



Helping Students Align Arts, Academics and Careers

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear MAMM Members,

I hope my greeting today finds you and your families doing well. During this challenging time, it is good to reflect on the many wonderful experiences we were able to enjoy on campus this academic year. Knowing the students are now working hard to find a new "norm" for where and how they learn, we think of them and wish them the best.

For those of you who supported Broadway Bound in January, either with a ticket purchase or underwriting support, we thank you! The Board is pleased to report this year's event had more attendees than ever – we were thrilled to have more guests join us this year. In addition, we raised over \$9,000. I hope we can continue not only to build on this fantastic event in 2021, but also build on our support for the students.

Sincerely,

Verne Wagner

President



#ArtTogetherNow

Calling All Students

Dean Dale Merrill is hosting a contest for College of the Arts students. Feed your need for creativity by producing a video demonstrating how dance, music, theatre, or visual arts can bring us together even when we are unable to connect in-person and you could win \$500!

Now more than ever, the arts are a necessary and vital conduit able to express our collective humanity and profoundly unite us in these unprecedented times. We are all in this together.

Here are the requirements:

- Create an innovative solo dance, music, theatre, or visual arts video highlighting how we are all in this together. You may also work with "virtual collaborators."
- NOTE: Please maintain social distance during this time and work only solo or virtually – stay healthy!
- A link to your video must be submitted to one of the College of the Arts social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter)
- Video content may not exceed 1 minute (60 seconds) in length.
- Videos must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Sunday, April 19, 2020. The winner will be announced on Friday, April 24.

If you post your video on social media, be sure to tag the College of the Arts or use the #ArtTogetherNow hashtag!

#ArtTogetherNow #CSUFCOTA #CSUF #CSUFMusic #CSUFTheatre #CSUFVisualArts #CSUFDance

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
arts.fullerton.edu

Dean Merrill is thinking a lot about our students during this difficult time. He is hosting a contest for College of the Arts students. Details have been posted on social media.

"Feed your need for creativity in these unprecedented times by creating a short, innovative video showcasing dance, music, theatre, or visual arts and you could win \$500 in cash!"

Broadway Bound

If it's January, then it must be time for Broadway Bound! On Sunday, January 26, a capacity audience of MAMM members and friends enjoyed an inspirational afternoon of entertainment in the McCarty Foyer of the Clayes Center. Upon entering the Clayes Center, they were greeted by a vibrant and upbeat performance by the Jazz Combo from the School of Music. Following greetings and introductions, the audience was treated to a performance by the BFA Musical Theatre seniors of the Department of Theatre and Dance. They performed a dynamic, non-stop revue that included classic Broadway standards and gems from recent Broadway hits. Their performance was followed by a catered reception and a meet-and-greet with the performers.

Broadway Bound has become an annual, signature fundraiser for the MAMM Alliance. The funds we raise are used to enhance the professional training of performing arts students through guest professional artists, master classes and special projects such as the acclaimed Festival of New Music sponsored by the School of Music and the New York Musical Theatre Showcase. Our thanks to all who came to enjoy a remarkable afternoon of entertainment, and a special thanks to those who so generously came forward as underwriters for this special event.



Theatre & Dance Department Updates

The BFA NYC Showcase trip has been postponed, and we are waiting for the COVID-19 threat to end. Half of our budget comes from IRA funding which expires on June 30th. I am working on securing the funds needed if the trip needs to take place after that date. Once we are safe to travel, we will look at rescheduling the BFA NYC Showcase. The students are currently filming their showcase to be able to share virtually. Once I have that link, I'll share it with you so that you can view them.



The BFA Acting LA Showcase has also been postponed because of COVID-19. Once the Stay-at-Home has been removed, we will reschedule the event. The students are still working on and filming their projects in a safe and social distant way by filming each person in their only space and editing the two performers together into one scene.

John Short and Bill Lett invited guest artists who worked with the students before the COVID-19 and continue to have guest artist by Zoom during the COVID-19 Stay at Home. This includes Susan Egan, the original Belle on Broadway from *Beauty and the Beast*, casting directors, drama therapist Alexis Maron, and our alumni who talk about their experiences going from student to Broadway.

MAMM Alliance provided funding to bring Doug Varone to campus to choreograph one of his pieces with our students in the Fall Dance Theatre. Award-winning choreographer and director, Doug Varone works in dance, theater, opera, film, and fashion. He is a passionate educator and articulate advocate for dance. By any measure, his work is extraordinary for its emotional range, kinetic breadth and the many arenas in which he works. His New York City-based Doug Varone and Dancers has been commissioned and presented to critical acclaim by leading international venues for close to three decades. For more information about **Doug Varone**, visit:



<http://www.dougvaroneanddancers.org/>

I would like to again thank the MAMM Alliance for all their support to the students and the Department. With your help, we can offer the students unique educational experiences that they would otherwise not receive.

Dave Mickey

Theatre & Dance Chair

Mark Your Calendars

The **Fall 2020** Theatre and Dance Production Schedule is below, including some rescheduled productions from Spring 2020.

Sep 4-19	<i>LIZZIE the Musical</i>	Arena Theatre
Sep 25-Oct 11	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	Little Theatre
Oct 9-25	<i>Vinegar Tom</i>	Hallberg Theatre
Oct 9-24 ^{Tentatively}	<i>In the Valley of the Shadow</i>	Grand Central Theatre
Oct 30-Nov 18	<i>As You Like It</i>	Young Theatre
Nov 20-Dec 13	<i>La Posada Magica</i>	Hallberg Theatre
Dec 3-13	<i>Fall Dance Theatre</i>	Little Theatre

Alumna Profile: Kirsten Vangsness

So what do these three things—a CSUF alumna, a police procedural and a hand sanitizer—have in common? You'll have to wait until the end of this to find out. Early this February, the Department of Theatre and Dance at CSUF hosted the regional Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. A highlight of the festival was both an interview and student Q-and-A with Fullerton alumna, Kirsten Vangsness '96 (B.A. Theatre Arts). She just completed her 15th season as a lead character on the critically acclaimed series "Criminal Minds." She not only acted in the series (playing Penelope Garcia, the quirky computer whiz who assists the authorities), but also wrote four of the scripts, including the series finale. "Criminal Minds" was a ratings hit for CBS, and one of its most watched cable shows throughout its 15-year run.



Kirsten shared with the enthusiastic students the struggles involved in establishing a career in "the business." She was quite candid about the challenges she faced and the need for persistence and belief in yourself. Her break-through came when she landed a small part on a pilot being filmed in Canada called "Quantico" (later re-titled "Criminal Minds"). That small part and the chemistry she had with the cast and producers led to a leading role. Following her Q-and-A with the students, she stayed on to chat and pose with students for countless iPhone photos.

Along with her work on the series, she has also found time to be star in a feature film called Kill Me, Deadly, a "film noir comedy" set in the Raymond Chandler-esque detective world of Los Angeles in the 1940s. Her other co-stars included Joe Mantegna and Leslie-Ann Downs. Kirsten also recently came back from producing two shows at the Edinburgh Festival, and continues to work with her theatre company in Los Angeles, Theatre of Note.

Oh, about the hand sanitizer. Kirsten and two of her friends, Brian and Robin Christenson, decided to become owners of a distillery—the Blinking Owl in Santa Ana. Then the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. And one of the products Blinking Owl was producing was high-proof ethyl alcohol—the base of vodka—the main ingredient in hand sanitizer. The County of Orange and others reached out to Blinking Owl to see if they could help. And now the distillery has moved a major portion of their production to hand sanitizer for the many organizations who are in need. And there is a small CSUF connection. The Fullerton Rotary Club embarked on a project to make much-needed face shields for St. Jude's and other hospitals. A major stumbling block: insufficient hand sanitizer for the volunteers assembling the shields. A CSUF emeritus who belonged to the club contacted Kirsten. He explained what the club was trying to do, and she immediately emailed back, "I'm on it." Through her efforts, Blinking Owl donated all the sanitizer the needed for six assembly stations. As a result, when the Fullerton Rotary and sister clubs finish, they will have created and donated 55,000 face shields for health workers.

What's in store for Kirsten as time moves forward? Even she doesn't know for sure. But Cal State Fullerton's motto is "Titans Reach Higher." Knowing Kirsten, that's a sure thing.

—Dr. Joe Arnold

Linda Woolverton Named a CSU "Remarkable Woman"

This past March, in honor of Women's History Month and this year's 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, the California State University recognized an outstanding alumna from each of its campuses as a "Remarkable Woman" of the Cal State system. Fullerton's honoree was Linda Woolverton ('79 M.A. Theatre Arts). She joined a group of alumnae that included legendary tennis star Billie Jean King (Long Beach) and Hilda Solis (Cal Poly Pomona) who as Secretary of Labor under President Obama was the first Latina to hold a Cabinet-level post. Linda wrote the screenplay for Disney's Beauty and the Beast. It became the first animated film to be nominated for Best Picture at the Academy Awards. Her other screen credits include Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey, The Lion King, Maleficent and Tim Burton's Alice in Wonderland. With the latter she became the first female screenwriter with a sole writing credit on a billion-dollar movie. Linda has been no stranger to the Cal State Fullerton campus since her graduation. She was back again last fall to spend time with students as they were in rehearsal Beauty and the Beast, the musical she wrote based on her film. It was nominated for both a Tony Award and won Great Britain's Oliver Award for Best Musical. She also returned to Cal State Fullerton in 2017 for a second time as a Commencement speaker.

**Social media is a great way to keep up with what is happening in the College of the Arts.
Here are some Facebook posts from spring semester 2020.**



Piano Masterclass with Awadagin Pratt



Who Are The Brave: Music in Honor of President's Day at Carnegie Hall, featuring Robert Istad, Christopher W. Peterson & CSUF choirs



Musical Theatre alumna Salisha Thomas is part of the original cast of a new musical, "Once Upon a One More Time", premiering in Chicago in April and expected to move to Broadway afterward. Salisha was recently part of the Broadway cast for "Beautiful The Carole King Musical"



Cal State Fullerton's Orchestra Concert, featuring the Talich Quartet



Flute Masterclass with Leone Buyse



CSU, Fullerton Dancers Shine at ACDA BAJA Conference 2020



Alumni Band Concert



CSUF Alumni, Linda Wolverton, has been recognized as one of 24 remarkable women of the California State University system



Rehearsal for "Jane Eyre"



Faculty Chamber Series with Guest Artist, Glenn Dicterow

