



Placer Repertory Theater

Performing arts, cultural & economic enrichment for Placer County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Placer Rep VAPA Academy offers Free Summer Program

Straight from the Spring Intersession, scoring 90-100% with students and parents on all evaluation areas, Placer Repertory Theater and the Colfax Elementary School District are currently offering registration for the Placer Rep VAPA Academy Summer Program, which runs May 30 through June 30 in Colfax, California. Placer Rep's VAPA Academy employs the visual & performing arts as a foundation from which applied arts, language arts, social sciences, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) may be integrated and explored through non-traditional experiential curriculum & activities that promote students' social, emotional, physical, and mental development.

Thanks to the scholastic vision and creativity of Dr. Andrew Giannini, Superintendent, and the Colfax Elementary School District, Placer Repertory Theater offers a unique experience in which students are encouraged to find their voices individually and collaboratively as they are trained in MFA curriculum, distilled and adapted for an age-appropriate kindergarten through grade 8 experience. From Stanislavski techniques and dramatic structure to the psychology of color and seven elements of design, students engage with interdisciplinary knowledge and professional tools that create a foundation for lifelong exploration.

Universally, what administrators, artist/educators, parents, and students love most about the VAPA Academy is that Placer Rep facilitates these students' education and guides them as the students engage with the curriculum; the artist/educators help students to find what they want to say and provide them with the knowledge, tools, and techniques to communicate their unique perspective and experiences through visual, literary and performing arts.



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“Students do not perform someone else’s ideas, but instead are guided to look within and decide what story they want to tell and then are given the tools to share that story,” said Matthew Heyer, a VAPA Academy Education Facilitator and Placer Rep company member. In addition to being a professional actor, Matthew has an expertise in costume design and fabrication, and teaches students the applied art of costume design and assists students with costume development.

Through expert facilitation of experiential curriculum, VAPA Academy students learn to use their creativity and imagination to conceive, plan, author, collaborate, lead functional groups, direct, design/craft, produce and perform age-appropriate new works relevant to the students, reflective of their individual voices and collaborative group voice.

Some of the Placer Rep Company Members and Affiliates who selected to participate in the Placer Rep VAPA Academy Summer Program includes:

- Teresa Stirling Forsyth, MFA MS, Founder/Producing Artistic Director for Placer Repertory Theater, a former professional visual artist and current professional in the performing arts, with expertise in new works development and social sciences;
- Judy Merrick, USC and RADA training programs with 13 years professional theater in NY, LA and UK, who is an expert in improvisation;
- Kyla Quinn, BA Technical Theater, who worked for Lifetime (TV/Film) and Asylum Studios and is a specialist in Performing Arts Technology
- Matthew D. Heyer, BFA, professional actor and costumer
- Arie Krastev, BS Computer Science, BS Mathematics, who is an early career actor and STEM specialist.

Visit Placer Rep’s website for more information on the VAPA Academy program and biographies of the artist/educators helping to facilitate the Placer Rep VAPA Academy of Colfax: <https://placerrep.org/placer-repertory-theater-vapa-academy/> or contact the Colfax Elementary School District (<https://www.colfax.k12.ca.us/>).

Placer Repertory Theater VAPA Academy of Colfax is a pilot program and one of several programs offered under Education Outreach at Placer Rep within the Community & Economic Enrichment quadrant of Placer Rep’s program areas. Other Education Outreach programs include Artists in the Classroom (visiting artists, artists-in-residence for K-college & senior citizens), School Tours program, Co-productions, and the Free Student Admittance program. Scholastic entities interested in a VAPA Academy in your school district, or in Placer Rep’s other Education Outreach programs



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may email Placer Rep: education@placerrep.org.

Placer Repertory Theater (www.PlacerRep.org) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with the mission to offer educational and quality-of-life enriching professional performing arts and cultural programs relevant to the people of Placer County and surrounding area, while supporting local organizations and acting as an economic engine for the region. Follow Placer Repertory Theater on Facebook (PlacerRep), Twitter and Instagram: @PlacerRep and subscribe to their YouTube Channel (Placer Repertory Theater).

Publishers: FMI: contact Info@placerrep.org



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FACILITATION TEAM

Below are some of the Placer Rep Company Members and Affiliates who participate in the Placer Rep VAPA Academy of Colfax.



**Teresa Stirling
FORSYTH**

TERESA STIRLING FORSYTH – Producing Artistic Director, VAPA Academy program oversight, administration, facilitation. With an MFA in Dramatic Arts and an MS in Business Management & Leadership, this former Silicon Valley high-tech VP and critically acclaimed professional director/playwright also plays the role of Producing Artistic Director for Placer Repertory Theater, which includes all program oversight, including Placer Repertory Theater VAPA Academy.

Previously, the artistic director for two San Francisco theater companies and founder/board president of an economic & workforce development nonprofit organization for Santa Cruz County, her performing arts background includes international tours as an actor/singer/dancer, and director/playwright for national and international touring productions with renowned professional performing artists, such as Brenda Wong Aoki (AEA/SAG/AFTRA), and companies like Dell'Arte Players (AEA). Projects on which Forsyth worked performed at venues such as the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian, Magic Theatre, Cowell Theater, Mark Taper Forum, Dallas Theatre Center, San Diego Repertory Theater and many other renowned venues, and received Dramalogue Awards, Critics Circle Awards, Indy Award: Best Spoken Word Album, Broadway World Awards, the Gloria Burt Fellowship, as well as numerous grants from the NEA, NEH, CAC, ACPC and corporations.

She is a member of the professional organizations: The Dramatists Guild of America (DGA), Stage Directors & Choreographers Society (SDC), The Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) and NNPN/New Play Exchange.



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**Judy
MERRICK**

JUDY MERRICK – Senior Education Facilitation. Judy worked for 13 years in New York as a performer and director. Her favorite credits include Portia in *Merchant of Venice* (Santa Monica Playhouse) and Lysander in *Midsummer Night's Dream* (RADA). She co-founded the NYC theatre Company, The Amoralist, and some of her credits include *The Cheaters Club*, Adam Rapp's *Ghost in the Cottonwoods* and *Bring Us the Head of Your Daughter*. Judy also worked at Playwrights Horizons, and the Manhattan Theatre Club, and toured with *Knuckleball*, which won best show, and she, best actress, at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Judy attended the USC BFA program, RADA, and AADA in NY. More recently, Judy performed in *Persephone's Tale* with her new Nevada City theater company House of Fates, in Placer Rep's award-winning production *Persuasion: a holiday romantic comedy*, and as the lead in *The Moors* with Sierra Stages in Nevada City.



**Kyla
QUINN**

KYLA QUINN – Senior Education Facilitation. Kyla Quinn's background spans professional, academic and community performing arts. Kyla received their BA degree in Technical Theatre in 2020 from California State University Long Beach and worked in the art department for both Lifetime and Asylum Studios in southern California. In addition to professional work on set, Kyla worked on several academic productions as both a designer and crew member. Most notably they worked as a makeup designer for a collaboration piece between California State Long Beach and the Long Beach Opera entitled *The Penal Colony*.

As a performer, Kyla starred in two independent films and particularly enjoys playing the roles of antagonists like Mr. Small in Placer Rep's production of *Sherlock Holmes Sign of the Four*, and Miss Henrietta Musgrove in Placer Rep's *Persuasion: a holiday romantic comedy* in 2021. Kyla was named a Placer Rep company member in January 2023, and is engaged in Placer Rep's professional growth program Studium-Practicum learning new theatrical theories, methods and tools, and the philosophies behind them.



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**Matthew
HEYER**

MATTHEW HEYER – Education Facilitation. Graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where he received his BFA in Theatre, Matthew won the Irene Ryan award for his ensemble work in 2018 and for his performance as Elliot in *Completeness* in 2019. Behind the scenes, Matthew is also a Costume Designer and Fabricator, a Set Designer and Constructor, and a Lighting Designer and Lighting Technician, and dabbles in Stage Management. His design credits include *The House that Will Not Stand*, *Completeness*, and *The Bard on Broadway*.

Matt studied IPA (the International Phonetic Alphabet) and performs duties as a Dialect Coach for Placer Repertory Theater productions. Currently, studying under PRT's Studium Practicum professional growth program, Matt has found new professional areas of concentration such as movement for the actor, vocal techniques, style acting and textual analysis. As an actor, for Placer Rep in 2021, Matthew played George and Milo in two one-acts in the production known as *From the Mind of Scott Charles*, and the title role in *An Evening with Sherlock Holmes*. In 2022, Matt performed with Placer Rep in the ensemble show, *Haunting History*, and was nominated for two Broadway World Awards, including his performances for PRT's 2022 monthly show, *Rifts in Time*.



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WHAT / EVENT

Placer Repertory Theater VAPA Academy Summer Program

May 30 through June 30

REGISTERING NOW!

Extended Learning Opportunities for grades K-8

DETAILS

The **Placer Rep VAPA Academy** program employs the visual & performing arts as a foundation from which applied arts, language arts, social sciences, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) may be integrated and explored through non-traditional experiential curriculum & activities to promote all four areas of student development: social, emotional, physical, and mental.

WHERE

Colfax Elementary School District
24825 Ben Taylor Rd
Colfax, CA 95713
Phone: (530) 346-2202

WHEN

Summer Program: May 30 through June 30, 2023, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 PM. All-day, Morning only and Afternoon only sessions.

FMI

To register your student:

Colfax Elementary School District, 24825 Ben Taylor Rd, Colfax, CA 95713, Phone: (530) 346-2202

To explore the Placer Repertory Theater Education Outreach programs for your educational institution:

Email: education@placerrep.org

WHO

Colfax Elementary School District and Placer Repertory Theater



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GRAPHIC:



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