

## LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP FOR NEW DEPARTMENT OF LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

La Jolla, CA – **La Jolla Playhouse** is pleased to announce leadership positions for its revamped Education and Outreach Department. The new **Department of Learning and Engagement** will be headed up by **Bridget Cavaiola** as Director of Learning, and **Jacole Kitchen** as Director of Arts Engagement and In-House Casting.

Department of Learning and Engagement, which will live under the Artistic umbrella, is a merging of the Playhouse's education and community engagement efforts, with the intention of deepening relationships with students and educators (K-12 and college level), adult learners, the military community and other groups that make up our diverse and vibrant San Diego community.

Cavaiola will oversee the Playhouse's learning initiatives, including in-school residencies and partnerships, summer youth programs, teacher training workshops and adult theatre classes; while Kitchen will oversee arts engagement programs, such as the Veterans Playwriting Workshop, the Playhouse Leadership Council, and community-based theatre projects. Kitchen will also continue to head up the Playhouse's local casting process, working in tandem with leading industry casting directors to cast all Playhouse productions. Both will be involved in planning the Playhouse's pre- and post-show audience engagement activities, such as The Green Room, Talkback Tuesday and Discovery Sunday. Additionally, both will serve as producers of the Playhouse's Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour, commissioning artists to create an original play for elementary school students each year. For more information on the Playhouse's Learning and Engagement activities, please visit [lajollaplayhouse.org/learningandengagement/](http://lajollaplayhouse.org/learningandengagement/).

"These two departments and the individuals leading them will live squarely within the Artistic arm of the Playhouse as fundamental elements of the art we produce in our community," said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse. "I look forward to working closely with Jacole and Bridget as they develop the vision for the theatre's vital Learning and Engagement activities."

"The shift to Learning and Engagement better represents the reciprocal, ongoing relationships we have with both our students and community groups, in which they are actively engaged and providing continuous feedback," expressed Playhouse Managing Director **Debby Buchholz**. "Bridget and Jacole bring tremendous experience to the Learning and Engagement Department, both at the Playhouse, in San Diego, and in the field at large, and we are so pleased to have them step into these new roles."

"It is an honor to co-lead this new department with Jacole as we merge these two vital and closely-knit facets of our work with students of all ages," **Cavaiola** noted. **Kitchen** echoed, "The shift reflects such a holistic progression of the Playhouse's programming, and I look forward to working with Bridget on expanding and deepening our relationships in the community."

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**Bridget Cavaiola** is a San Diego-based educator, improviser and facilitator who has been performing and teaching improv, theater and communication strategies to adults and children since 2005. She has been a Master Teaching Artist with Arts for Learning, San Diego, La Jolla Playhouse, and San Diego Junior Theatre and is a performer and teacher with Finest City Improv. She is the former Education Director for the Baltimore Improv Group as well as a former Teaching Artist for Young Audiences of Maryland. A Baltimore County Public Schools High School (MD) English and theater teacher for seven years, Bridget is a graduate of the Young Audience of Maryland Teaching Artist Institute and has extensive training in inclusion, professional development, and arts integration. She holds a Master's degree in Communicating in Contemporary Cultures and teaches adjunct at the college level. She has performed improv in Baltimore, DC, New York, Chicago, Austin, Philadelphia, London and San Diego.

**Jacole Kitchen** is the Director of Arts Engagement and In-House Casting at La Jolla Playhouse, spearheading numerous community-based programs, including the Veterans Writing Workshop and the Playhouse Leadership Council. In addition, she teaches acting, improv and professional development for actors through UCSD Extension. Her directing credits include the Playhouse's POP Tour productions *Pick Me Last* and *Light Years Away*, *Cardboard Piano* (Diversionary Theatre), *An Iliad* (New Village Arts) and *September and Her Sisters* (Scripps Ranch Theatre – Ooal New Play Festival). Assistant directing credits include *Tiger Style!* and *Guards at the Taj* (La Jolla Playhouse), *HONKY*, *The Oldest Boy* and *Detroit* (San Diego Repertory Theatre). She was recently appointed the Executive Director of the San Diego Performing Arts League.

**La Jolla Playhouse** is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 105 world premieres, commissioning more than 60 new works, and sending 33 productions to Broadway – including the hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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