

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

Chance Theater's summer youth program returns...
Speak Up – Take a 'Chance'

For the 11th year, local students can tell their stories on the Chance stage for free!

June 15, 2016 ... Anaheim, California ... The official resident theater company of Anaheim, Chance Theater is proud to announce the commencement of its 11th summer of their groundbreaking and transformative **Speak Up: Take a 'Chance'** education program for students grades 7-12. Over the course of this year's **Speak Up**, our young artists will build their storytelling skills and gain a larger sense of community as they voice experiences and create their own original play under the guidance of Chance Theater Artists. Led by Education Director Karen O'Hanlon and Producing Associate for our TYA series Darryl Hovis, **Speak Up will begin on June 20 and culminate in four public performances on July 23 and 24 at 11:00 am and 6:00pm.**

"In my opinion, the most valuable aspect of the workshops were collaborating with one another. Listening, speaking, and learning from unique students from different schools. Programs like this end rivalry, and prejudice throughout the district. Suddenly theater is not a competition, but a celebration of arts, and reflection of human experiences. It was an honor to work with these students." - *Amilcar, grade 11*

Under the guidance of seasoned Chance artists, students will undergo a collaborative process exploring their own creativity. Students will participate in the construction of a new work from start to finish, absorbing every aspect of theatrical producing. During this process, they also gain confidence, grow a sense of community, as well as learn leadership, team-building, communication and public speaking skills.

Through the **Speak Up** program, Chance Theater has mentored hundreds of young minds to become more attuned with theater and their own expression, all free of charge. Thanks to the generosity of donors, it's been possible for many at-risk students to gain access to this positive program from the very beginning. This year's program is being funded by Robert J. and Doreen D. Marshall Fund for Dramatic Arts and Music - The Orange County Community Foundation, The Allergan Foundation, Anaheim Community Foundation, Anaheim Arts Council, Kiwanis Club of Greater Anaheim, and the Elizabeth George Foundation.

(more)

Darryl B. Hovis (Director) is an actor, director, and designer, and is the Producing Associate of the Theater for Young Audiences Series at Chance Theater. He earned his MA in Theatre Production at Central Washington University and studied acting at the Professional Conservatory at UCSD under Anna Shapiro (Steppenwolf) as well as South Coast Repertory under Karen Hensel. He is the co-founder and artistic director of the Culver City Academy of Visual and Performing Arts, where he developed an intensive arts program for high school students in theatre, film, music, and art, and has gone on to develop theatre programs at other Southern California high schools, as well as Theatre International at Leysin American School in Leysin, Switzerland. He has directed a multitude of productions, some of his favorites being *Therese Raquin* (Chance Theater), *Rent* and *The Threepenny Opera* (Samohi Theatre), *Machinal* and *Resurrecting Antigone* (UniTheatre), and *The Miracle Worker* and *Treehouses* (AVPA).

Karen O'Hanlon (Producer) is an actor, director, a Chance resident artist, and is the Education Director at Chance Theater. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from East Stroudsburg University and has worked as a teaching artist, actress, and director throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Delaware. At the McCarter Theatre in Princeton, New Jersey, she spent several years teaching and directing for the First Stage program, as well as their in-school residency program. Karen was the regional director for Creative Theatre, where she worked to bring after-school and summer camps to children throughout the east coast. In addition, she has worked with several outreach programs designed to help at-risk youths and teens find their voice through creative expression. In California, Karen taught Theatre at Fairmont Private School, where she produced student-driven new work. Karen is also a coach and judge for the Orange County middle school debate program.

To schedule press interviews, request photos, or for any additional information, contact Casey Long at (714) 900-3284 or casey@chancetheater.com.

(more)

ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER has won five Ovation Awards (including two for Best Production of a Musical--Intimate Theater for *Triassic Parq -- The Musical* and *Jerry Springer: The Opera*). The Chance also received an LADCC Award for its reimagined revival of *West Side Story*. The Anaheim City Council recently named Chance Theater "the official resident theater company of Anaheim". Twice named "Outstanding Arts Organization" by Arts Orange County, Chance Theater is also a recipient of the LADCC's Polly Warfield Award for Excellence. Founded in 1999, Chance Theater is focused on its goal of being Orange County's premiere mid-size contemporary theater by contributing to a more compassionate, connected, and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, Network of Ensemble Theaters, and the LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: Every student will thrive in a theatrical environment through improv games, story circles and more as they Over the course of *Speak up*, students will build their storytelling skills and gain a larger sense of community as they voice their experiences and create their own original play with the guidance of Chance Theater Artists. All students are welcome to join this immersive and fun experience.

WHEN: **Workshop schedule:** June 20 – July 24, 2016

Monday, Wednesday and Friday (Grades 7-9) 9:00am – 12:00pm

Monday, Wednesday and Friday (Grades 9-12) 12:30pm – 3:30pm

Rehearsals: July 18-22 Monday-Friday (All Grades) 9:00am – 3:30pm

Performances: July 23 & 24 at 11:00am and 6:00pm

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center, 5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807