Caitlin and McCale, and Grandee to Caroline (5), Emmett (5), Ollie (3) and Olivia (1).

Production Team Biographies

CLAY AIKEN (Master of Ceremonies) is one of Raleigh Little Theatre's most notable alumni. He first graced the RLT stage in the annual production of *Cinderella* in 1994 and again in '95 and '96. In 2002, America fell in love with Clay's extraordinary talent and undeniable charisma on the second season of Fox's *American Idol*. His journey on the show became a cultural phenomenon, drawing nearly 40 million viewers for the finale – the highest rated episode of live, regularly-scheduled television of the 21st Century.

Clay's music career ignited like a wildfire. In the first seven years of his career he racked up a combined 6 million in record sales, a number only amplified by tens of millions more who tuned in to his performances on tours and TV and solidified his status as a beloved artist and a national treasure.

Beyond his recording accomplishments, Clay has captivated audiences on stages across America. He has headlined 12 national tours and performed on some of the biggest and most prestigious stages in the world. In 2005, his Joyful Noise Tour also advocated for Community theatres throughout the nation by inviting members of a community theatre in the 30 something cities where the shows were, to participate in the show by providing 12 actors to be the ensemble members. The audiences were encouraged to support community theatre because of the inclusivity, creative encouragement and "safe place" they provide. Raleigh Little Theatre participated in shows in Charlotte and Raleigh.

Clay has also excelled beyond the pop music world. His Broadway debut in 2008 in Monty Python's *Spamalot* earned rave reviews. He later returned to Broadway in 2018 for the co-headlining show *Ruben & Clay's First Annual Christmas Carol Family Fun Pageant Spectacular Reunion Show*.

Beyond his entertaining career, Clay has remained deeply committed to giving back and has been a tireless advocate for children with disabilities. In 2003, he built upon his pre-Idol experience as an elementary special education teacher by co-founding the National Inclusion Project to help advocate and provide for the inclusion of children with disabilities. As a UNICEF ambassador, Clay dedicated ten years to improving the lives of children worldwide. To advocate for child protection and access to education around the world, he traveled to disaster zones and warzones in Afghanistan, Somalia, Indonesia, Mexico, Uganda, and Kenya.

Clay has also ventured into the world of politics, running unsuccessfully for a Congressional seat in the North Carolina House of Representatives in 2014 and again as a U.S. House seat in 2022.



Passionate
advocates for
our **clients** and
communities.

Poyner Spruill ^{LLP}

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

www.poynerspruill.com

© Poyner Spruill LLP 2025. All rights reserved.

RALEIGH | CHARLOTTE | ROCKY MOUNT | SOUTHERN PINES

Finding **yes**® for our communities

Williams Mullen proudly supports
the Raleigh Little Theatre's *Divas!*
Through steadfast action, meaningful
connection and critical resources, we're
committed to helping you turn aspirations
into achievements.

WILLIAMS MULLEN > findingyes®

Raleigh Little Theatre

Staff Biographies

MICHELE WEATHERS (Executive Producer) (she/her/hers) Previously: Executive Director and Senior Advisor at Carolina Ballet (2017–2023), Managing Director at PlayMakers Repertory Company (2014–2016), Managing Director at Barrington Stage Company (Pittsfield, MA) and North Carolina Theatre (1991–2004). NY credits include: *In the Heights*, *High Fidelity*, *Orson's Shadow*, and *Red Light Winter*. In 2019, she was recognized with TBJ's Women in Business Leadership Award and, in 2024, she was a member of the inaugural group of award winners for Raleigh Magazine's Impact 50. DEI training: artEquity and Emerging Equity. Michele is a member of the League of Professional Theatre Women and is a Theatre grant panelist for the NEA. Her daughter, Peyton Rose, is a senior at Enloe High School. Meredith College grad. She is incredibly proud of RLT's place in this community.

DENNIS R. BERFIELD (Production Manager/Technical Director) is from South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. He received degrees in Theater and Communication Studies at the Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Scenic Design and Technology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dennis has worked at various regional and off-Broadway theaters as a Scenic Artist, Carpenter, Master Carpenter, Scenic Designer, Assistant Technical Director, and Scenic Coordinator. After working professionally for a number of years, Dennis became an adjunct professor at Millikin University in Decatur, IL, and went on to become the Technical Director at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania.

TERRA HODGE (Director of Education) (she/her) is the Director of Education at Raleigh Little Theatre. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre Education from North Carolina Central University and her Master of Arts degree in Media Arts from Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus. Prior to joining RLT, Terra was the Theatre Arts teacher at Culbreth Middle School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She was named the 2017–2018 Culbreth Teacher of the Year and was named an Honor Teacher for Chapel Hill – Carrboro City Schools. Terra has worked as a teaching artist, actor, and director with many local theatre companies. She is the director of Agape Theatre Project's production of *Crowns* that was featured at the 2024 International Black Theatre Festival in Winston Salem, NC.

JENNY MITCHELL (Costume Shop Manager) is the Costume Shop Manager here at Raleigh Little Theatre. She is thankful to have such a dedicated group of volunteers and co-workers to work with on this, and every, production. Her most recent credits include: *Something Rotten!*, *Kinky Boots*, *Trouble in Mind*, *Curtains*, and *Junie B. Jones Is Not A Crook*.

MEGAN FARRELL (Marketing Manager) joined the Raleigh Little Theatre team in August 2019. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing from North Carolina State University. Megan grew up a theater kid and loves getting to "play" on the admin side of the performing arts now as an adult. When she's not at the theatre, Megan is likely cheering on the Dodgers, watching horror movies, or going on adventures with her tiny best friend Emmie.

ALI WOOD (Assistant Technical Director) could be found both on-stage and backstage while she was growing up. From skits her grandfather wrote for church to performing at the local community theatre, Ali was always involved. However, during her college years, she found lighting and swapped over to the dark side. After graduating, Ali worked as an Entertainment Stage Technician for Walt Disney World and now she continues her career as the Assistant Technical Director here at Raleigh Little Theatre where she hopes to continue spreading the love and joy of theatre with everyone she meets.

DENISE SCHUMAKER (Associate Costume Shop Manager) first worked with Raleigh Little Theatre in 1994 as a volunteer on costumes for *Oliver!* Since then, she has designed, built, organized, and supervised costumes, props and sets for local theatre, dance, and opera, plus off-Broadway, tours, film, and television. In addition to RLT, you may have seen her work on stage at North Carolina Theatre, North Carolina Opera, Theatre in the Park, Theatre Raleigh, Peace University, NCSU, Duke University, Barton College, Honest Pint Theatre Company, RedBird Theater Company, Justice Theatre Project, or elsewhere. She was honored with an Emmy® nomination in 2010.

KIRAN BAUCOM (Development Manager) was born and raised in Durham and is so happy to be back home working in the Triangle's thriving arts scene. She received a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from Yale University, where she held various roles in campus theatre, film, comedy, and performance poetry spaces. As Development Manager, Kiran draws on her varied experiences in arts administration, grant management, and nonprofit fundraising. She looks forward to every opportunity to support the work of her brilliant coworkers and form ever-deeper connections with the entire RLT community.

Raleigh Little Theatre

Staff Biographies

CANDACE SPENCER (Education Programs Specialist) is an accomplished African American theatre professional passionate about nurturing young artists. She holds a BA in Theatre from Greensboro College and an MFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Louisville. Candace has expanded her artistic perspective through a six-month study abroad program in London, where she explored theatre and dance. While pursuing her MFA, Candace gained four years of experience teaching introductory acting classes to undergraduates, and she developed on-camera acting skills during her undergraduate studies. She is skilled in drama instruction, on-stage and on-camera acting, and stage directing. Her dedication to youth development is not only evident in her teaching experience, but also in her work with young artists at a summer camp in Los Angeles, California. Candace's diverse training, experience, and love for theatre make her an invaluable asset to the RLT Education team.

EMMA CLEMENTS (Jack Hall Scholar) is a local director and producer. They are very excited to be joining the RLT team for the 2024-2025 season as the Jack Hall Scholar! They recently graduated from UNC-CH, where they held several student leadership and production roles, including Executive Director of Production for Pauper Players' 2022-2023 season. Emma also serves as the Artistic Director for Boy With Box Theatre Company, a new small-budget theatre company in Chapel Hill.

MAGGIE GINA (Administrative Intern) is currently a sophomore at NC State majoring in Business Administration with a double minor in arts entrepreneurship and music performance. Since she first picked up a trumpet at age 9, she was immediately drawn to a world of music and creativity, helping her realize she needed the arts to be forever a part of her life! Maggie is very excited to be a part of RLT and is grateful for the chance to gain real-world experience in marketing/administration and see first hand what it means to bring a performance to life. When not in the theater, Maggie can usually be found spending time with friends and family, studying, or in and out of practice rooms.

Raleigh Little Theatre Staff

Executive Producer	Michele Weathers
Production Manager/ Technical Director	Dennis R. Berfield
Director of Education	Terra Hodge
Costume Shop Manager/ Resident Costume Designer	Jenny Mitchell
Development Manager	Kiran Baucom
Marketing Manager	Megan Farrell
Assistant Technical Director	Ali Wood
Associate Costume Shop Manager	Denise Schumaker
Education Programs Specialist	Candace Spencer
Box Office Associates	Jackson Griffin Joel Schaer Morgan Harris Nic Johnson
Temp Finance Associate	Laurel Whitten
Jack Hall Scholar	Emma Clements
Administrative Intern	Maggie Gina

2024-25 Board of Directors

Natasha Gore (President)
Steve Epstein (Vice President)
Clifton M. Cates III (Treasurer)
Rudra Dutta (Secretary)
Chanda Branch
Gene Cordon
Judy M. Dove
Barbette Hunter
Leslie Ann Jackson
Safiyah Jackson
Betsy Ludwig
Amelia Lumpkin
Carol Machuca
Marquita Robertson
Suzanne Ruggles
Phillip Bernard Smith
Victoria Wheeler
Michael Dunavan (Volunteer Rep)
Caitlin Poe (Board Attorney)

2024-25 Advisory Board

Chris Brown	Gail Smith
Bud Coggins	Scott Sutton
Kristin Cooper	Cantey Tanner
Shelley Crisp	Larry Wilson
Georgia Donaldson	Smedes York
Keith Kapp	Steve Zaytoun
Mike McGee	

Congratulations to **Raleigh
Little Theatre** for its
contributions and dedication
to the arts in our community.



*Good luck to all of this
year's Divas
from
The Swanstrom Family*



RALEIGH
LITTLE
THEATRE



*In loving memory of Haskell Fitz-Simons.
You will always be greatly missed.
- Steve and Lisa Zaytoun*



**RALEIGH
LITTLE
THEATRE**

The 2025-2026 Season

Hadestown: Teen Edition

July 25 - August 10, 2025

Mad Libs® Live!

September 12 - 18, 2025

Witch

October 24 - November 9, 2025

Cinderella

December 5 - 21, 2025

Moonlight and Magnolias

February 6 - 22, 2026

1776

March 27 - April 19, 2026

The Hobbit

May 2 - 10, 2026

School of Rock

June 5 - 28, 2026

Subscriptions on sale now!

RaleighLittleTheatre.org





RALEIGH
LITTLE
THEATRE

TICKETS: 919-821-3111
RaleighLittleTheatre.org



@RLT1936