

Zach Theater Announces New Leader of Advanced Training Program and New North Campus Manager

New leaders bring extensive experience as educators and artists to elevate Zach's advanced training in musical theater and acting.

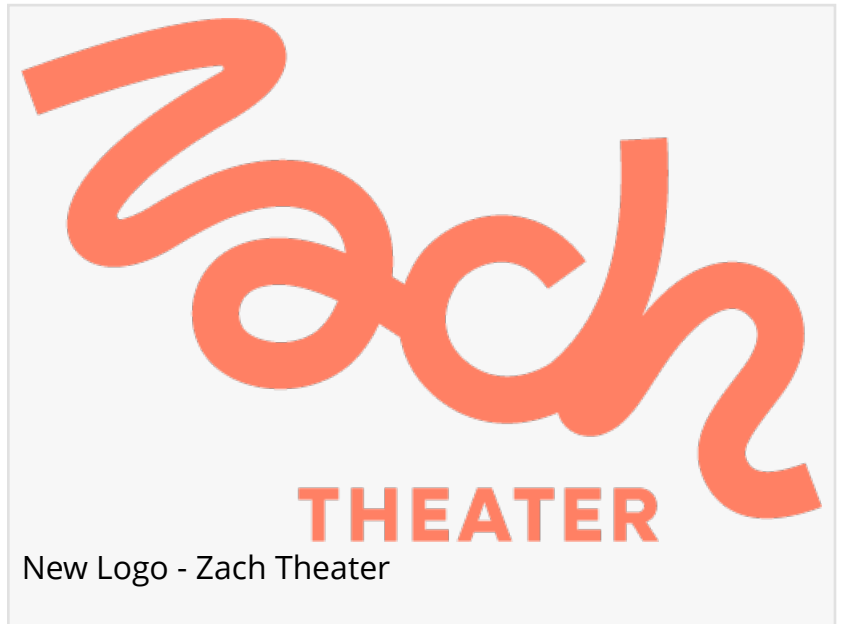
AUSTIN, TX, UNITED STATES,

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Zach Theater, the longest-running professional theater in Texas, announced two new leaders for its advanced training programs.

Charles Swan has been named Associate Director of Advanced Training to oversee musical theater and acting advanced training programs

across both the Downtown and North campuses, while Julia Cherson has been appointed Zach North Manager, where she will also direct the Acting Conservatory.



"These appointments mark an exciting new chapter for our advanced training programs," said Nat Miller, Director of Youth Programming at Zach Theater. "Charles and Julia bring the right combination of artistic vision, educational expertise and commitment to student growth. Their leadership will help us expand opportunities for young artists and ensure our students are fully prepared for the next step in their journey."

Swan, a Houston native, earned his BFA in musical theater with an emphasis in dance from Sam Houston State University. He launched a career performing across the country before turning to education, including eight years leading the musical theater program at Houston's High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and most recently teaching at the Dreyfoos School of the Arts in Florida. His students have gone on to appear on Broadway in *Hamilton*, *The Prom*, *Kimberly Akimbo*, *The Lion King* and more, as well as earn national recognition from the YoungArts Foundation and the August Wilson Monologue Competition.

In addition to his classroom work, Swan has directed and choreographed Off-Broadway and

regionally, including *The Young Man from Atlanta*, *BEAU: A New Musical* and *Grey Gardens* starring Betty Buckley. He has performed at Theatre Under the Stars, the Alley Theatre and Houston Grand Opera, and trained at the Lincoln Center Directors Lab and Broadway Theatre Project.

"This role combines my passions for artistry and education, and I am thrilled to join the Zach community," Swan said. "My goal is to help students become confident, market-ready performers while also equipping them with transferable skills that will serve them in any field."

Chereson holds an MFA in acting from Pennsylvania State University and a BA in theatre from the University of Mount Union. She has trained at Chicago's Black Box Acting Studio, Victory Gardens Theatre and the Second City Conservatory. Most recently, she served as theatre director at Somerset Community College in Kentucky, where she revitalized a program that had been dormant for two years following the pandemic.

Her directing credits include *Hand to God* at Southwestern University, *Native Gardens* at SkyDome Stage Company, *Steel Magnolias* and *Waiting for the Host* at Somerset Community College, and assistant director for *Sweeney Todd* at Flashback Theater Co.

"As an extension of what Zach Theater is known for, I want Zach North to be a place where students feel supported to take risks and grow as artists," said Chereson. "By making training accessible and inclusive, we can create an environment that helps young people discover their voice and build confidence on and off the stage."

Since 2013, Zach's Pre-Professional Company has enrolled more than 600 students, with alumni appearing in Broadway productions such as *The Notebook*, *& Juliet*, *Real Women Have Curves* and *A Light in the Piazza*. In 2018, Zach expanded advanced training with the launch of its Zach North Cedar Park campus and Zach Academy, further solidifying its reputation as one of the strongest youth training pipelines in the country.

More information about all Zach Youth Programs is available at:

- Training Programs: www.zachtheater.org/zach-youth/training-programs/
- Academy: www.zachtheater.org/zach-youth/academy/
- Classes: www.zachtheater.org/zach-youth/classes/
- Camps: www.zachtheater.org/zach-youth/camps/

About Zach Theater

Zach Theater is the longest-running professional theater in Texas and one of the ten oldest in the country. Founded in 1921 as Austin Community Players, incorporated in 1932 as Austin Little Theater, and sometime later became Austin Civic Theater; it was renamed the Zachary Scott Theater Center in 1968. Zach is a nonprofit arts organization that creates theater, education, and training programs designed to ignite connection between artists, audiences, students, and the community.

As Austin's leading professional producing theater, Zach employs more than 300 actors, musicians, and designers each year to stage a bold and diverse array of plays and musicals under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Dave Steakley and Managing Director Jamie Herlich.

Zach serves nearly 140,000 Central Texans annually, including more than 35,000 children and youth through innovative education programs, camps and classes, and community outreach including over \$110,000 annually in financial aid to students to ensure access to theater education. With a strong commitment to inclusion, Zach offers over 52,000 in discounted or free tickets to the community each year.

Guided by a vision to be the place for everyone's story, Zach is committed to artistic excellence, belonging, innovation, and integrity in everything they do. Learn more at zachtheater.org.

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