

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** Patricia Blaufuss, Public Relations Manager  
203-571-1287 | pblaufuss@westportplayhouse.org

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### Westport Country Playhouse Announces Youth Council Members

Westport Country Playhouse announces recently selected members of The Playhouse Youth Council, a new advocacy group to support the artistic and community-building mission of the historic theater which celebrates its 90th anniversary this year. The Playhouse Youth Council is comprised of high school students from across New Haven and Fairfield County.

The Playhouse Youth Council members are: Sofia Michelle Carrillo, 16, New Haven, Cooperative Arts and Humanities High School; Henry Carson, 15, Westport, Staples High School; Nate Cohen, 15, Ridgefield, Ridgefield High School; Kat Corrigan, 17, Wilton, Wilton High School/Regional Center for the Arts; Kate Davitt, 16, Westport, Staples High School; Sophia DelGaudio, 16, Fairfield, Fairfield Ludlow High School; Shea Frimmer, 14, Weston, Weston High School; Cessa Lewis, 15, Westport, St. Luke's School; Charly Peter, 15, Stamford, Westhill High School; Sofia Schaffer, 16, Ridgefield, Hopkins School; Joelle Singer Jensen, 16, Greenwich, Greenwich High School; Ethan Smith, 16, Bethel, Bethel High School; and Sophia Vellotti, 15, Westport, Staples High School.

"The Youth Council will act as young ambassadors to the Playhouse as well as share their ideas and opinions that will help shape the Playhouse of the future," said Jenny Nelson, Roz and Bud Siegel director of education and community engagement. "In addition, the Youth Council authentically aligns with our education department's core values of Empathy, Collaboration, Literacy, and Activism. At the Playhouse, we have a seat at the table for everyone, and we are committed to giving voice to the young artists of New Haven and Fairfield County."

The Playhouse Youth Council offers students in grades 9-12 a way to connect with young artists in their community and learn about the inner working of a non-profit, professional, regional theater. Members will meet, virtually, if need be, six times per year to learn about the Playhouse's mission, vision, and programming. They will serve as advocates in the community, in particular to help facilitate stronger partnerships with local schools. In addition, they will engage with working theater professionals through a speaker series, have behind-the-scenes access, attend board of trustees' meetings, and help create a community event at the Playhouse. Youth Council members will also contribute creative solutions on how the Playhouse can broaden its appeal to a more diverse community within Fairfield County and beyond. Compensation for Youth Council members will include complimentary tickets to Playhouse productions and events. Community services hours may be applicable.

Four members of the Playhouse's Theater Council serve as an advisory board to the Youth Council. They are Athena Adamson, vice chair of the Playhouse board of trustees; Adam Clemens, secretary of the Playhouse board of trustees; Rashana Graham, New Haven middle school teacher; and Dr. Peter Marghella, medical and public health preparedness and response authority.

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#### WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

25 POWERS COURT WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE T (203) 227-5137 F 203.221.7482 | BOX OFFICE T (203) 227-4177 F (203) 454-3238

[westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org)

The Theater Council of Westport Country Playhouse is a group of volunteer leaders who serve as theater ambassadors through the promotion of and advocacy for the Playhouse's artistic integrity, expansion and generating of new patronage, and cultivation of a diverse and inclusive environment

The Playhouse Youth Council Sponsors are Athena and Daniel Adamson. Other 2021 Education Program Sponsors and Supporters are The David & Geri Epstein Foundation; George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation; Adolph & Ruth Schnurmacher Foundation, Inc.; The Westport Young Woman's League; Eunice and David Bigelow; Anna Czekaj-Farber; and Roz and Bud Siegel.

For more information on the Playhouse Youth Council, contact Jenny Nelson, Roz and Bud Siegel director of education and community engagement, at [jnelson@westportplayhouse.org](mailto:jnelson@westportplayhouse.org) or 203-571-1149.

For Westport Country Playhouse information, visit [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org), leave a message on the box office voicemail at (203) 227-4177, or email at [boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org](mailto:boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org). The Playhouse's physical box office is closed during the pandemic, but staff is working from home, returning phone messages and answering emails. Please understand with the high volume of inquiries, it may take up to 72 hours to respond. Stay connected to the Playhouse on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), follow on Twitter (@WCPlayhouse), and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

### **ABOUT WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE**

The mission of Westport Country Playhouse is to enrich, enlighten, and engage the community through the power of professionally produced theater of the highest caliber and the welcoming experience of the Playhouse campus. The not-for-profit Playhouse provides this experience in multiple ways by offering live theater experiences of the highest quality, under the artistic direction of Mark Lamos; educational and community engagement events to further explore the work on stage; the New Works Initiative, a program dedicated to the discovery, development, and production of new live theatrical works; special performances and programs for students and teachers with extensive curriculum support material; Script in Hand play readings to deepen relationships with audiences and artists; the renowned Woodward Internship Program during the summer months for aspiring theater professionals; Family Festivities presentations to delight young and old alike and to promote reading through live theater; youth performance training through Broadway Method Academy, Westport Country Playhouse's resident conservatory program; and the beautiful and historic Playhouse campus open for enjoyment and community events year-round. Charity Navigator has recently awarded its top 4-star charity rating to the Playhouse in recognition of its strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

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