



## **History & Mission**

The mission of Servant Stage Company exists to serve the Lancaster County community with outstanding musical and theatrical experiences by making the arts accessible to all - especially people with financial or physical limitations through a Pay-What-You-Will (PWYW) model. Additionally, the company seeks to provide a creative outlet for artists of all ages and income levels in our community to develop and share their talents and create performances that inspire, educate, challenge, and entertain.

Since 2011, Servant Stage has brought hundreds of full-scale theatrical performances to dozens of venues in our community, including performances in retirement homes, theaters, churches, parks, schools, and other community focused venues. This commitment to meeting our community where they are - both through location and financial flexibility - is what makes Servant Stage a stand alone arts and culture hub in Lancaster County, the state of Pennsylvania, and most of the United States.

In an average year, Servant Stage impacts over 44,000 individuals through PWYW performances and reaches over 525 local students through educational classes, camps and youth focused theater companies that bring quality training and performance opportunities to those who may not otherwise be able to access such. The Mainstage Series consists of five musical productions a year, the majority of which have a touring component to retirement homes, community spaces (like public parks and churches), and schools. This variety ensures that audiences have an opportunity to experience the greatest classic musicals, comedies, and dramas from the theatrical canon, as well as new works that span all genres.

## **Youth Theatre Education Program**

Servant Stage's robust Youth Theatre Education Program boosts training and performance opportunities for children in our area. Through five available summer camps, and two winter productions, children are able to learn and perform in seven shows each year. Often these productions are chosen to mirror familiar children's literature or stories, allowing this family programming to extend to a wider audience, and we take seriously the responsibility of being, in many cases, the first exposure of the theatrical arts for children and families.

We are particularly proud of our impact on the broader community through year-round arts-education opportunities, featuring programs that take place both at the theater and directly in local spaces. For more than a decade, Servant Stage has made continuous strides to commit itself to cultivating the future of theater audiences, enthusiasts, and performers by fostering arts

appreciation in young people, reaching over 500 students annually, with interest to serve 500 more should capacity expand. We are a Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) approved organization, and we are dedicated to creating unique, accessible opportunities for the future of our workforce and audiences.

Students learn to connect with their curriculum, their peers, their communities, and their inner selves by creating bridges between the world of the student and real-life scenarios that they may encounter. Our programs are shaped to increase social-emotional life skills like self-confidence, collaboration and goal setting, while introducing the arts as an outlet for creativity and mental health support. Above all, we strive to eliminate economic and financial obstacles while making the arts available for every student.

- ***Youth Companies\**** - The Youth Company program at Servant Stage consists of four training and performing companies: Servant Stage Teen Company (TeenCo), Apprentice Company (AppCo), Junior Company (JrCo), and Kid Company (KidCo). This dedicated training ground for students ages 10-19 allows for year-round classes to hone theatre skills. In 2023, nearly 50 students worked on the fulfillment of their artistic pursuits with dynamic classes taught by high-caliber theatre professionals. Aside from weekly classes in acting, dancing and singing, students receive specialty lessons in audition preparation, headshot/resumes, networking, and general theatre disciplines, with a culminating performance at the end of the session. While an audition and tuition are required for this programming, no student is turned away due to financial limitations and scholarships are available. **\*EITC Eligible Program**
- ***Summer Camps\**** - An immersive experience for children 8-18, five 1-week full day camps culminate in a production of a public full-length show for hundreds of students in the region. Campers will have the chance to learn from local teaching artists with a passion for sharing arts-education with young people, providing valuable jobs for those in the arts industry. In 2023, 194 students participated in camp, educating further than just the arts, by improving children's overall well-being and opening the doors to complementary topics such as English Language Arts. Participating in extended theatre activities promotes literacy through an emphasis on reading and comprehension by learning lines and adopting a character, as well as encouraging children to practice listening, understanding, and relating to people who may be different from themselves. No interested child will be turned away from this experience, as scholarships are available to remove financial barriers to continued training for those interested in developing their passion for theatre arts. **\*EITC Eligible Program**

- **Winter Production Series** - This two part series offered nearly 100 students in 2023 an all-encompassing journey into the world of theatre - stretching from auditions to rehearsals to performances. Directed by a staff of local theatre professionals, this process culminates in a fully-staged production, brought to life before an audience, and often focused on family-friendly, familiar tales rooted in literature or film. For many attendees, this is their first experience with live theatre, considering the average ticket prices that many larger families cannot afford.
- **Touring Outreach Program\*** - This program brings professional theatre productions into community spaces throughout our region. Each season, we provide an average of 50 performances that take place across schools, churches, senior living communities, and public parks to meet our audiences where they are. Additionally, during the 2024 Season, we served 18 Lancaster County schools with LIFT EV'RY VOICE, a production highlighting the many voices throughout US history who have spoken out for equality for people of all races, with 7 in-school performances and 11 performances in partnership with The Ware Center during Black History Month. Study guides are provided to each student to ensure that show content not only enhance English Language Arts skills and address PA Common Core State Standards, but work in conjunction with the performances to facilitate further conversations and enhance future classroom lessons.

**\*EITC Eligible Program**

Additional opportunities include PWYW drop-in classes on Monday evenings for all ages, in various theatre disciplines.

### **Accessibility and DEI**

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are values at the core of the mission of Servant Stage Company and all aspects of our organization are committed to striving for more diverse, accessible, and equitable programming.

As our organization continues to grow and expand, we are taking intentional steps to be a catalyst of change in the theater industry and more accurately represent the melting pot of our community, and will continue to showcase a variety of experiences that appeal to our community as a whole and cast those onstage with representation of that community in mind.



We have also been committed to promoting productions that amplify diverse voices and share the stories of dynamic figures of all backgrounds, so all audience members can see themselves in the characters on our stages. We strive to maintain a diverse population among our staff, artists, and students. Last season, our Mainstage productions consisted of artists from varied backgrounds, and our directors and choreographers were 50% non-white individuals. In our youth programming, 10% of participating students were BIPOC, and we hope to expand this number, as students from minority and historically underrepresented communities feel as though they have a safe and welcoming home in theater based on the representation set by those in production leadership, administrative, and performing roles.