

MEET THE 2026 ATHENS THEATRE YOUTH ACADEMY

SUMMER CAMP TEACHERS



Angelyn Rhode, YOUTH ACADEMY DIRECTOR

Angelyn began her teaching career in 2001 at First Stage Theatre Academy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She moved to Orlando in 2003 and spent ten years creating magic with Walt Disney World Entertainment, as well as serving as a facilitator and trainer for Disney's Youth Education Series. It was during this time that she rediscovered her love of teaching.

After "hanging up her crown," Ms. Rhode taught at Lochwood Academy for the Performing Arts from 2014 - 2017, where she led classes in voice, musical theatre, drama, and choir for elementary, middle, and high school students. She has also served as a Music Director, Choreographer, and Teaching Artist for many local theaters, including Orlando Shakes, Hagerty High School, Breakthrough Theatre of Winter Park, and Wekiva River Players. In addition, from 2013 to 2021 she worked as a licensed Kindermusik Instructor with Grow and Sing Studios, teaching music and movement classes to babies and toddlers.

Ms. Rhode has been a Teaching Artist at the Athens since 2017 and, in 2019, launched the After School Program for the Athens Theatre Youth Academy. Her mainstage music director credits include *Annie*, *The Lion King JR.*, and *Aladdin JR.* As a performer, audiences may have seen her in *The Sound of Music*, *Ragtime*, *Scrooge*, *Elf*, *Shrek TYA*, *Singin' in the Rain*, and *Into the Woods*.

Through all of these experiences, Angelyn treasures the opportunity to share her love of music and the arts with students of all ages.

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Samantha Rodriguez,
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Samantha is a mezzo-soprano vocalist and a devoted vocal coach with a passion for music. She holds a bachelor's degree in vocal music from Oakland University in MI. With years of experience as an elementary music educator and private vocal coach, she is devoted to empowering students of all ages to learn music! Music is a universal language that Samantha believes can be fun and enjoyable to learn for anyone regardless of their background or experience level. Whether it be to further pursue a musical endeavor, or for personal enjoyment, she will help any student reach their fullest vocal potential.

As a vocal coach, Samantha will teach her students healthy vocal technique and performance skills for the stage or studio. Samantha crafts each lesson according to her student's individual needs, passing her love of music to her students in an engaging and inspiring manner.

Samantha herself has experience in theatre and chorus performances, where she has starred in numerous roles including Cinderella in *Into the Woods*, Katrina in *Sleepy Hollow*, *Rogers and Hammerstein* musical revue, as well as performing in the Disney Candlelight processional and other various chorus and vocal performances. She was recently seen on the Athens Stage creating stunning music with Nun Ensemble in *The Sound of Music*.

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Allyson Elliott

Allyson Elliott is an Orlando based actress and instructor and is happy to be back teaching at the Athens Theatre. She has been performing and teaching in the Orlando area for over a decade. You may have seen her conducting magical frogs at Islands of Adventure or hanging out with Blueey and Bingo at Animal Kingdom! She considers herself blessed to teach these wonderful kiddos with some of the best teaching artists in Orlando!

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Amanda Tyler

A native Floridian, Ms. Tyler studied film and theatre production at Valencia College. She began working in theatre in 1993 at Seaside Music Theatre in Daytona Beach as Wardrobe Supervisor, Assistant to the Resident Costume Designer, and Costume Rentals Manager. She finds herself out from behind the curtain for the first time as the Athens House Manager.

Amanda joined the Athens family in 2023 and is excited to help this incredible organization continue to grow and move forward. She takes great pride in the work she does alongside the many dedicated Athens Theatre volunteer ushers while helping to bring amazing art to the historic DeLand stage.

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Amy Uppercue

Amy Uppercue has been working behind the scenes at the Athens Theatre since 2011 and has loved being a part of all the magic that has been created on our stage.

Favorite costume design credits include *Footloose: Youth Edition*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, *Legally Blonde: the Musical*, *Footloose*, and *Steel Magnolias*.

In addition to running the Athens Costume Shop, Amy is also a teaching artist for the Athens Theatre Youth Academy and serves on the board of the National League of Junior Cotillion West Volusia Chapter. So much love to C, HK, AB and B.

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Ashley Peters

Ashley Peters has been performing much of her life in theatre, choirs, and opera. She has been seen on stage in various theatres around town and regularly in the Bach Festival Chorus of Winter Park and the Disney Candlelight Cast Choir.

Ashley's "day job" is teaching middle school chorus and theatre, which she has been doing for the last 18 years of her teaching career. She holds degrees in choral music education from UCF and FSU. Ashley is thrilled to continue as part of the ATYA family!

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Avery Tyler

Avery Tyler works as part of the Athens stage management team. Stage Management credits include: *Steel Magnolias*, *The Full Monty*, *A Funny... Forum*, *Misery* & *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Some favorite shows she has been the ASM for include: *Sound of Music*, *Legally Blonde*, *Noises Off*, *White Christmas*, *Young Frankenstein* & *Rock of Ages*. She also stage manages and teaches technical theater with the Athens Theater Youth Academy.

Outside of the Athens, Avery teaches at Deltona High. She would like to thank the cast, crew, and production team for all their hard work as well as thank the audience for supporting the arts in their community.

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Christie Young

Christie is a musical theatre performer, puppeteer, director, and teaching artist from Lexington, KY. She holds an MFA in Musical Theatre performance from the University of Central Florida and can be found most days acting and puppeteering at Universal Orlando Resort.

In addition to performing, Christie is an adjunct theatre and voice instructor at Daytona State College and is a licensed Estill Certified Voice Instructor. At the Athens, she directs the MainStage youth productions, and audiences have enjoyed her performances in *Sweeney Todd*, *Holiday Inn*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Rock of Ages*, and many more.

Christie has performed for theatre companies from New Hampshire to Alaska, including Princess Tours/Cruises, Flat Rock Playhouse, and Lexington Children's Theatre. At Universal Orlando, she has originated six roles, opened four lands, and one theme park. In Central Florida, she has performed for Walt Disney World, Odd-O-T's Entertainment, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, and the former Capone's Dinner and Show. She believes art is an act of service and that training the next generation is the best way to give back to the artistic community.

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D'Montrae Harris

D'Montrae Harris is proud to return to the Athens Theatre Youth Academy, where his own journey as a performer began. A former Youth Academy student and mainstage performer since 2018, D'Montrae now serves as the Athens' Talent Outreach Coordinator, working to foster diverse representation and empower artists in the community.

Beyond the stage, D'Montrae works as a choreographer across Central Florida, with credits at the Athens Theatre, Orlando Family Stage, Orlando Shakes, and many other performance venues. As both a performer and educator, he is passionate about cultivating spaces where students can explore identity, artistry, and collaboration through theatre.

Trained as a dancer under the Alvin Ailey Dance Conservatory in Jacksonville, D'Montrae specializes in Jazz, Hip Hop, Contemporary, Tap, Musical Theatre, Acro, and Lyrical/Modern. As a vocalist, he is trained in Classical, Jazz, Commercial/Pop, and Musical Theatre styles.

Onstage, his performance credits include being a dance swing for the national tour of *The Thorn*, Grandmaster Chad/Nikos Argitakos in *Legally Blonde*, Angel in *RENT*, Damien Hubbard in *Mean Girls*, and one of seven original narrators for the world premiere of *Seventeen* with the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra.

As both a performer and teacher, D'Montrae is committed to inspiring the next generation of artists with the same passion, creativity, and dedication that shaped his own path.

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Emma Pierson

Emma Pierson has been dancing for over 15 years, including 10 years as a competitive dancer. She is trained in ballet, jazz, tap, lyrical, hip hop, musical theatre, and contemporary. Throughout the course of her training, she has achieved several overall wins and earned multiple scholarships for her performance and artistry.

For the past three years, Emma has taught dancers ages 3–18, sharing her passion, technique, and creativity with each class she leads. She has choreographed a wide range of pieces across all styles, with her choreography traveling and being performed throughout Florida. Her work has earned multiple choreography awards and numerous first-place titles, reflecting her dedication to artistic excellence and her ability to inspire young dancers.

Emma is excited to bring her experience and enthusiasm to Athens Theatre and to continue helping dancers grow both technically and artistically.

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Emma Stoughton

Emma Stoughton has been teaching music in its many forms since she was a teenager. She attended Stetson University and graduated in 2025 with a Music Education degree.

Ms. Stoughton has been teaching musical theatre for almost a decade now. She has worked at Athens for four years, but has been part of the Athens family since 2013. She has had many opportunities teaching music and drama at Volusia County Baptist Church where she led classes in voice, musical theatre, and drama for elementary and middle school students.

Ms. Stoughton currently works at Spruce Creek Elementary where she teaches music. She recently was Assistant Director for their production of *Beauty and the Beast*. She is excited to continue sharing her love of music with all her students!

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Gracie Holland

Gracie is thrilled to be returning this summer as a Teaching Artist! A rising junior at Stetson University, she is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance. Her training includes musical theatre, opera/classical, jazz and commercial pop/rock.

As a former Youth Academy student herself, Gracie especially enjoys helping young performers grow in confidence, creativity and musicianship. Her favorite part of the job is seeing them all shine on-stage at the end of each week! She began working with ATYA as a junior counselor for two summers before stepping into the role of Teaching Artist, this being her third summer teaching K-2 camps!

Onstage, her performance credits include Austyn in *In Pieces*, Belle in *A Christmas Carol*, The Enchantress in *Beauty and the Beast*, Jenny in *The Shape of Things*, and Genevieve in *The Bakers Wife*. She cannot wait to spend another summer making music, creating memories, and celebrating each camper's success onstage!

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Hayden Patterson

Originally from Cary, NC, Hayden graduated from East Carolina University in 2018 with her BFA in Theatre Arts Education, BFA in Theatre Arts with a concentration in Theatre For Youth, and a minor in vocal music studies. While in college, Hayden was the recipient of an Undergraduate Research in Creative Activities Grant and the Outstanding Senior in Theatre Education Award. Hayden was also the head drama, musical theatre dance, and acapella counselor for four summers at Keystone Camp for Girls in Brevard, NC.

Upon her college graduation, she moved down to Florida to participate in the Disney College Program. During her four years of making magic as a cast member, her favorite role was being a part of the Animal Science Education team at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Her previous directing credits include *Disney's Finding Nemo Jr.*, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Disney's Jungle Book Kids*, *Mary Poppins*, *Into the Woods*, *Bring It On: The Musical*, and *The Ice Wolf*. She cannot wait to start this theatrical summer with you all!

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Jacob Eaddy

Jacob Eaddy is an industry professional in the world of entertainment with over a decade and a half of experience as a director, producer, and instructor of the performing arts along with over two decades as a performer in various disciplines including, singing, dancing, acting, and even puppetry. He has brought all of these experiences together to help create 4 academic arts programs for various schools and churches, 1 homeschool performing arts co-op, and 2 entertainment companies.

He has a BA in Legal Studies: Entertainment Law from The University of Central Florida and is a certified Drama teacher with the state of Florida.

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Noah Clark

Originally from Nashville, TN, Noah Clark is an actor and musician located in Orlando, Florida. Noah has worked with various theaters in the area including the Athens Theatre, Bay Street Players, and Theater West End. Noah has been a teaching artist at the Athens Theatre Youth Academy with their summer camps since 2024 and has worked with varying ages from middle to high school for the duration of that time.

Noah has been acting in various community and professional productions for over a decade and has extensive vocal experience in both mainstream and musical theatre music, as well as music directing experience at both the Athens Theatre Youth Academy as well as in Nashville, TN in college and at community theaters. In college, Noah studied Commercial Entertainment with a specialized focus in Musical Theatre and Music production.

Noah wants to foster a safe environment for children by providing a safe and effective lesson plan, alongside helping the youth academy students feel like they can accomplish their goals with both acting and voice.

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Lexi Dares

Lexi is so excited to be sharing her love of music with her students! Having grown up surrounded by music, she began singing in children's choir at the age of 4. Eventually, she started performing in musicals and never looked back! Lexi graduated Summa Cum

Laude from Jacksonville University with her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre. She served as the student director of the JU RiverTones, an all-female auditioned vocal jazz ensemble for three of her four years there. Along with this, she was nominated for the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship at the Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival, as well as placing in the top 6 of their Musical Theatre Intensive competition. When she is not teaching, Lexi can be seen performing at Orlando's Theme Parks, including Universal Orlando Resort and SeaWorld Orlando, and at theaters around Central Florida!

As an educator, Lexi focuses predominately on students building healthy habits that will allow them to have a long, successful career. She also emphasizes students having fun, because loving what you do is what makes it all worth it! Lexi is very thankful for this opportunity and truly can't wait to watch her students grow through music!

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Marisol LaBoy

Marisol is originally from Brooklyn, NY and has a background in Elementary Education. She taught Kindergarten and 1st Grade ELL in Nashville for 5 years. She then took a hiatus from teaching in 2012, moved to Florida and became an Equity performer at Disney where she worked for eight years. In 2016, she became a Kindermusik Educator and worked with Grow & Sing Studios for six years. In 2017, she became the Children's Worship Producer at Northland Church in Longwood, FL and fulfilled that role for six years, as well. She went back to teaching in the Public Schools in 2021 and is currently an Elementary Music Teacher for OCPS.

Marisol has been a teaching artist for summer camp at ATYA since 2022 and has worked with students in grades K–12. During the school year, she teaches the weekend Music and Drama classes for grades K-2 and assists with additional special events. She enjoys working with all of the staff at the Athens Theatre and building relationships with students and their families.

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Michael McNamara

Michael is excited to be back teaching with Athens Theatre for a third summer! He is an educator, director, and performer from Oviedo, FL with a BA in Theatre and Economics from Rollins College and an MFA in Directing from Western Illinois University. He loves to teach and coach students in acting, improvisation, and musical theatre, and this last year he has served as the Artistic Director of the Gallery Players, the home for long form improvisation at WIU.

Michael has taught and directed at theatres across Central Florida and currently performs as an improviser with *The Dinner Detective*. His recent directing projects include *Eurydice* (WIU), *Hamlet* (Timucua Arts), and *A Skull in Connemara* (WIU).

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Molly Schoolmeester

Molly is a professional actress, director, and arts educator based in Orlando, Florida. She holds a BFA in Performing Arts, Vocal Performance, and Dance from the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD).

Molly has graced stages across Central Florida and beyond, with notable roles including Stella Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland*. She recently directed *Anastasia* with High Country Fine Arts in Buena Vista, CO. Athens' audiences have seen her in the casts of *The Full Monty* and *The Sound of Music*. She also supported Athens' backstage crews for *Holiday Inn*, and *Alice in Wonderland Jr.*

In addition to performing, Molly is a certified Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors and a trained Intimacy Director through Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, as well as a proud member of Florida Intimacy Professionals.

Molly is someone who truly wears many hats in the theatre world and loves every single one of them. Whether she's on stage, in the wings, or in the classroom, she thrives in the company of creative people and brings the same passion and intentionality to every role she takes on. She is thrilled to share her multi-faceted experience with the next generation of theatre artists, and believes that bold, vulnerable storytelling begins with a safe, supportive, and collaborative environment.

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Tiffany Demps

Tiffany Demps is excited to be returning as an ATYA teacher for her 6th summer! Tiffany has been an educator, music director, and performer here in Central Florida for the last 15 years. A graduate of Stetson University's School of Music, she just finished her 11th year as the Director of Chorus and Theatre at Heritage Middle School for Volusia County Schools.

In addition to directing shows at her school, Tiffany is a regular music director for the Shoestring Theatre and West End Prep middle and high school productions at Theatre West End. Every summer Tiffany is a vocal coach for the Young Artist program at the Shoestring and music directs for camps here at ATYA, Theatre West End, and the Ritz Theatre. As a performer, Tiffany has done shows with numerous professional and community theaters throughout Central Florida, and will next be seen here on the Athens stage as Mother Superior in *Sister Act* this summer.