

LEGALLY BLONDE



NEAR WEST THEATRE PRESENTS

LEGALLY BLONDE

"SEE DREAMS REALLY DO COME TRUE, YOU NEVER HAVE TO COMPROMISE."

JULY 19 - AUGUST 4

PERFORMANCES: JULY 19, 20, 26, 27, 28 & AUG. 2, 3, & 4

TEEN SUMMER MAINSTAGE PRODUCTION

RUNTIME: 2 HOURS AND 25 MINUTES , 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION

LEGALLY BLONDE IS RATED PG-13 FOR MATURE THEMES, LANGUAGE, AND SUGGESTIVE SITUATIONS.

BOOK BY HEATHER HACH

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY LAURENCE O'KEEFE AND NELL BENJAMIN

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY AMANDA BROWN AND
THE METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER MOTION PICTURE

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION BY HAL LUFTIG, FOX THEATRICALS, DORI BERINSTEIN, JAMES L. NEDERLANDER, INDEPENDENT PRESENTERS NETWORK, ROY FURMAN, AMANDA LIPITZ, BROADWAY ASIA, BARBARA WHITMAN, FWPM GROUP, HENDEL/WIESENFELD, GOLDBERG/BINDER, STERN/MEYER, LANE/COMLEY, BARTNER-JENKINS/NOCCIOLO AND WARREN TREPP; PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION WITH MGM ONSTAGE, DARCIE DENKERT AND DEAN STOLBER.

LEGALLY BLONDE

IS PRESENTED THROUGH SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL (MTI).
ALL AUTHORIZED PERFORMANCE MATERIALS ARE ALSO SUPPLIED BY MTI.

Photographing, videotaping or recording audio or images of this production, including by camera, cell phone, or other device, is strictly prohibited.

THE TEAM

KRISTY CRUZ
DIRECTOR

HEIDI HERCZEG
MUSICAL DIRECTOR

TYREE FRANKLIN
STAGE MANAGER

JAILYN HARRIS
CHOREOGRAPHER

ROB WACHALA
LIGHTING DESIGNER

CAMERON MICHALAK
SCENIC DESIGNER

VENCHISE PHILLIPS
PROPS MASTER

VANESSA COOK
COSTUME DESIGNER

PERREN HEDDERSON
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

BELLA BREHM
SOUND DESIGNER

EMILY HEHNEN
ASST. TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

MICHAEL STEIN
PRODUCTIONS & RENTALS MANAGER

ELISA GAUNTNER
ASST. CHOREOGRAPHER

EMILY FERRER
SOUND TECH

JEN HITMAR-SHANKLAND
CHARGE SCENIC ARTIST

JULIA FISHER
INTIMACY COORDINATOR

JAMES ROMEO
ASSOCIATE SOUND DESIGNER

DANA & EMMA SUMPTER
WARDROBE SUPERVISORS



THE TEAM

SUMMER TECH WORKSHOP

JUDAH BISHEIMER
KARYS BISHEIMER
GREY OLSON
RED BOOSE

STAGE CREW

JASMINE BANES
JUDAH BISHEIMER
KARYS BISHEIMER
DERRICK CHAPMAN
KATE COLEMAN
KISHAWNA GREEN
NICK MAISTROS
ORION MCGUINNESS
MUIREANN REPENNING
YAMINI SRIDHAR

SPECIAL THANKS

AARON PHILLIPS
CPH
MICHAEL SNIDER
TRINIDAD SNIDER
JENNIFER BUTLER & WESTLAKE HIGH SCHOOL

BREAK-A-LEGS

BREAK A LEG, BELLA BEAR! LOVE MOM, DAD AND XAVI

**Parker - You make us proud every single day. We love you.
love, Mom, Dad, Bailey, Delaney & Ollie**

LETTER FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Friends, Family, and Community!

Welcome back to Near West Theatre! Our 2023-2024 season was an incredible time for us as an organization. From Production to Programming, Near West Theatre continues to grow, thrive, and challenge ourselves and others artistically.

Last year, our programming made a significant impact as we found a home in several schools within the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). Our teaching artists worked tirelessly to provide a fun and educational theatre arts experience, helping students gain and effectively apply skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, and develop and maintain positive relationships. We staged a production of *Jungle Book* with our partners at Orchard Stem and worked with Special Education at Joseph Gallagher, to name a few. Our RISE! after-school program had two successful semesters and ended its spring session with a Black Box production of *Disney's Frozen Jr.*, which sold out houses every night!

If you came to see a main-stage production in 2023-2024, I guarantee you left wanting more. We had you stomping and clapping competition style, jitterbugging to the Emerald City, dreaming on the streets of Brooklyn, and finally, building a prom for everyone! Each show was a unique experience, challenging us to love fiercely and to stay true to one another.

In our 47th season, we ask you to look at *What Lies Beneath*! This year's shows challenge us to take a deeper look at a person, a community, our relationships, and how one person's actions can change the world around them. There is undoubtedly something for everyone, and we encourage you to get your tickets now!

It has been five years since I stepped into the role of Artistic Director, and I am still honored and proud to serve in that capacity. We have just completed our Strategic Planning for Near West Theatre and cannot wait to activate it with all of you. There is so much opportunity for you, our friends, families, and community to get involved and help set us on the path to celebrating Near West Theatre's 50th birthday!

So, hold on tight, my friends, because the best is yet to come! We are thrilled to welcome you to our 47th season, and we can't wait to see you at the theater!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Trinidad", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Trinidad Snider | NWT Artistic Director

THE CAST

ELLE WOODS	SUMMER HUSSAIN
EMMETT FORREST	RON HUBBARD
PAULETTE	SOPHIE HULL
PROFESSOR CALLAHAN	COLIN SNIDER
WARNER HUNTINGTON III	OWEN GREENE
VIVIENNE KENSINGTON	CHELSEA BOYLES
BROOKE WYNDAM.....	MADDIE BERBEC
SERENA	BROOKE PETERSON
PILAR	AMAYA MOORE
MARGOT	MEGHAN KRIEGER
ENID HOOPES.....	AVERY WRENTMORE
KYLE B. O'BOYLE	BRIAN CURRIE
KATE	MICHAELA SNIDER
GRANDMASTER CHAD	JOSUE HERNANDEZ
AARON SCHULTZ	ISAAC COOK
SUNDEEP PADAMADAN	KAREEM MCHAOURAB

ENSEMBLE.....	MARTIN BALA, JAIDYN BISHEIMER, ANNA BOHRER, EVANGELINA CALDERON, BRYCE COOK, ISAAC COOK, ELIZABETH CURTIS, MADELINE CURTIS, PARKER GOOD, CHLOE HAZELWOOD, ADAM KENNEDY, MICHAYLA KING, GABRIELLE LYKES, KAREEM MCHAOURAB, KRYSTINA MCMILLON, OLIVIA MOORE, PEYTON MURRY, KAI PENNINGTON, ISABELLA RAMIREZ, GWYNETH REES, D'ARYL SNEAD, MIKEY SZABO, ESTHER TAN, KAIYU THACH, MACK VAN LIER, ISAIAH YOUNG, JULIA ZIEL
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SCENES & MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

SCENE 1

OMIGOD YOU GUYS ELLE, SERENA, MARGOT, PILAR, AND ENSEMBLE

SCENE 2

SERIOUS..... ELLE AND WARNER

SCENE 3

DAUGHTER OF DELTA NU SERENA, MARGOT, PILAR, AND ENSEMBLE

SCENE 4

WHAT YOU WANT (PART 1) ELLE, SERENA, MARGOT, PILAR, KATE, ELLE'S DAD,
ELLE'S MOM, GRANDMASTER CHAD, AND ENSEMBLE

WHAT YOU WANT (PART 2) ELLE, ENSEMBLE

THE HARVARD VARIATIONS EMMETT, AARON, ENID, PADAMADAN,
AND HARVARD STUDENTS

SCENE 5

BLOOD IN THE WATER CALLAHAN AND ENSEMBLE

SCENE 6

POSITIVE..... ELLE, SERENA, MARGOT, PILAR, AND GREEK CHORUS

SCENE 7

IRELAND PAULETTE

IRELAND REPRISE PAULETTE

SCENE 8

SERIOUS REPRISE..... ELLE AND WARNER

CHIP ON MY SHOULDER..... ELLE, EMMETT, GREEK CHORUS, AND ENSEMBLE

SCENE 9

SO MUCH BETTER..... ELLE, GREEK CHORUS, AND ENSEMBLE

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

WHIPPED INTO SHAPE BROOKE, CALLAHAN, AND ENSEMBLE

DELTA NU NU NU BROOKE AND ELLE

SCENE 2

TAKE IT LIKE A MAN..... ELLE, EMMETT, AND SALESPeOPLE

SCENE 3

BEND AND SNAP ELLE, PAULETTE, SERENA, MARGOT, PILAR,
BEND AND SNAP GUYS, AND SALON FOLKS

SCENE 4

GAY OR EUROPEAN..... ELLE, CALLAHAN, EMMETT, BROOKE, VIVIENNE,
WARNER, ENID, JUDGE, NIKOS, CARLOS, AND ENSEMBLE

SCENE 5

LEGALLY BLONDE ELLE AND EMMETT

SCENE 6

LEGALLY BLONDE REMIX..... VIVIENNE, ELLE, ENID, BROOKE, MR. WOODS,
MRS. WOODS, AND ENSEMBLE

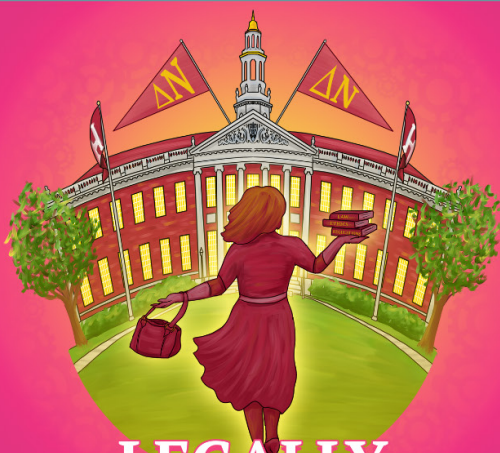
SCENE 7

SCENE OF THE CRIME..... ELLE, JUDGE, SERENA, MARGOT, PILAR, AND ENSEMBLE

FIND MY WAY/FINALE ELLE, PAULETTE, EMMETT, AND ENSEMBLE



OUR 2024-2025 SEASON



LEGALLY BLONDE

JULY 2024



SCROOGE

NOVEMBER 2024



LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

FEBRUARY 2025



Beautiful The Carole King Musical

APRIL 2025

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

It never ceases to amaze me what can be achieved when a group of people decide to set their minds to something.

More so, it never ceases to inspire and move me when a group of teens realize the power they have within themselves to change their circumstances.

This summer has been a whirlwind putting up such a massive undertaking as *Legally Blonde*. This show has big production numbers, challenging vocals, and characters whose stories are not always easy to tell. There is tons of comedy and even more heart to dig into and discover. It is a show that benefits from an abundance of time: to learn, to explore, to finesse; the kind of time that unfortunately has not been a luxury of ours these last 8 weeks.

Despite that, the 41 teens you see onstage never stopped working to truly bring this story to life. They chose to not let anything stand in their way, to not let anyone tell them they're not capable of greatness, and they continue to make that choice every time they tell this story.

Legally Blonde is the journey of a girl not truly seen by the world around her. She is immediately dismissed by some, seen as a joke to others, and underestimated at every turn.

Yet she does not let that stop her from pursuing her greatness. She does not let that diminish the light she brings to the world.

I would like to think that there's a little bit of Elle Woods in all of us. She is not dumb or even necessarily naïve. Elle simply chooses to see the good in the world around her, and when it's not there, she chooses to be the good and to bring it out of everyone she encounters.

At some point in our lives we've all seen that goodness surrounding us, whether in the innocence of childhood or following many years of growth in a world that so often tries to prove otherwise. We've all felt unseen, all at one point or another had our potential dismissed, all been underestimated – sometimes even by ourselves.

But what Elle Woods teaches us is that as long as we stay true to ourselves and hold fast to our beliefs, we can never fail to live the life we are capable of. She shows us that we can be a force for better, even when surrounded by those telling us it's not possible.

This cast has shown me that time and time again this summer. I am certain they will continue to do so beyond the stage for many years to come, knowing the power they hold within themselves to shape the world around them into one truly for the better.

It has been my privilege to spend my summer guiding these artists and witnessing the light they emanate. I hope when you leave the theatre today that its shine will have reminded you of all that you are capable of as well. TPOG

Kristy Cruz | Legally Blonde Director

GET TO KNOW THE CAST

Martin Bala (Ensemble) (He/Him) is an upcoming senior in high school and is excited to be a part of the cast of *Legally Blonde*. This is Martin's first show at Near West Theatre, and he's excited to perform despite being nervous for his first time. Outside of school, Martin likes to play chess and hang out with friends. Martin is in the marching band, science olympiad, academic challenge, and the cross country team. Martin loved his time with the cast and he hopes you enjoy the show

Maddie Berbec (*Brooke Wyndham*) (She/Her) is beyond excited to be doing her first show at Near West Theatre! She is a rising junior at Magnificat High School and her recent credits include *Chicago: Teen Edition* (Clerk/Ensemble) at Magnificat High School, *Once Upon A Mattress* (Queen Aggravain) at Beck Center for the Arts, *The Addams Family* (Pugsley Addams) at Magnificat High School, and *Mean Girls* (Janis Sarkisian) at Beck Center for the Arts. When Maddie is not performing she enjoys hanging out with friends and listening to music! She is so grateful for her family and friends' support. Enjoy the show! :)

Jaidyn Bisheimer (Ensemble) (She/Her) is thrilled to be a part of Near West Theatre this summer and participate in such a magical musical. She was in *Cinderella* (Ensemble) at Saint Joseph Academy, *Godspell* (Ensemble) at Saint Joseph Academy, as well as *Six Teen Edition* (Ensemble) at Saint Joseph Academy. She would like to thank her family, specifically her mom and her sister for being her biggest cheerleaders and encouraging her to keep trying. If Jaidyn is not doing theatre, you can see her playing with her dogs, running or reading. She is so excited for you to see this show!

Anna Bohrer (Ensemble) (She/Her) is so excited to be joining the cast of *Legally Blonde* at Near West Theatre. This will be Anna's first show with the company and she couldn't be more excited to join this talented group of performers. A few of her previous shows include: *Seussical* (Gertrude McFuzz) at Phoenix Performing Arts, *Hamlet* (Queen Gertrude) at Our Lady of the Elms High School, *Oklahoma* (Aunt Eller) at Akron Civic Theater, *Homicide Puzzle* (Tyler) Our Lady of the Elms. She attends West Virginia Wesleyan college, double majoring in History and Political Science with a minor in Legal Studies. She is a member of the WVWC golf team and the Alpha Lambda Delta honors fraternity.

Chelsea Boyles (*Vivienne Kensington*) (She/Her) is so excited to be in *Legally Blonde -The Musical*! She is 17-years-old and just graduated from Holy Name High School. She is going to be a freshman at Ohio University this fall. This is not her first time doing shows at Near West Theatre. Previous credits include: *BKLYN-The Musical* (City Weed), *Bring It On!* (Stunter/Jackson Dance Crew), and *All Shook Up* (Lorraine). She would like to thank her friends for being so supportive and loving. She dedicates all of her performances for her father who she loves and misses so much.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Evangelina Calderon (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) couldn't be more excited to be back on stage after performing in *Bring It On!* (*Ensemble*), last summer. As a long time RISE! participant Eva has truly blossomed here at Near West Theatre. Evangelina's passions include dancing, modeling and shopping her money away.

Bryce Daniel Cook (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is excited to be back at his home-away-from-home, Near West Theatre! Previous credits include: *The Prom* (Dance Ens.), *Bring It On!* (La Cienega) and *Head Over Heels* (Dance Ens.) at Near West Theatre; *Catch Me if You Can* (Frank Jr.), *Footloose* (Ren), and *Children of Eden* (Japheth) at his high school; *Elf Jr.* (Buddy), and *The 25th... Spelling Bee* (Chip) at Norwalk Arts Center; *The Lion King Jr.* (Young Simba) and *Seussical! Jr.* (Wickersham Brother) at Heidelberg Community Music School. Bryce wants to thank his parents, past directors/choreographers, the NWT staff and cast for making this such a 'Positive' experience! <https://brycedanielcook.wixsite.com/my-site>

Isaac Cook (*Aaron*) (He/Him) is acting for the first time on the Near West Theatre stage and is excited to perform with such a dedicated group of people. Past credits include: *The Drowsy Chaperone* (George), *All Shook Up* (Chad) at the Norwalk Arts Center; *Children of Eden* (Cain/Shem), *Footloose* (Chuck Cranston/Ensemble), *Catch Me if You Can* (Carl Hanratty) at his high school. He would like to thank his parents for their support, his high school music teacher for listening to all the nonsense he spouts, and all involved in *Legally Blonde* for making his first NWT experience special. He hopes you enjoy this show and dedicates his performance to Reese Witherspoon for her cool name and for being the original legal blonde.

Brian Currie (*Kyle B. O'Boyle*) (He/Him) is so excited to return to the Near West Theatre stage. He is an alum from John Hay Early College High School and ecstatic to showcase what he can bring to *Legally Blonde*. This past November, Brian took on his dream role in Hathaway Brown's production of *The Wiz* (Scarecrow). Other recent credits include: CMSD's All-City productions of *Urinetown* (2019), *In The Heights* (2023), and *Dreamgirls* (2024); *Bring It On!* (Cameron) at Near West Theatre; and at the annual Station of Hope festival at Cleveland Public Theatre. Brian would like to thank his amazing All-City and NWT family who has continuously been supportive and loving no matter what. He would also like to thank his mother, father, sisters, brother, grandparents and the rest of his beautiful family and friends for the ongoing support that they have given him throughout this process.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Madeline Curtis (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be in her first show at Near West Theatre. Madeline is a rising 8th grader at St. Mark School. This show will be her fifth production. She has recently been in: *The Little Mermaid Jr.* (Aquata) at St Mark School, *Willy Wonka Jr.* (James, Oompa Loompa, Squirrel, and Chef) at Academy for Dramatic Arts, *Lion King Jr.* (Simba) at Academy for Dramatic Arts, and *Snow White Variety Show* (Real Snow White and Ugly Duckling) at St Mark School. Other than theatre, Madeline enjoys singing, dancing, and spending time with friends. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Elizabeth Curtis (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is super excited to be performing her first show at Near West Theatre. She is 13 years old and attends St. Mark School. Her most recent credits include: *The Little Mermaid* (Adrina) at St. Mark, *Willy Wonka* (Phineous Trout) at Academy for Dramatic Arts, *Lion King* (Mufasa) at Academy for Dramatic Arts, *Snow White Variety Show* (Evil Queen) at St. Mark. Liz would like to give a huge thank you to anyone who helped make this show happen. She truly appreciates all of your guys' hard work.

Parker Good (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is incredibly excited to be back at Near West Theatre for his second summer show and is a rising junior in high school. His recent credits include: *The Little Mermaid* (Ensemble) at Hawken Players Society and *Bring It On!* (Ensemble) at Near West Theatre. When offstage, Parker enjoys singing, riding roller coasters, listening to music, and competing in speech and debate. Parker would like to thank his family for all their support and time throughout this process. He's positive you'll enjoy the show!

Owen Greene (Warner Huntington III) (He/Him) is so excited to be taking part in his first show at Near West Theatre and is a sophomore at Lakeland Community College! His most recent credits include: *Mamma Mia* (Sam) at Mentor High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Neville Landless) at Mentor High School, and *Shrek* (Donkey) at Curtain 440! When Owen is not on stage he enjoys playing the guitar, solving rubik's cubes, and going to the gym. Owen would like to thank his family and friends for their support! He hopes you enjoy the show!

Chloe Hazelwood (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is excited to be back at Near West Theatre! She will be attending St. Paul High School in the fall and will be in 11th grade. Her experience with performance started at the age of three dancing for Class Act Dance Studio. She has since been in four musicals, which include: *Bring It On!* (Ensemble) at Near West Theatre; and *Children of Eden* (Snake), *Footloose* (Billy Joe), and *Catch Me If You Can* (Mindy/Head Nurse) at her high school. Her other activities include cheerleading, Girl Scouts, marching band, mock trial, tennis, and 4-H. She would like to thank her crazy family for being theatre nerds and pushing her towards the arts. She hopes you're "So Much Better" after this show!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Josue Hernandez (*Grandmaster Chad/Ensemble*) (He/Him) is really excited to be in his first show at the Near West Theatre. He is now a junior at Cleveland School of the Arts where he majors in theater. His most recent credits include: *Between Worlds* (Carter) by Samia Keeton at Cleveland School of the Arts' New Works Festival, and *In The Heights* (Usnavi) at Playhouse Square in the CMSD All-City Musical! He would like to thank all his friends and family, but especially his parents, grandparents, and cousin Lili and many more cause he has so much family and then friend Miyani for going with him to the audition, he thanks her for being the best friend to make a nervous audition so fun.

Ronald Ixaac Hubbard II (*Emmett Forrest*) (He/Him) is so excited to be returning to Near West Theatre and is entering his senior year at Mayfield High School! His most recent credits include: *Rent* (Tom Collins), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Mr. Beauregard), and *Ragtime* (Booker T. Washington) at Mayfield High School! When Ronald is not on stage he enjoys making his own music, and also singing and spending time with his friends and family. Ronald would like to thank his family, friends, and former directors for their support. Enjoy the show!!!

Sophie Hull (*Paulette*) (She/Her) is overjoyed to be back at her home theater for a pinkalicious summer! Sophie is a rising junior at Oberlin College studying psychology, education, and arts administration. She recently had her directing debut at Oberlin with *13! The Musical*, and also devises theater projects at Grafton Correctional Facility. Outside of performing, Sophie loves squeezing her friends tight, listening to Stevie Wonder, and hanging out with the coolest 7 year old she knows, Greta! She would like to thank her Mamala, Blessing, her Obie pals, and fellow cast members for their laughter, radiance, and love. Sophie dedicates every show to her late dad, Jonathan <3 Enjoy!!

Summer Hussain (*Elle Woods*) (She/Her) is honored to be playing Elle Woods in Legally Blonde which is her last teen show at Near West Theatre. Some previous credits include: *Bring It On!* (Skylar) at Near West Theatre, *Legally Blonde* (Paulette Bonafonte) and *Chicago* (Mama Morton) at Westlake High School. Summer is super excited to be doing a Summer show and will be returning to the University of Cincinnati for her Sophomore year. Summer would like to thank her family for their support and Near West Theatre for giving her this incredible opportunity.

Adam Kennedy (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is so excited to be making his Near West debut! He is a sophomore at Baldwin Wallace University majoring in Music Education. His most recent credits include: *Seussical* (Horton), *Puffs* (Oliver Rivers), and *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* (Ovington/Ensemble) at Brunswick High School. He enjoys learning new instruments, mostly playing cello and piano, recently performing in the pit orchestra of *The Last Five Years* at The MAD* Factory. Adam would like to thank his friends and family for always supporting him and hopes everyone enjoys the show!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Mickey King (Ensemble) (She/Her) is a consummate theater artist, with a profound passion for the stage. Their journey in the world of Theatre began at a young age, and since then, they've dedicated themselves to the craft. With a diverse range of skills, from acting to directing and stage design, Mickey has left an indelible mark on the theatrical landscape. As a tireless advocate for inclusivity and diversity in the arts, Mickey aims to create spaces where all voices can be heard and celebrated.

Meghan Krieger (Margot) (She/Her) is over the moon to be a part of another Near West Theatre production! Recently Meghan was in: *It's A Wonderful Life* (Mother Bailey) at Westlake High school, *Bring It On!* (Ensemble) at Near West Theatre and *Legally Blonde* (Delta Nu/Ensemble) at Westlake High school. Meghan is also on her school's flag line and in choir, and will be a senior at Westlake High school in the fall! Meghan would like to thank her Nana for introducing her to theater. And a huge thank you to Kristy and the entire production team! Enjoy the show!!<3

Gabby Lykes (Ensemble) (She/Her) is very enthusiastic about joining this musical, *Legally Blonde*! She's only been in one musical, *The Mystery Of Edwin Drood* in 2020. When Gabby is not on stage, she likes doing things like dancing, singing, playing games, and trying new things. Gabby appreciates all that she has and wishes everyone luck in the future. She thanks everyone working at Near West Theatre for supporting her dreams to become an actor in the future. Love you guys!

Kareem McHaourab (Ensemble) (He/Him) is super excited to be in his second musical at Near West Theatre. His most recent show was *Hello Dolly* at Westlake High School. He is so happy to see his old friends from last summer and to make new ones. Kareem would like to thank the wonderful cast, crew, and directors. Enjoy the Show!

Krystina McMillon (Ensemble) (She/Her) is super excited to be returning to Near West Theatre and is a Junior at Cleveland school of the arts. Her most recent credits include *In the Heights* (Ensemble) and *Dreamgirls* (Ensemble) with CMSD's All City; *Bring It On!* (Ensemble) at Near West Theatre. In her freetime Krystina loves to listen to music, hang out with friends, and just being herself. Krystina would like to thank her family and friends and all those who have supported her always the way! Enjoy the show My Loves!!

Amaya Moore (Pilar) is beyond ecstatic to return to Near West Theatre's teen summer shows! She is a rising freshman at Baldwin Wallace University, and loves making jewelry and spending time in nature when not performing. Some of her previous shows include: *All Shook Up* (Ensemble) at Near West Theatre, and *Godspell* (Judas) at Saint Joes. Amaya is joyous knowing she is back at this beautiful theatre with such beautiful people. Enjoy every moment!!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Olivia Moore (*Ensemble*) (She/her) is so glad she was given the opportunity to be a part of the cast of *Legally Blonde*! Olivia has graduated from Our Lady of Mount Carmel and will be a freshman at Saint Joes starting in the fall! Her past performances at Near West Theatre include: *Carnival* (Ensemble), *Music Man* (Ensemble), *Wizard of Oz* (Featured Dance Ensemble), and numerous RISE! programs back in 2018. Olivia enjoys singing and spending time with her amazing family, and she wants to thank them for all of their support, especially her sister Amaya! She also wants to thank her best friend Amy, who has been one of her biggest supporters from the start! Enjoy the show!!

Peyton Murry (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be on the cast of *Legally Blonde* at Near West Theatre. This fall, she will be a junior at Ohio Connections Academy. Peyton was last seen on stage in *Frozen Jr.* (Elsa) at Near West Theatre. Beyond the stage, she enjoys gaming, reading books, and volunteering at a horse program. Peyton is grateful for the support of her family and friends! She is excited to share this performance with everyone. Enjoy the show!

Kai Pennington (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is ecstatic to be in another show at Near West Theatre! Kai has been a part of Near West Theatre for seven years now! His most memorable shows include: *All Shook Up* (Dennis), *The Little Mermaid*, *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella*, and *The Mystery Of Edwin Drood*! Off the stage, Kai is a rising junior at John Hay (Science and Medicine) and is a TV binger to say the least, most recently *Real Housewives*. Kai thanks everyone in his life who has supported him throughout the years, especially the last couple of years. Kai wants to let everybody know that this show is a BLAST and hopes everyone loves this show as much as he does! Enjoy!

Brooke Peterson (*Serena*) (She/Her) is beyond excited to be playing *Serena* in this production! *Legally Blonde* is her absolute favorite show and she's so glad to be doing it with an awesome cast & crew! She is 15 and a rising sophomore! Previous credits include: *Bring It On!* (Campbell) at Near West Theatre, *Into the Woods* (Cinderella) at Chardon High School, *Wizard of Oz* (Dorothy) with Thrive at Geauga Theatre, *13!* (Kendra) at Fine Arts Association, *Matilda* (Matilda) at Geauga Theatre, & Top 25 in *Shining Star 2023*. When she's not on stage she's studying dance, voice, and cheerleading! She would love to thank her family, her voice teacher Helen Todd, and all the directors! Enjoy the show and always keep it "Positive!"

Isabella Ramirez (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is so excited to perform in her second Near West Theatre production! She is even more excited to work with such a talented group of people from all over Cleveland. Isabella is going to be a Sophomore this fall at Avon High School. Besides acting, in her free time, Isabella likes to sing, bake, play piano, and hanging out with her dogs. She would like to thank her parents for supporting her through everything, being easy to talk to, and for truly being the best parents that anyone could ever ask for. Thank you for coming and enjoy this amazing show!!!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Gwyneth Rees (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be performing in her first production with Near West Theatre. She graduated from Bay High School in May and will be attending Cleveland State University in the fall where she will be studying and continuing her theatre career. Her most recent credits include: *Something Rotten!* (Portia) at Bay High School, *The Wizard of Oz* (Dorothy) at Theatre Agápe, *Newsies* (Darcy/Ensemble) at Bay High School, and *Into the Woods* (Jack's Mom) at MAD* Factory. When Gwyneth is not on stage she enjoys spending time with her friends, drawing, and reading books. She would like to thank her family for supporting her through all her ups and downs.

D'Aryl Snead (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is so excited to be apart of a performance at Near West Theatre for the very first time!! She is currently a sophomore at Baldwin Wallace University, studying psychology and performing arts. Her most recent shows she has performed in include: *Sister Act* (Deloris Van Cartier/Sister Mary Clarence), *Matilda* (Bruce Bogtrotter), and *Who's Tommy* (Big Kid/Bully). When D'Aryl isn't on stage, she's doing anything that expresses her creativity including: singing, dancing, drawing and writing. D'Aryl also loves listening to music, practicing her Spanish speaking ability, and spending time with her family and closest friends. She thanks her family for all their support! <3

Michaela Snider (*Kate*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be performing in her second musical at Near West Theatre and is a junior at Chardon High School. Other shows she has been in include: *Legally Blonde* (Vivienne), *Seussical* (Jojo), *Annie* (Ensemble), *Mean Girls* (Gretchen), and *Into The Woods* (Little Red). When Michaela is not on stage, she loves to spend time with her friends and family, sing, and is specifically interested in studying in the medical field. Michaela would like to thank her family and the whole production team for their love and support throughout this process. Enjoy the show!

Colin Snider (*Professor Callahan*) (He/Him) is beyond thrilled to be making his return to the Near West Theatre stage! He's an upcoming sophomore at Walsh University. Recent roles Colin has played includes: *The Addams Family* (Gomez) at Chardon High School, *Bring It On!* (Twig) at Near West Theatre, and in *Footloose* (Travis) at the Fine Arts Association. Other than theatre, Colin loves to run, play the guitar, and voice act! He would like to thank his siblings (Dylan, Michaela, and Kirstin), his parents (Michael and Trinidad), his best friend Vince Piotrkowski, his girlfriend Tonille Decipeda, and every last cast and crew member of the show for their unwavering support and love.

Mikey Szabo (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is so excited to be returning to the stage for his third show at Near West Theatre! His previous shows at Near West were *All Shook Up* (Ensemble) and *Bring It On!* (Ensemble/Stunt Captain). When he is not performing, Mikey enjoys drawing, crocheting, listening to music, and spending time with his friends. He is so proud of everyone in the cast for all their hard work, and he hopes you'll love the show as much as he does!!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Esther Tan (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is very glad to be in her first teen show. *Legally Blonde* will be her 6th show at Near West Theatre, her first being *Music Man* (*Ensemble*) in 2022. In her free time, Esther loves playing soccer, crocheting, playing violin, and making jewelry. Esther wants to thank everyone for coming out to watch *Legally Blonde*. Enjoy the show!

Kaiyu Thach (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is very excited to be apart of Near West Theatre's production of *Legally Blonde*! He is going into his senior year at Westlake High School and most recently was apart of Westlake's production of *Hello Dolly* (Dance Chorus). In his free time, Kaiyu likes listening to music and hanging out with his friends. He's very happy to be a part of Near West's *Legally Blonde*!

Mack van Lier (*Ensemble*) (They/Them) is super excited to be a part of this production. They started their theater journey in *Once On This Island Jr.* (*Ensemble*), and more recently have been in *The Wizard of Oz* (*Ensemble*) and *The Prom* (*Ensemble*), all at Near West Theatre. They just graduated from the Mastery School of Hawken, and are excited to go to Knox College in the fall. They'd like to thank their parents and brother, as well as the whole NWT community for being supportive and amazing. :-)

Avery Wrentmore (*Enid Hoopes*) (She/Her) is beyond thrilled to be in her first show at Near West Theatre! She recently graduated from Brunswick High School where she participated in their theater program her junior and senior years. Her most memorable shows include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hermia) at Brunswick High School, *Mean Girls* (Janis Sarkisian) at Brunswick High School, and *Puffs* (Megan Jones) at Brunswick High School. She plans on going to Kent State University in the fall and hopes to be involved in more community theater shows in the future. Avery would like to thank her friends for telling her about Near West Theatre and her family for all their support. Enjoy the show!

Isaiah Young (*Ensemble*) (He/They) is thrilled to be a part of this production of *Legally Blonde* at Near West Theatre.

Jules Ziel (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is SO pumped to be apart of this incredible production with this insanely talented cast. Jules has been with Near West Theatre since 2019, being in the *Addams Family*, and just couldn't stay away since. A few more shows that she has done include *All Shook Up* (*Ensemble*), *Chess* (Young Florence), and most recently *Legally Blonde* (Margot). When Jules isn't on stage she enjoys reading books with bad storylines but awesome romance, napping, and spending time with her best friend, Brielle. She would love to thank her parents, her friends, and especially her grandmother who she knows would be so proud of her. Enjoy this amazing show!

GET TO KNOW THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Bella Brehm (*Sound Designer*) (She/Her) is a recent Kent State University graduate with a BFA in Theater Technology, Production, and Design with a concentration in Sound Design. She has worked with multiple other theatres around the Akron and Columbus area. Some recent past design work includes *Cabaret* at Kent State, *Murder on the Orient Express* with Arena Fair Theater, and *The Mousetrap* at Weathervane Playhouse.

Kenedy M. Brooks (*Assistant Stage Manager*) (She/They) is a stage manager who graduated from Kent State University. Some of their previous work as a stage manager include: *Zoom Play Without a Title*, *Home of the Brave*, *KSU Opera Scenes 2022*, *Urinetown*, and *KSU Opera Scenes 2023*. She also worked on *Freaky Friday*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* in the scenic department. Outside of college work Kenedy also worked as an assistant stage manager at on *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *The Marvelous Wonderettes*, and *The Prom* at Porthouse Theatre in 2023, and *Make Believe* at Dobama Theatre.

Vanessa Cook (*Costume Design*) (She/Her) BW Conservatory (BM) and Regent University (MA) alum, Mrs. Cook is the owner of Cook Theatre Designs, LLC, a freelance design firm that serves Ohio theatre programs. She served as TD, designer and adjunct professor at Heidelberg University and is former costume/set designer for Heidelberg's Community Music School. In addition to Near West, Mrs. Cook currently works with several Cleveland based theater companies. Most recently; Spark Theatre 4 Youth, The Brecksville Theater, Dobama, Cleveland Opera Theatre, and Hathaway Brown Theatre Institute. She also assists with local and regional HS productions teaching the next generation about technical theatre. She has decades of experience and specializes in costume and prop creation. Mrs. Cook is the co-founder of the Norwalk Arts Center (NAC) and serves on the board of directors as Secretary, as well as NAC's prop/set and costume mistress.

Kristy Cruz (*Director*) (She/Her) is overjoyed to be returning to Near West Theatre, where she most recently choreographed last spring's production of *Head Over Heels*, *The Prom*, and directed last summer's teen production of *Bring It On! The Musical* this past summer. Previously at NWT, she has held the title of Assistant Choreographer to Stephanie Morrison-Hrbek for *West Side Story* and *Finian's Rainbow*, and has had the privilege of being onstage in countless NWT shows over the last 20 years. Since 2004, she has proudly served as the Choreographer for the Solon High School Drama Club, where students have earned four Dazzle Award nominations for Best Choreography Execution recognizing their work in *Shrek The Musical*, *All Shook Up*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *We Will Rock You*, and *Curtains*. Kristy's direction and choreography has also been seen on the stages of such local theatres as Cassidy, Ashland University, Blank Canvas, French Creek, Brecksville, Aurora Community, Geauga Lyric Theatre Guild, and Solon Center for the Arts. An active member of the Cleveland theatre community both onstage and off, she also serves on the Board for Near West Theatre. Kristy sends endless gratitude to the cast and production staff for all of their hard work, to Trinidad for this incredible opportunity, and to her friends and family (especially Mom and Summer) for their constant support. Enjoy the show! TPOG

ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Emily Ferrer (*Sound Technician*) (She/Her) is so excited to be back for her 5th show at NWT. Recent NWT Productions include *The Music Man*, *All Shook Up*, *Head Over Heels*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Other recent productions include *Addams Family*, *Richard III*, *Blithe Spirit*, and *James and the Giant Peach Jr.*

Julia Fisher (*Intimacy Coordinator*) (She/Her) is an intimacy director and playwright whose work has been seen in professional theatres throughout Northeast Ohio. She is a Certified Intimacy Director through Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, where she also served for two years as a Teaching Artist and Curriculum Developer. Julia has intimacy directed over 30 productions across Ohio - at Dobama Theatre (where she will be the Resident ID next season), Rubber City Theatre (where she has served as Resident ID for three seasons), Cain Park, Ensemble Theatre, convergence-continuum, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Cleveland Public Theatre's Test Flight, LatinUs Theater, Broadview Heights Spotlights, the University of Akron, and Ohio Northern University. A longtime NWT audience member, she is excited and grateful to be working on her first show at Near West! www.juliachristinefisher.com

Tyree Franklin (*Stage Manager*) (He/Him) is a Cleveland based stage manager and Artist with his BFA in Stage Management from Wright State University. His recent stage management credits includes *Velveteen Rabbit: A New Musical* at Playhouse Square, *BKLYN* at Near West Theatre, *The Bubbly Black Girl who Sheds her Chameleon Skin* (Karamu House), *The Tempest*, *The Liar*, *Everybody*, and *Passage* (Cleveland Playhouse), *Langston Hughes' Black Nativity* (Karamu House). Tyree is a new playwright. His play *Tales of a fat man* was recently produced at Cleveland Public Theatre's 2023 Pandemonium. He would like to thank his family and friends for their continued love and support!

Elisa Gauntner (*Asst. Choreographer*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be at Near West on the production side for the first time as an assistant choreographer! She currently studies Arts Management and Theater/Dance at BW. Recent credits include: *Testing Grounds 2024* (Dancer) at BW and *The Prom* (Ensemble/Alyssa u/s) at NWT. She is still shocked to be able to work under Kristy and Jailyn, two people for whom she is eternally grateful after a memorable production of *Bring It On* last summer! She is appreciative of the opportunity they have given her to revisit this show and grow in this safe space. She is grateful for the support from the community, family, friends, and people she looks up to! She truly loves you all <3

ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Jailyn Harris (*Choreographer*) (She/Her) is a native of Cleveland, Ohio and a graduate of Bowling Green State University, where she received her BAC in theatre, with a minor in dance. As a performer, she has had the opportunity to perform in film, festivals, arenas, and in theaters across Northeast Ohio and beyond with credits from Dobama Theatre, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Ensemble Theatre, Karamu House, Lakeland Civic Theatre, the Players Guild Theatre, and the A.R.T. in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She enjoys working on and developing new works and had the opportunity to perform in the world premiere of *Heartbreakers In Hell* by Joey Contreras and Benjamin Halstead (Rubber City Theatre). Directing credits include a staged reading of the new musical *Wishful Thinking* by Jamie Maletz and a virtual production of *Ragtime* with M.A.D. Factory Theatre. Jailyn has a strong dance background and extensive experience in Jazz, Hip Hop and Musical Theatre. She is an Associate Member of MadJax Dance Company. Jailyn has choreographed for theaters and organizations across the northeast Ohio area and beyond, including the Sitar Arts Center in Washington, DC.

Perren Hedderson (*Technical Director*) (He/Him) has been with Near West Theatre for many years, starting as a young teen acting and helping construct the sets. He is now the Technical Director and a freelance Projection Designer. He has also worked in film here in Cleveland and for a few years in New Mexico. Credits include *We Will Rock You* (projections) at Blank Canvas Theatre, *Chess* (projection design) at Near West Theatre, and a side music project called Triage. He's a Dad now too with two kids. Love to Sarah, Kellen, Asa, and Sab!

Emily Hennen (*Assistant Technical Director*) (She/Her) graduated from Ohio University with a BFA in Production Design and Technology in 2016 and has been with Near West full time since 2018. Occasionally, she also works as a sound and video technician for Near West events and performances, and she is thrilled to continue working with such a talented and creative team.

Heidi Herczeg (*Music Director*) (She/Her) has been seen music directing all over northeast Ohio for the last 24 years, including at the Beck Center, the Cassidy Theater and Near West Theatre. She has been a member of the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and The Cleveland Opera Chorus, serving as Children's Choir Master during her tenure. Retiring from the Bay Village City Schools in 2020 after 33 years, Heidi is thrilled to be able to devote her time continuing to music directing and to be working with such a talented cast and production team. Thank you to Kristy and Trinidad for this opportunity! OMG!

ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Jenny Hitmar-Shankland (*Scenic Charge*) (She/Her) has been painting for Near West Theatre since 2002. She paints as a scenic artist throughout Northeast Ohio but considers Near West one of her families. She has taught scenic painting at Baldwin Wallace University and regularly paints their mainstage shows. She has painted for the Cleveland Play House for seven years, and now operates under her business name Fresco Scenic Studio. She loves how close the Ohio theater community is and also has painted for Cleveland Opera Theater, Parade the Circle, Blank Canvas, Ballet Theater of Ohio, Carousel Dinner Theater, Sign Stage, and Chagrin Arts Academy. She is proud to have painted the Lobby mural for Near West Theatre, and grateful for the continual trust from an organization that allows her to throw large amounts of liquid around its beautiful stage. Love to her husband and two children who are growing up here.

Cameron Caley Michalak (*Scenic Designer*) (He/Him) is a Cleveland-based Scenic Designer, Technical Director, Artist, and Builder. Regional design credits include: Cleveland Play House productions of *Watching Butterflies*, *These Mortal Hosts*, *Venus in Fur*, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, and *A Soldier's Tale*. CWRU/CPH MFA Acting Program's design credits include *The Liar*, *Passage*, *A Philadelphia Story*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Misanthrope*, and *The Winter's Tale*. Cleveland Ballet's *The Nutcracker Suite*, *Alice*, *Provocativo*. Selected local credits include *When Farah Cries* (Borderlight I.T.F.); *What We Look Like*, *John*, *Appropriate*, *The Effect*, *The Night Alive* (Dobama); *Les Misérables*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Wiz*, (Near West Theatre); *Meteor Shower*, *Really Really* (Beck Center); *Bubly Black Girl* (Karamu) and after at least 24 years with M.A.D. *Factory Kinky Boots*, *Aida*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Hairspray*. Cameron recently completed his MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College, and acts as Technical Director and Instructor for Cleveland State University's Department of Theatre and Dance.

Venchise Phillips (*Props Master*) (She/Her) is excited for another Near West Theatre show! Prop Designer credits at NWT include *Head Over Heels* and *All Shook Up*, and *Of Mice and Men* and *One Man Two Guvnors* at Blank Canvas Theatre. Recent on-stage credits include *Zombie Prom* (Ramona Merengue/Ensemble) and *Comma* (Nurse) at Blank Canvas, *Escapegoat* (Isabela) at The Cleveland Playhouse, *The Music Man* (Mrs. Squires) at NWT, and *Puffs: Or Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic* (Megan Jones) at Broadview Heights Spotlights Theater. Love to Aaron, now and for always. Enjoy the show!

James Romeo (*Associate Sound Designer*) (He/Him) is elated to be given the opportunity to return back to Near West Theatre for another main stage production. Recent productions include *The Prom* (Near West Theatre), *Avenue Q* (Cleveland State University), *The Last Five Years* (NWT), *Bring It On* (NWT), *Head Over Heels* (NWT), *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (CSU), *Ain't Misbehavin* (NWT), *Music Man* (NWT), *Sweeney Todd* (CSU), *All Shook Up* (NWT), CSU Spring 2022 Dance Concert, *Richard III* (CSU), *She Loves Me* (CSU), and *Blithe Spirit* (CSU).

ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Michael Stein (*Production Manager*) (He/Him) is in his eighth year at Near West Theatre (NWT) as PM/ RM. His 40+ year career in theatre has taken him across the U.S. from Maine to California but mostly in Ohio as the Stage Manager/Production Manager/Lighting Designer at the Carousel Dinner Theatre in Akron, OH. Prior to returning to Near West Theatre in 2016, he was the Production Manager at the Palace Theater in Wisconsin Dells, WI. Michael was thrilled to return to Lighting Design for *The Last Five Years* in our Black Box Theatre! His past lighting designs at NWT include *Les Miserable School Edition*, *The Web of Anansi*, 1776, *Carnival*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Once on this Island* 2009, *Secret Garden* 2010, *The Wiz* 2010, *Rent* 2010, *Willy Wonka* 2011, *A Christmas Story the Musical*, *Move On!*, *Urinetown* and many of the yearly Benefit performances. He was also the Co-Lighting Designer for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Mary Poppins*. As always, he thanks and sends love to his wife Carlie.

Trinidad Snider (*Artistic Director*) (She/Her) started her Near West Theatre (NWT) journey at the age of 15 in the summer teen production of *FAME*. Since then, she has had the honor and privilege to be both onstage and behind the scenes in various theaters in the Cleveland area and beyond for the past 35 years. Most recently, she was seen onstage in the Cleveland Playhouse production of *In The Heights* as Abulea Claudia. Trinidad is slated to direct this year's productions of *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Beautiful!* She is a proud member of the board at Dobama Theatre. She is so grateful to the NWT staff and board for all their support and hard work. She is incredibly thankful for this community. She would like to thank the entire cast and production team of *Legally Blonde* for bringing so much joy and creative energy to this process. She would like to send love to her family, Michael, Kirstin, Colin, Dylan, and Michaela. For George and Kevin. #TPOG

Robert Wachala (*Lighting Designer*) (He/Him) has spent time with many local companies in the Cleveland area working with Tri-C, Near West Theatre, LiveNation, among others. He is excited to bring *Legally Blonde* to life in collaboration with this talented team. Recent Credits include CPT TestFlight's production *Temptation of Adam*; *Last Ship to Proxima Centurai*, *Stonewallin'*, *Wonderland Wives*, *After the Blast*, *The NEOMFA Playwright* with Convergence-Continuum; *We Will Rock You*, *Bulletproof Backpack*, *All In the Timing* with Tri-C. He is thrilled to return to NWT. He would like to thank all those who have supported and mentored him along the way including his parents, family, friends, and his wonderful ever-present partner, Eva.

"WOMEN IN LAW" TALK BACK BIOS

Emily Baxter (She/Her) works as a litigation associate for BakerHostetler. Emily came to Cleveland to work as a law clerk for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio. Emily is a member of Ladder Down Cleveland's Class of 2022, a leadership development program for women lawyers, and a member of the Cleveland Bridge Builders Class of 2024 through the Cleveland Leadership Center. She received the Cleveland Professional 20/30 Club's Movers and Shakers Award in 2023. Emily earned her law degree from the University of Michigan Law School and holds degrees from the London School of Economics and Political Science and Dartmouth College. Before law school, she worked on electoral campaigns and in work-family policy at a think tank in Washington, D.C. She is originally from Erie, Pa, where she grew up participating in community theater, particularly at the Erie Playhouse. In her past life as an actor, Emily worked on a summer stock production of *Babes in Arms* in Tamworth, New Hampshire. She has played her favorite role (Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*) twice: once as part of an outdoor community theater production in Washington, D.C., and once as a founding member of the Dartmouth Rude Mechanicals, a student-run Shakespeare company that still produces plays today.

Dolores (Lola) Garcia (She/Her) is a dedicated first-chair trial lawyer who handles complex commercial litigation matters. She counsels business clients both before and after litigation arises on wide-ranging issues involving business disputes, commercial contract interpretation, and compliance issues. She has represented large and small organizations, including financial institutions, real estate developers, health care facilities and providers, and manufacturers in state and federal courts. Lola has particular experience in defending companies subject to government investigation and follow-on civil and criminal litigation. A former Assistant United States Attorney, Lola has extensive experience with litigation involving various state and federal statutes regulating business conduct and competition, including investigations and pre-suit analyses related to each of these areas. As an active community leader and advocate, Lola sits on the board of directors for several nonprofits including Providence House, SPACES, the Tri-C Foundation, Say Yes to Cleveland Scholarship Program, and Metro-Health Foundation. Throughout her career, she has earned numerous accolades. She was selected by Corporate Counsel Business Journal to their "50 Women to Watch" list, named a "Latino Leader Worth Watching," by Profiles in Diversity Journal, named one of the "Most Influential Black Lawyers in America" by Savoy Magazine, and selected for the Crain's Cleveland Business list of "Notables in Law." Lola is consistently recognized by Ohio Super Lawyers and The Best Lawyers in America®. Lola earned her B.A. from Grinnell College and her J.D. from Harvard Law School.

"WOMEN IN LAW" TALK BACK BIOS CONT'D

Cathryn Greenwald (She/Her) is a partner in the real estate practice group at Thompson Hine LLP and focuses her practice on all aspects of commercial real estate transactions, including the representation of lenders in all types of real estate financing transactions. Cathryn is a member of the American College of Mortgage Attorneys (ACMA), the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) where she currently serves as the Governance Chair of the Cleveland chapter. In 2024, Cathryn was selected to the Ohio Super Lawyers list and was included in The Best Lawyers in America® for Real Estate Law. She was also recognized as part of the 2021 Forty Under 40 class by Crain's Cleveland Business. Ms. Greenwald received her B.S in Business Administration from Miami University, magna cum laude, her M.S in Environmental Studies from Cleveland State University and her J.D. from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, magna cum laude.

Khalida Sims Jackson (She/Her) is an adjunct Professor and the Director of Pardon, Clemency & Reentry Clinic for Cleveland State University College of Law. Professor Jackson grew up in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. She is a graduate of Cleveland Heights High School and attended The Ohio State University where she received a bachelor's degree in English. Professor Jackson earned her Juris Doctorate Degree from Wayne State University Law School (Detroit, Michigan) in 2011 and was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 2013. While in Michigan, she worked at the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office in the Special Victims Unit and the Salvation Army William Booth Legal Aid Clinic. Upon returning to Cleveland, she worked with her father, Attorney Rufus Sims, at Sims and Associates and then the Cuyahoga County Public Defender's Office from 2013 to 2020. From 2020 to 2022, Professor Jackson was an Assistant Federal Defender at the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Northern District of Ohio. A proponent for community service, Professor Jackson has been involved in the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's 3Rs Program: Rights, Responsibilities, Realities, Cuyahoga County Witness/Victim Services, Stephanie Tubbs Jones Summer Legal Academy, Twelve Literary Arts, Greater Cleveland Congregations, The Cleveland Browns Foundation Diversity Leadership Program, and I.M.H.O.T.E.P (Instructional Mathematics Helping Our Teens Excel Program). Professor Jackson currently resides in Shaker Heights, Ohio with her husband, Colin and daughter, Khloe.

"WOMEN IN LAW" TALK BACK BIOS CONT'D

Maggie Sullivan (She/Her) is an associate at BakerHostetler in the Business Group, with a primarily transactional practice, including Mergers and Acquisitions and debt financing transactions. Maggie also has experience clerking at both a state appellate court and a federal district court. As Co-Director of the Young Lawyers Theater Collective, Maggie enjoys connecting young professionals in Northeast Ohio to the Cleveland arts community and to each other. She is a graduate of Cleveland State University College of Law and was published in the Cleveland State Law Review for her article titled "Gaps in Our National Security: How the Lack of Female Leadership Impacts Our Nation's Success and Safety," which received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the Ohio State Bar Association. She also wrote an Honors Thesis at the University of South Carolina Honors College titled "The Progression of the Female Narrative: A Qualitative Analysis of Perceived Leadership Barriers for Women in the Legal Field."



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LEGALLY BLONDE CREATIVE BIOS

Heather Hach (*Book*) received 2007 Tony and Drama Desk nominations for her work on Legally Blonde. Graduate of the University of Colorado, Boulder, School of Journalism. Worked at The New York Times Denver Bureau as a research assistant and Sports and Fitness Publishing in Boulder, Colorado, as a magazine editor. Member of Denver's Comedy Sports improv comedy troupe. Worked on the TV shows "Caroline in the City" and "Dilbert." Won Walt Disney Screenwriting Fellowship in 1999. Film credits include Disney's "Freaky Friday" and "What to Expect When You're Expecting." Also wrote the young adult novel "Freaky Monday" with Mary Rodgers. Much love to friends and family, especially Jason, Harper and Drake.

Laurence O'Keefe (*Music & Lyrics*) received 2007 Tony and Drama Desk nominations for his work on Legally Blonde. Larry thanks all Blonde producers and creative team. He won the Ed Kleban Award, the ASCAP Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award and a Jonathan Larson award for his music and lyrics. Off-Broadway credits: Bat Boy: The Musical (Lucille Lortel, Richard Rodgers, Outer Critics' Circle awards), which has received 100+ productions worldwide; music for Sarah, Plain and Tall, lyrics by Nell Benjamin (touring with TheatreWorksUSA). Co-author with Nell Benjamin of Cam Jansen (Drama Desk nomination) and The Mice. Larry is a product of his education with the Harvard Krokodiloes, the Hasty Pudding Theatricals, the Harvard Lampoon and the Actors' Gang, but especially the incomparable Nell Benjamin.

Nell Benjamin (*Music & Lyrics*) Nell co-wrote the score to Legally Blonde, the Musical with composer Laurence O'Keefe, which received Tony Award nominations, Drama Desk nominations, and the Olivier and Helpmann Awards for Best Musical. Nell wrote the lyrics to Mean Girls, which received multiple Tony Award nominations, including for Best Original Score and Best Musical. Nell's play, The Explorers Club, won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Play, the Edgerton Foundation New American Plays Award, and an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant. Nell has written book and/or lyrics for Pirates! (or Gilbert and Sullivan plunder'd), Sarah, Plain and Tall, Cam Jansen (Drama Desk-nominated), I Want My Hat Back, How I Became A Pirate, The Mice, Life of the Party and Because of Winn Dixie.

Upcoming musicals are: Huzzah!, Life of the Party, Dave. Television writing includes "Unhappily Ever After", Animal Planet's "Whoa! Sunday with Mo Rocca", "Electric Company", "Best Time Ever with Neil Patrick Harris", "Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway", "Julie's Greenroom."

Benjamin is the recipient of the Kleban Foundation Award and a Jonathan Larson Grant.



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Matt Lachman, owner, opened Cleveland Sex Therapy in 2019 to nurture sex positivity and eradicate shame caused by sex negativity and purity culture.



SERVICES OFFERED



INDIVIDUAL

Sex can be extremely vulnerable to talk about. We want to help nurture growth and autonomy in our clients.



POLYAM/KINK

Matt and his team specialize in working with members of the polyamorous and kink communities.



RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are hard. Communication fails and intimacy starts lacking. We can help create more sustainability.



LGBTQIA+

Cleveland Sex Therapy prides itself on being a safe space for members of the queer community by providing LGBTQIA+ affirming care.

LOCATED IN GORDON SQUARE




(216) 870-7510



www.clevelandsextherapy.com



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Near West Theatre builds loving relationships and engages diverse people in strengthening their sense of identity, passion, and purpose, individually and in community, through accessible, affordable and transformational theatre arts experiences.

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