

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** Patricia Blaufuss, Public Relations Manager

(203) 227-5137 x197 | (203) 571-1287 | pblaufuss@westportplayhouse.org

For Immediate Release: June 9, 2021

### Westport Country Playhouse's 2021 Woodward Internship Class

Westport Country Playhouse announces its 2021 Joanne Woodward Internship class of three theater career aspirants who will enhance their professional skills and gain on-the-job experience working directly with Playhouse senior staff from June through mid-August.

Named in honor of actress, director, and the Playhouse's former artistic director, the Joanne Woodward Internship program is one of the nation's preeminent theater training opportunities for emerging professionals. Internships have formed a vital part of the Playhouse's mission since 1946. Among the alumni of the Playhouse's program is composer Stephen Sondheim.

"We are thrilled to welcome our new interns to the Westport Country Playhouse," said Jenny Nelson, who is the Roz and Bud Siegel director of education and community engagement at the Playhouse. "It is our hope that these talented, young people will gain authentic knowledge about their craft as well as offer guidance to our staff about ways we can amplify young people in our community through the art of theater."

This year's Woodward Interns, selected from over 120 applicants, are Betzabeth Castro, Bridgeport, CT, education intern; Kierstin Jones, Hamden, CT, development intern, and Margot Trouvé, Washington, D.C., marketing intern.

Castro, education intern, is an actor and singer who has performed all over Connecticut. She received her associate's degree in theater arts at Housatonic Community College, and a bachelor's degree in theater at Southern Connecticut State University. Her recent credits include "Polkadots: The Cool Kids Musical" at Legacy Theater, "Cold Sh\*t" at ReBirth Arts Collective, "Phenomenal Women+ Inspire" at Westport Country Playhouse, and "Twelfth Night" at Advice for the Players. She is currently working on "The Sound of Music" as Maria with Fairfield Center Stage. Castro is also an educational assistant at Housatonic Community College's Writing Center where she tutors writing to college students of varying ages and backgrounds. Castro will work closely with the education department to support the Playhouse's educational productions, programs, and events.

Jones, development intern, is recent graduate from Fairfield University with a B.A. in theatre. She was the audience relations intern for Theatre Fairfield during her junior year and the dramaturgy intern during her senior year. She has stage-managed several shows including "Fortinbras," "Rabbit Hole," and "[title of show]." She co-produced and acted in a virtual student-run production of "Woman and Scarecrow" by Marina Carr this past winter as part of Theatre Fairfield's Independent Project. Jones has also dabbled in playwriting. She wrote and workshopped an original play inspired by "The Picture of Dorian Gray" by Oscar Wilde for her senior capstone called "Gray." Jones will work closely with the development department, supporting the Playhouse's fundraising campaigns, operations, and special events, and learning about the administrative side of running a non-profit regional theater.

- MORE -

**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)

Trouvé, marketing intern, will be working virtually from Washington, DC. She is a recent graduate of the University of Maryland (UMD) where she earned her bachelor's degree in theatre and arts leadership. During her time at UMD she performed in 10 shows, interned at The Theatre Lab School of the Dramatic Arts and Shakespeare Theatre Company, and was on the board of the school's first all-female identifying theater group, The Muses. Trouvé pursues her passion for creativity and media by acting in local commercials and plays; assistant producing commercials, including one for the Washington Nationals; and co-developing and marketing her pop culture podcast, "Pop Off, Sis." Trouvé will work closely with the other members of the Playhouse marketing team to support virtual programming, print/digital communications, and digital marketing campaigns with a goal of engaging theater audiences and finding new ways to connect with the community.

In addition to working in their respective departments, interns will attend weekly seminars featuring a variety of guest speakers, including Playhouse staff members, visiting designers and artists, commercial producers, and more. In response to Covid-19, the Playhouse is unable to offer internships in production during the 2021 season.

The 2021 interns were hired through the Playhouse's recently restructured recruiting process to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. Hiring panels, comprised of the department's manager, other department members, and a staff member from a different department, carefully reviewed all applications and asked identical questions of all candidates, creating an equitable environment.

In addition to the Woodward Internships, the Playhouse supports the Staples High School Internship program, designed for seniors to gain a comprehensive overview of an organization and get real-world experience for four-weeks prior to graduation. This year's Staples intern at the Playhouse is Nasir Wynruit, a member of Staples Players, for which he designs sound. In the fall, he will attend Tufts University's School of Engineering, majoring in computer science.

Woodward Internship Program sponsors include Anna Czekaj-Farber. All 2021 Education and Community Engagement Programming is supported by the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation, Roz and Bud Siegel, the David and Geri Epstein Foundation, the Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Foundation, and the Westport Young Woman's League.

2021 Season Sponsor is the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation. 2021 Season Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio.

The Playhouse's 2021 Season, its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, includes two new virtual productions, "Tiny House," a timely new comedy, written by Michael Gotch, and directed by Mark Lamos, Playhouse artistic director, playing June 29 through July 18; and "Doubt: A Parable," the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning drama written by John Patrick Shanley and directed by David Kennedy, Playhouse associate artistic director, playing November 2 through November 21. Two HD video productions from the Playhouse archives will stream on-demand, beginning with the musical, "Man of La Mancha" (2018), from August 23 through September 5, and another TBA, from September 13 - 26. Three Script in Hand playreadings will include "The Savannah Disputation" by Evan Smith, from June 15 - 20, and two others TBA, October 19 - 24, and December 14 - 19. The complete schedule is available at [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org). All play titles, artists, dates, and formats are subject to change.

Due to the global pandemic, the indoor portions of the Playhouse campus remain closed to the public since March 2020. As the Playhouse resumes its in-person events, beginning on June 26 with "Cabaret in the Robards," Covid-19 health and safety protocols, including capacity restrictions and mask-wearing, will be observed.

For information and tickets, visit [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org), call (203) 227-4177, or email [boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org](mailto:boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org). Stay connected to the Playhouse on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), follow on Twitter (@WCPlayhouse), and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

## **ABOUT WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE**

Founded in 1931, Westport Country Playhouse is celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. 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.

###