



POLK COUNTY VETERANS' COUNCIL

**Box 3911
Lakeland, FL 33802
863-602-0921**

31 January 2019

**To Whom it May Concern
Re: TheatreWorks Florida**

It is my pleasure to provide this recommendation for the theatre arts program, *Vet Voices*, developed and hosted by TheatreWorks Florida headed by Scott Cook and Abel Gonzales.

For the past year, TheatreWorks Florida has worked with Veterans to involve them in multiple theatre dimensions—acting, writing, prop construction, etc. From a Veterans perspective, we believe such a program is beneficial to those combat veterans seeking to deal with emotional issues such as PTSD as a result of their combat experience.

We believe arts experiences including painting, music, sculpture, and the like are valuable in assisting with the emotional adjustment many veterans require. The efforts of Scott and Abel, contribute in a meaningful way to the overall arts experience.

I recommend TheatreWorks Florida be considered by any community to be included in a veteran support program.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Gary L. Clark".

**Colonel USAF(Ret)
Chairman**



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

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SENATOR KELLI STARGEL

15th District

September 2, 2015

TheatreWorks Florida
Attn: Scott Cook, Artistic Producer
8 East Cypress Street
Davenport, FL 33837

Dear Mr. Cook,

I saw the article in the Ledger and wanted to congratulate you on bringing TheatreWorks Florida into Davenport. We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful institution promoting the theatrical arts in our area. I applaud your willingness to give back to our community and wish continued success in the years to come. Again, congratulations on this very special event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelli Stargel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kelli" and last name "Stargel" clearly distinguishable.

Kelli Stargel
State Senator, District 15

REPLY TO:

- ☐ 2033 East Edgewood Drive, Suite 1, Lakeland, Florida 33803
- ☐ 324 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5015

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

ANDY GARDINER
President of the Senate

GARRETT RICHTER
President Pro Tempore



Brandon N. Kneeld
City Commissioner for the
City of Davenport

1 S. Allapaha Ave.
Davenport, FL 33837

BKneeld@MyDavenport.org

Polk County Public Schools &
The Polk County School Board
1915 S Floral Ave
Bartow, FL 33830

Dear PCPS Staff & School Board Members,

I am writing to you today on behalf of TheatreWorks Florida, and their long history of outstanding work in the City of Davenport and greater NE Polk County community. TheatreWorks Florida has established itself as the crown jewel of arts and culture in the City of Davenport. Their long list of shows have been of the highest production quality, offering exposure to the arts for a population with otherwise limited options. More importantly however, TheatreWorks Florida has been a valuable participant in our community with numerous service and outreach ventures. Since 2014, the TheatreCares program has actively sought to include individuals in art programs that may not otherwise have that opportunity. More recent, the VetVoices program has helped many veterans find an outlet for therapy through the arts and reconnect with the communities they are returning to. These are but a few examples of the impact TheatreWorks Florida has had on the Davenport community.

None of these continued achievements would have been possible without the help and partnership of Polk County Public Schools. Your generous donations of space and other resources at the old Davenport Elementary has provided TheatreWorks Florida and its programs a place and opportunity to grow. This collaboration has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated by myself and others in the community. As you know, the city has been partnering with PCPS to reopen Davenport Elementary, a project that the city and I are fully committed to. The unfortunate drawback to this project is the uncertainty that it places on the future of TheatreWorks Florida and their programming in this space.

Anything that PCPS Staff and the Board can do to continue to partner with and help ease the transition for TheatreWorks Florida would be warmly welcomed by the community. I would love for them to continue to be able to be active in our community and would be thrilled if PCPS can continue to partner with them in that capacity. Whatever the future holds however, please do keep the organization in your consideration as you plan for the future of Davenport Elementary, and provide them with regular communication and as much information as possible to maximize their time and ability to plan for that future. As always, I am deeply thankful for your partnership and continued support of our children and communities.

Sincerely,

Brandon N. Kneeld



CITY OF DAVENPORT

Gateway to the Ridge

January 12, 2018

Scott A. Cook, Artistic Producer
THEATREWORKS FLORIDA
8 East Cypress Street
Davenport, Florida 33837

Dear Mr. Cook:

Oscar Wilde is quoted as saying, *"The stage is not merely the meeting place of all the arts, but is also the return of art to life."* The Davenport Campus of TheatreWorks Florida is bringing art, as well as new memories, to our wonderful town. My wife and I were delighted to be part of the audience during the first two plays of TheatreWorks' inaugural season in Davenport. Needless to say, having survived our teenage years through the 1950's and 1960's, we truly felt a connection with the actors on the stage. We are looking forward to your next play, "The Great American Trailer Park Musical."

The Davenport Campus of TheatreWorks Florida has become an integral part of our community. For the duration of the play, you have provided a sense of family between the actors on the stage, the theater staff, and the audience. You are also providing our students at Ridge Community High School and Haines City High School with the opportunity to broaden their horizons. They are learning that the theater is not only about the actor on the stage. It is also about directing, singing, dancing, music, set design, costumes, lighting, sound effects, and so on. The students who are involved with the Davenport Campus theater are also learning important life skills such as solving problems that might arise at the last moment.

Thank you for making Davenport the home of TheatreWorks Florida.

Sincerely,

Vice Mayor H. B. "Rob" Robinson

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MISSION:
***Cultivating an
environment
for the
arts to flourish
through
Advocacy,
Collaboration,
Economic
Development,
Education and
Promotion.***

June 21, 2017

Scott A. Cook
TheatreWorks Florida, Artistic Producer
8 East Cypress Street
Davenport, FL 33837

Dear Mr. Cook,

The Polk Arts Alliance is submitting this letter in support of the exciting professional, high quality productions that are being done by TheatreWorks Florida in our communities.

Your mission and all the great work you are doing engages audiences and creates programming and opportunities that positively impacts all of our citizens including students, the elderly, the disabled, underserved populations in central Florida. Your community outreach program TheatreCares, creates and reaches excellence in the arts for everyone.

As Polk County's only professional theater, your award winning TheatreWorks Florida is contributing to help establish the Davenport community as a premiere arts and culture center and with professional main stage plays and musicals that provide, preserve and promote the advancement of the art of live theatre.

TheatreWorks Florida is building a stronger community, improving the quality of life and helping in the revitalization of the downtown area.

We are very proud and fortunate to have such a level of artistic quality and expertise that contributes to the community's cultural enrichment and provides opportunities and experiences unique to our Central Florida region.

Sincerely,

Meri Mass

Meri Mass
Executive Director

The Polk Arts Alliance is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. All memberships and donations are tax deductible in accordance to the law.
One hundred percent of the revenue from the sale of the Florida State of the Arts license plate comes back to Polk County.
Select the Arts – Buy the Plate!

Polk County's Officially Designated Arts Agency

Cindy C. Rodriguez

863.698.8019

crodriguez@tampabay.rr.com

Jan. 16, 2018

Mr. Scott A. Cook
TheatreWorks Florida
Davenport FL

Dear Mr. Cook:

I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of my personal experiences and observations related to TheatreWorks Florida (TWF) and your impactful efforts to ensure a thriving arts & culture presence in Davenport and surrounding areas.

I have watched the company grow from its inception – seeing early performances at the Davenport location (School House Rocks) and, more recently, enjoying both Marvelous Wonderettes productions. Each time I travel from my home in Lakeland to take in a TWF production, I bring a friend and invest in the local economy by having dinner/beverages at one of the local restaurants in the City. We've visited the True Blue Winery, the Hotel Restaurant and more. The arts are a fantastic partner with local hospitality businesses and increase tourism and, more importantly tourism-related spends in the area – contributing in significant ways to the local economy/prosperity while also building "community."

As you know, an independent study recently showed that in Polk County overall, the arts contribute over \$46 million annually to the economy, creates/sustains jobs, supports other local businesses, provides educational opportunities for folks of all ages and enhances the quality of life for residents, students and tourists alike.

Every production I've seen has been delightful! As public affairs professional, I am honored to work daily amongst great community leaders. I am actively engaged in many civic activities, Polk Vision's efforts, several local chambers, the Polk Regional Water Cooperative, and the Florida Public Relations Association – having held executive level leadership positions in most of those named. I have actively participated in and supported Polk Education Foundation's fundraising efforts (local celebrity dancer in Stepping Out for Education) – currently serve on the board of the Polk Arts Alliance and on the Arts/Culture/Heritage sub-committee of Polk's Tourist Development Council. I am a passionate community leader and arts advocate.

Because of that involvement and passion, I am particularly pleased with the experience(s) you provide high schoolers from Ridge Community and Haines City High and the volunteer/engagement opportunities you provide for all demographics in Northeast Polk. Your organization epitomizes how the arts – especially the arts in education – benefits a local community well beyond the talent, curtain calls and applause experienced inside the venue itself. I offer my wholehearted support for continued partnership with Polk County Schools, the City of Davenport and the arts community. Keep up the great work!

With Warm Regards,

Cindy Rodriguez
Sr. Government Affairs Regional Manager
Southwest Florida Water Management District