

STAGE THE CHANGE

The Arts as a Social Voice



Press Kit 2020

STAGE THE CHANGE

THE ARTS AS A SOCIAL VOICE

MISSION:

- To provide communities with inspirational, original performances, which serve as catalysts for change.
- To help students become global citizens through creativity and performance.



STAGE THE CHANGE

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A Brief History

STAGE THE CHANGE was founded in 2013 through the Hauppauge High School Drama program. After positive reception throughout the community, the “Anti-Bully Project”—a series of student written vignettes meant to address bullying, peer pressure, healthy relationships, and other sensitive topics – proceeded to receive recognition throughout New York State from countless theatre, education, and social issue organizations.

Founding Director Ruthie Pincus was thrilled to find that her students were not only capable of producing theatre to begin conversations but eager to write and share their own perspectives. Pincus recognized the potential to expand beyond the high school setting and explore other human rights issues. What arose was a one-day annual theater conference, held at Tilles Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of Long Island University in Brookville, New York. The conference is attended by high school and college students, educators, arts professionals and community members and includes panel discussions, interactive workshops, keynote speakers, and student performances and serves as a launching point for new works created by students to showcase in their communities and inspire change in the world. In 2015, Stage the Change expanded its focus to include dance and, in 2017 added film. Attendance has increased from 276 participants in 2013 to 819 participants in 2019.

Conference guest speakers have included Tony-Award winning Broadway actor **Gavin Creel**; Broadway & television actress/activist **Jessica Hecht**; four-time Tony-Award winning playwright **Terrence McNally**; Tony-award winning producer **Tom Kirdahy**; **Jeanine Tesori**, composer of Broadway’s *Fun Home*, *Shrek* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Award Winner and activist **Anna Deavere Smith**; Broadway actor and playwright **John Cariani** (*Almost Maine*, *Something Rotten*);

2020 programs will expand to include a Summer Ambassador program. This program will invite students from the tri-state area to participate in a one-week intensive program, led by theater professionals. Participants will learn leadership skills and develop works of socially mindful theater to be presented in their home communities in 2020-21.

Stage the Change is co-sponsored by Tilles Center for Performing Arts and Hauppauge Public Schools. The annual conference is hosted at Tilles Center on the campus of LIU Post.

STAGE THE CHANGE

About the Conference

The annual conference strives to cultivate socially mindful artists. It is attended by over 800 high school and college students, educators, arts professionals and community members, participants are challenged to find new ways to use their voices. The 4 different sections of the conference reflect this goal:

- *A keynote speaker*
- *Presentations of juried socially mindful student-created works of theater, film and dance*
- *Interactive breakout sessions for students and educators*
- *Panels with theatre, film, and dance professionals which explore how the arts can bring about social change*



Workshop facilitators and guest speakers are professional actors, directors, film-makers and dancers who focus their work around social justice issues.

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Workshops and Presenters

Past conferences have included presentations and workshops from:



Full lists of presenters available at stagethechange.org

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Past Conferences

Honored Guest Speakers:

2019

[Gavin Creel](#)



2018

[Jessica Hecht](#)

2017

[Terrence McNally](#) &
[Tom Kirdahy](#)



2016

[Jeanine Tesori](#)

2015

[Anna Deavere Smith](#)

2014

[Tom Kirdahy](#) &
[Sheryl Kaller](#)



2013

[Joe Norton](#)

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Conference Participants 2013-2019

Adelphi University
Arlington High School
Baldwin Senior High School
Bellmore-Merrick Central High
School District
Brooklyn College
Calhoun H.S.
Carle Place Schools
Cold Spring Harbor Jr/ Sr High
School
Cold Spring Harbor Jr/Sr High
School
Commack High School
Copiague Schools
Deer Park High School
Division Avenue High School
East Meadow High School
Eastport South Manor HS
EF Academy
Elwood Schools
Farmingdale High School
Flushing High School
Franklin High School
Freeport High School
Half Hollow Hills High School East
Half Hollow Hills High School West
Hauppauge High School
Hempstead High School
Hicksville High School
Hofstra University
Holy Trinity Diocesan High School
John F. Kennedy High School
Kenmore West High School

Kings Park High School
Long Island University
Nassau BOCES Long Island High
School for the Arts
North Babylon High School
North Shore Schools
Northport High School
NYC J.H.S. 227
NYC P.S. 176X
P.S. 176X, JHS 227
Port Jefferson Schools
Portledge School
Princeton High School
Roosevelt High School
Smithtown H.S. West
Smithtown High School East
Smithtown High School West
South Side High School
Stony Brook University
Success Academy
The Calhoun School
The Hewitt School
Uniondale High School
Urban Assembly School for the
Performing Arts
Valley Stream Central High School
Walt Whitman High School
Walt Whitman High School
William Floyd High School
Wyandanch Memorial High School

STAGE THE CHANGE

In the News

Featured on:



Articles and Honors

STAGE THE CHANGE

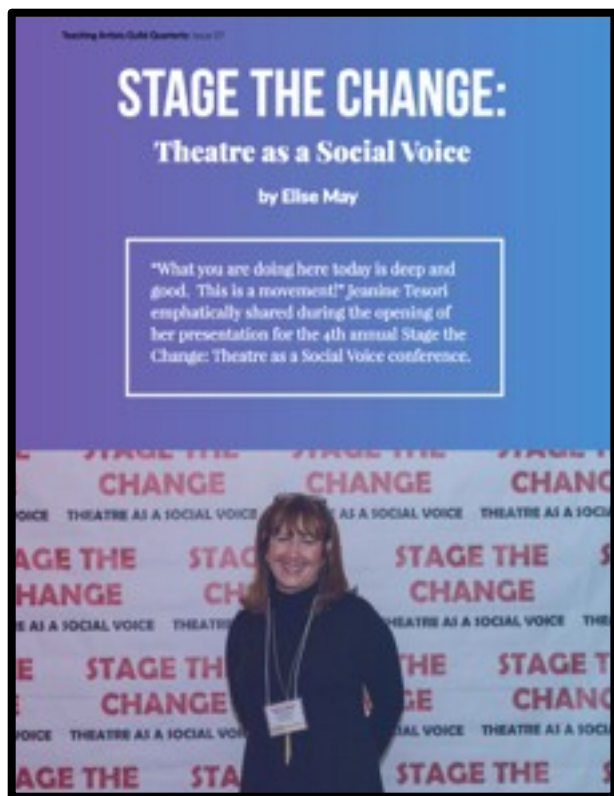
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HARVARD
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Story: [Staging Change: Three Ways theater can build community and create a platform for social justice.](#) Leah Shafer, June 2017

www.teetico.com



Teaching Artist Guild Quarterly: [Stage the Change, Theater as a Social Voice.](#) Elise May, December, 2016



January, 2017: Honored by the Suffolk County Human Rights Council at NY City Hall

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In the News

Smithtown Messenger

October 29, 2015

Hauppauge Stage the Change Players Perform at 2015 IAIE World Conference

Hauppauge High School's Stage the Change players recently performed at the 2015 International Alliance for Invitational Education (IAIE) World Conference titled "Beyond the Test: Inviting School Success," held at the Islandia Marriott Hotel, the 33rd Annual IAIE World Conference brought together educators from around the world to learn more about "Invitational Education" and to share their successful strategies for creating positive school climates.

Prior to the conference, IAIE Executive Director Joan R. Fritz had an opportunity to see a presentation by Hauppauge's Stage the Change players, prompting her to extend an invitation to the students to give a 45-minute performance at the 2015 Annual IAIE Conference. "I was very moved by the students' creative work, professed messages and most professional performances," she stated.

Invitational Education is not a program, but a theory of practice in which school adults learn how to message students and colleagues in ways that are

intentionally respectful, trustworthy, optimistic and caring, so that everyone has the opportunity to realize their full potential. It is a self-concept approach to school climate. "The idea is that our self-concept develops from all the positive and negative messages we get about ourselves through the people in our lives and in our environment. My self-concept (what I believe to be true about myself) then influences the behaviors that I choose," described Fritz. "We work with school adults to help them realize how their words and actions are perceived by students and how they influence that student's self-concept and behaviors. Student voice, choice, leadership and democratic practices are all part of Invitational Education."

The International Alliance for Invitational Education also recently launched a new Coalition to Promote Positive School Climate, with eight other national school climate organizations. According to Fritz, working together, the Coalition "hopes to ensure balance in American schools and to inform policy makers about how the current high-stakes testing and evaluation initiatives are actually lowering student and staff motivation and effort - the unintended consequences of a highly controlled, uninviting climate."



Smithtown Messenger

November 13, 2014

Broadway/Theatre Pros Join With Hauppauge Students As Voices of Social Change

Broadway Producer Tom Kindahy, Broadway Director (Mother and Sons) Sheryl Kaller and Playwright Dominique Morisseau are among the professionals who will join with Hauppauge High School's theatre students on their mission to use their creative talents to become voices of social change. In 2012, the students in Hauppauge Theatre Teacher Ruth Pincus' Advanced Acting Ensemble Class banded together to write and perform the "Anti-Bully Project" for the Hauppauge Middle School and others. The vignettes captured the attention of the Council for Prejudice Reduction, Tilles Center, RFK Foundation, among others, and led to the "Stage the Change, Theatre as a Social Voice" Conference, which will be held on Friday, November 21, 2014, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the Tilles Center for Performing Arts in Brookville, New York.

The 2nd Annual "Stage the Change" Conference will investigate methods for teaching students to become global citizens through creativity and performance. This day of learning, collaborating and inspiring is open to all Long Island high school and college theatre students, educators, guidance counselors, social awareness clubs, youth groups, parents and community members. "The success of last year's 'Stage the Change' has shown us that this full-day event is an opportunity to engage young people and to inspire them to become voices of change,"



Tom Kindahy -
Three award winning
Broadway producer (It's
Only a Play, Mothers &
Sons, Master Class) -
photo by Linda Santoro



Dominique Morisseau -
Ted Kennedy Playwright
award recipient,
Visionary Playwright,
Poet, Actress & Artist -
photo by Joseph Moran

described Pincus. "Bringing kindness and dignity to the forefront through theatre empowers students to make a difference in their own schools, communities and their world."

Kindahy, Kaller and Morisseau will join Associate Director of Education and Outreach for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS Joe Norton, Director of Programs, Artists Striving to End Poverty Abby Geris, Education

Director, Tectonic Theatre Project Matthew Freeman, Ron Russell, the EPIC Theatre, and others as Conference participants and/or panelists.

In addition to performances by Hauppauge's theatre students, the Conference will feature Keynote Speeches from Kindahy and Kaller and Breakout Sessions on such topics as:

- The Artist as Citizen and a City of Artists - Both Make a Difference
- From a Moment to a Movement
- Making a Scene: Staging a Plush Mob
- The Seven Principles for Inclusive Education
- Using Deal's Image Theatre Techniques to Map a Theory of Social Change
- Young Playwrights

"Theatre programs can be catalysts for change in school districts and communities," described Pincus. "By bringing kindness and dignity to the forefront through theatre, students will be empowered to make a difference. If theatre is our art form and means of expression, it becomes our most powerful voice."

To register for "Stage the Change, Theatre as a Social Voice," visit www.stagechange.org or contact Ruth Pincus at rpincus@stagechange.org or call 516-375-3532. Tickets are \$75 for adults and \$5 for students. The Conference is Common Core and APPR compliant and aligns with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA).

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Media- videos

2017 Conference Highlights

<https://youtu.be/fT3q5eSM7xg>

WLIW Interview

<http://www.wliw.org/programs/wliw-arts-beat/february-5-2015/>

MyLITV Interview with STC Founder Ruthie Pincus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7VoHMYLfc0>

Stage the Change Promotional Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgOGpXAfWpC>



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About the Founder

Ruthie Pincus

Executive Director of Stage the Change

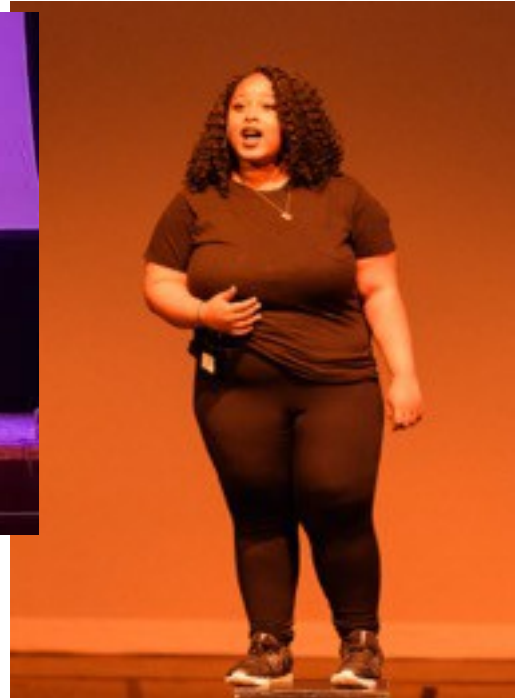
Ruthie Pincus is an award winning Theatre teacher at Hauppauge High School in Hauppauge, New York. Ruthie came to teaching as an actress and director. For the past 17 years she has been teaching theatre and enabling her students to create original theatre pieces based on issues such as human rights, celebrating diversity, equality and kindness. By creating Stage the Change, Ruthie has taken her cause beyond the walls of her own high school, with her mission of enabling other schools to teach their students to use their "theatre voices" to change their world. As she continues to teach and empower other students and teachers, her goal is to help to create global citizens among our students and allow them and the communities that support them, to understand the power of theatre and all of the arts in our educational systems and beyond.



"Year after year, I watch students, educators and communities empowered by the use of our 'arts voices.' I am so proud to be part of a community that not only cherishes, but supports and encourages our student voices as we teach them how to hone their passions to 'stage a change.' [...] "It is so very important as we gather our 'allies' in this mission, to understand and appreciate the difference that we make in the lives of our students, communities and our audiences. It is a privilege to be among this generous community of people that give their time and efforts to this very important cause."

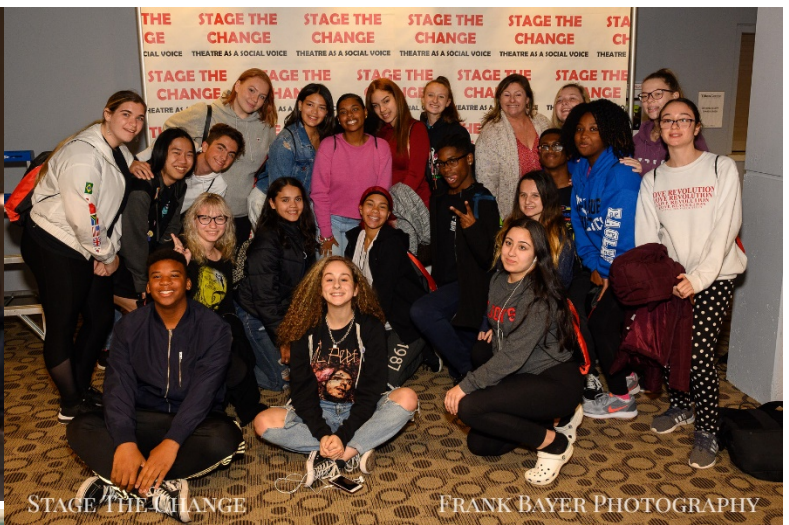
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Photos



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Photos



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<https://www.facebook.com/stagechange/>



<https://twitter.com/stagechange>



https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzrb-Ag_kcSlm7W_ECvvWHw



[@stagechange](https://www.instagram.com/stagechange)

Stage the Change is co-sponsored by Hauppauge Public Schools and Tilles Center for the Performing Arts' Department of Arts Education at LIU Post

TillesCenter
for the Performing Arts LIU Post



Stage the Change Aligns with Dignity for all Students Act

Stage the Change is registered with Nassau and Suffolk BOCES Arts in Education Services.