

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

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Westport Country Playhouse Elects Five to Board of Trustees

Five new members were elected to the board of trustees at Westport Country Playhouse, bringing the total to 33, led by Ania Czekaj-Farber of Westport, chair.

The new Playhouse trustees are Tom Coppola of New York City, Diane DelVecchio of Stamford, Tracey Knight Narang of Westport, Alison K. Smith of Wilton, and Stafford W. Thomas, Jr. of Shelton.

"These new trustees represent a real diversity of geography and background," said Michael Barker, Westport Country Playhouse managing director. "With professions as varied as finance, real estate, advertising, education, and creative producing, their unifying feature is a love of live performance and the theatrical art form. As we reemerge into our first full in-person season since March 2020, these leaders will use their passion and talents to support our mission and spread the word that Westport Country Playhouse is back!"

Tom Coppola is originally from New Rochelle, NY. His parents instilled his love of the performing arts, which led to his pursuit of an acting career throughout college. Four colleges and 10 years later, he ultimately completed a degree in mass communications from Iona College. His career has been focused on media and content production, primarily as executive producer at SpotCo, Broadway's leading live entertainment advertising agency. As a director and choreographer, Coppola has been at the helm of numerous productions throughout the tristate area and Chicago. He is founder/CEO of Party of Four NYC.

Diane DelVecchio received a BFA degree in fashion design from FIT in Manhattan, leading to a career in fabric merchandising/print styling, and ultimately in executive textile sales. She is a real estate investor and partner in Edelweiss Realty, and has renovated multiple residences in the tristate area. She is also the owner of DCD Realty Group at Keller Williams Realty (KW), specializing in residential real estate sales, purchases, and investment property in Connecticut and Westchester County. DelVecchio is a member of the Agent Leadership Committee for the KW Stamford Market Center and is also active in the Stamford Downtown Retail Committee.

Tracey Knight Narang is a Tony Award-winning producer and a playwright. Her producer credits include "Rodgers & Hammerstein's Oklahoma!"; "for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf," coming to Broadway spring 2022; the highly anticipated "Sing Street"; and Arthur Miller's "The American Clock" at the Old Vic. In addition, she is the lead producer of "Period Piece," which is currently in development. She is on the board of directors of New York City Center, a member of the Dramatists Guild of America and the League of Professional Theatre Women, as well as a steering committee member of the CT Chapter of LPTW.

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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

Alison K. Smith leads the New York regional office for Principal Financial Group that services over 3,000 clients. She holds a bachelor's in business administration from James Madison University, a master's in science management with a focus in executive benefits and risk management, and a master's of business administration from Florida State University. She is a Chartered Retirement Plans SpecialistSM and is the recipient of a C(k)P® designation through TRAU at The University of Southern California. Smith is a co-owner and founder of WildBloom Skincare, a national skincare and beauty solutions company, and has also written two children's books in The Celebration Series.

Stafford W. Thomas, Jr. is principal of Staples High School in Westport. He previously served as principal of Hillcrest Middle School in Trumbull, which, in 2018-2019 was honored as Connecticut Middle School of the Year by the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS). Thomas began his career as a social studies teacher at South Side High School in Rockville Centre, New York. He currently serves as an adjunct professor in the graduate school of education at Sacred Heart University. Stafford holds a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Georgetown University, a Master of Arts in teaching social studies from Brown University, and a dual degree in law (Juris Doctor) and educational administration (M.Ed.) from Boston College.

Westport Country Playhouse's 2022 season includes the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning pop/rock musical, "Next to Normal," about a family's response to loss and endurance, with music by Tom Kitt, book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey, and directed and choreographed by Marcos Santana, from April 5 through April 23; "Straight White Men," about a father's relationship with his three adult sons, written by Young Jean Lee and directed by Mark Lamos, from May 24 through June 5; "Kim's Convenience," a comedy about a Korean family who own a Toronto convenience store that generated a Netflix series, written by Ins Choi and directed by Nelson T. Eusebio III, from July 5 through July 17; Obie Award winner and Pulitzer Prize finalist "4000 Miles," about two unlikely roommates, written by Amy Herzog and directed by David Kennedy, from August 23 through September 4; and Los Angeles Drama-Logue winner and Pulitzer Prize nominee "From the Mississippi Delta," an inspiring coming-of-age journey, by Endesha Ida Mae Holland and directed by Goldie E. Patrick, from October 18 through October 30. The complete schedule is available at westportplayhouse.org. All play titles, artists, dates, and formats are subject to change.

For more information and tickets, visit www.westportplayhouse.org, email boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org, or call the box office at (203) 227-4177, Tuesday through Friday, 12 to 6 p.m. Stay connected to the Playhouse at westportplayhouse.org, on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), follow on Twitter (@WCPlayhouse), and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse). Westport Country Playhouse is located at 25 Powers Court, off Route 1, Westport.

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 worth talking about* 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; 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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