

La Jolla Playhouse Partners with Educational Theatre Association for JumpStart Theatre

APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT MIDDLE SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN ACCLAIMED INITIATIVE FOSTERING MUSICAL THEATRE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

San Diego, CA – La Jolla Playhouse is now accepting applications from middle schools in the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) to be considered for the **JumpStart Theatre Program**, a three-year, fully-funded musical theatre program, sponsored by the Playhouse and the **Educational Theatre Association (EdTA)**. The program will be implemented in partnership with the **San Diego Unified School District**, and three SDUSD middle schools will be selected to begin the program during the 2018-19 school year.

The JumpStart Theatre Program equips non-theatre teachers with the skills and resources to produce their school's first musical through a proven combination of hands-on mentoring and boot-camp style training. Due to its reputation for excellence in arts education through such programs as the Performing Outreach Program (POP) Tour and the Young Performers series of summer theatre training programs (YP@LJP), La Jolla Playhouse was chosen as one of two theatre companies in the country to spearhead the national expansion of the highly-successful JumpStart Theatre Program that the EdTA has conducted in Cincinnati since 2014.

"We are honored to be one of the inaugural Regional Partners for EdTA's JumpStart Theatre program. La Jolla Playhouse is known for – and deeply committed to – the development of new plays and musicals, and the JumpStart Theatre Program provides a terrific proven method of empowering teachers to produce musicals in their middle schools," said Playhouse Managing Director **Michael S. Rosenberg**. "The opportunity to partner with EdTA and SDUSD in bringing the joy of musical theatre to students and teachers in our community while building life skills through participation in the arts, could not be a better fit for the Playhouse."

"We are thrilled to have JumpStart Theatre come to San Diego Unified School District. What a terrific opportunity for our middle school students to not only have an arts experience but to develop their 21st century skills. We know JumpStart Theatre will continue our vision to transform lives through the arts. Thank you to our great local community partner, La Jolla Playhouse and to the Educational Theatre Association," remarked **Cindy Marten, SDUSD Superintendent**.

Applications are open to all San Diego Unified School District middle schools. Selection criteria includes the commitment of a minimum three educators from each school who will remain dedicated to the program for the duration. Previous theatre experience is not required. Schools will be mentored by La Jolla Playhouse teaching artists throughout the entire program with the goal of building a sustainable, long-term musical theatre curriculum.

Applications will be available on La Jolla Playhouse website now through February 15, 2018 at lajollaplayhouse.org/jumpstart-theatre. Applications received after this date will be advised to apply for the 2019 school year. All applications will be reviewed, and schools selected to move forward will be notified by March 15, 2018. Site visits and interviews will be scheduled at that time with a final selection to be completed and announced by April 1, 2018.

About La Jolla Playhouse

The Tony Award-winning La Jolla Playhouse is internationally-renowned for creating some of the most exciting and adventurous work in American theatre, through its new play development initiatives, its innovative Without Walls series, artist residencies and commissions. Currently led by Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Michael S. Rosenberg, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer. La Jolla Playhouse has had 32 productions transfer to Broadway, garnering 38 Tony Awards, among them the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away*, along with *Jersey Boys*, *Memphis*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Big River*, as well as Billy Crystal's *700 Sundays* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *I Am My Own Wife*, both fostered as part of the Playhouse's Page To Stage Program. For more information, visit LaJollaPlayhouse.org

About The Educational Theatre Association (EdTA)

The Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) is an international association with approximately 125,000 active members. EdTA's mission is shaping lives through theatre education: honoring student achievement in theatre; supporting teachers by providing professional development, resources, and recognition; and influencing public opinion that theatre education is essential and builds life skills. EdTA is the home of the International Thespian Society, an honorary organization established at more than 4,700 schools that has inducted more than 2.3 million theatre students since its founding in 1929. EdTA also produces the International Thespian Festival and publishes *Dramatics* magazine for high school theatre students, and *Teaching Theatre*, a journal for theatre education professionals. For more information, visit schooltheatre.org.