

ACTING WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

**AWB**

A UNIQUE THEATRE WORKSHOP FOR THE DISABLED  
PHILADELPHIA

2019

# ANNUAL REPORT





## Mission & History

### OUR MISSION

Acting Without Boundaries aims to transform lives and build self-esteem in an empowered community of people with physical disabilities through theater that celebrates ability.

### OUR HISTORY

Acting Without Boundaries was founded in 2004 by Christine Rouse because of her love of theater, acting, and her personal experience with Cerebral Palsy. As a teen, Christine's desire to perform was often limited and she wanted to provide a place where children and teens with physical disabilities could shine on and off stage. Starting with a few actors and a few workshops, founder Christine Rouse has grown the program over the past 15 years to now include five life changing programs: AWB Juniors, AWB Seniors, AWB Masters, AWB Melodies, and the AWB Acting Lab.

Through AWB performances and the Melodies outreach program, AWB reaches hundreds of people each year, showing them that disabilities do not have to be an impediment to independence, inclusion and success.

For fifteen years, AWB has expanded in exciting ways. Building on Christine Rouse's original vision of serving young people under the age of 30, AWB is committed to serving mature adults aged 30 plus with theatre arts programming that provide life skills, compassion, empathy and joy to our actors, families, volunteers and audiences. Since 2004 AWB has increased program participation by 400% and the retention rate from our original first two years is over 40%.

It is with much pride that we celebrate AWB's 15 Year Anniversary and a 55% increase in the number of program participants!

The foundation of theater is communication and learning how to effectively connect and cooperate with others. It is the combination of our successful connecting verbally, physically and emotionally that is essential to one's quality of life.

## Letter From the Director

### Dear AWB Friends,

This year marks a special milestone for Acting Without Boundaries because we are celebrating 15 years of providing theatre opportunities for children, teens, and adults with physical disabilities. It has been amazing to watch the growth of AWB develop over the years.

Many of our original cast members from 2004 were adolescents at the time of joining AWB – many of whom have stayed with us for the past 15 years! Over the past decade and a half, they have grown into adults. These once young teens are now college graduates, living on their own, in relationships, pursuing jobs, pursuing acting jobs, and other careers.

It's been an extraordinary 2019 for AWB. In February, AWB performed at the Kimmel Center as part of Philly Theatre Week, sponsored by Theatre Philadelphia. With Kimmel's marketing support we filled the entire performance space. It has been an exhilarating year for our organization. In March, AWB launched AWB Acting Lab, a theatre class program for adults with physical disabilities at Inglis House in Philadelphia. In April, AWB held its Fourth Annual Hero Award at Water Works in Fairmont Park, where we honored Lauren DeBruicker, who is an attorney and advocate for people with disabilities. AWB Jr. performed "How Spiders Came To Be, The Tale Of Arachne" at The Agnes Irwin School in May. AWB launched a new program, the AWB Masters' Program for adults that took place in June at Inglis House. In July, we held our annual summer workshop for "Peter and The Starcatcher" (a prequel to Peter Pan) at The Haverford School and performed for the campers attending ESF Summer Camps. In September, AWB did a Melodies performance for the Lower School at The Haverford

School. In October, the actors performed "Peter and The Starcatcher" in Centennial Hall at The Haverford School for the community.

AWB Melodies has performed for many community organizations and events such as Green Street Friends School, Impact Center, and Bryn Mawr Day.

There are many ways for you to get involved with AWB from donating through our Hero Award Sponsorship program, purchasing an ad in our playbills or making a contribution at shows. You can volunteer with AWB on or off the stage. What is important is that you stay a part of the AWB family.

I am both proud and honored to lead this amazing organization. I hope you enjoy reading about AWB and our many accomplishments in the following pages and thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

**Christine Rouse**

Founder and Executive Director  
Acting Without Boundaries



## AWB Seniors

AWB is a place where actors can make vital peer and mentoring relationships. Participants learn how to collaborate effectively and they build many life skills to better equip themselves for self-advocacy. The AWB Senior program begins in November each year. From November to July, there are monthly four-hour workshops. In July, a five-day intensive workshop program culminates with a preview performance for children attending ESF Camps at The Haverford School. The program year concludes in October with a major performance debuted for the community. The actors perform their major production at Centennial Hall at The Haverford School. This past year AWB performed *Peter and the Starcatcher*. It was suspenseful, fun and extraordinary! Through social media promotion, word of mouth, newspaper advertisement and direct contact with the community, AWB filled the 655 seat theatre for the prequel to *Peter Pan*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*.





## AWB Juniors

Established in 2008, AWB Juniors year-round program culminates in a musical performance at the Agnes Irwin School's West-Wike Theater. Each month, participants attend a two-hour workshop conducted by Maria Ceferatti, a professional music educator. Participants receive training in acting, singing, dancing and various improvisational techniques. AWB Juniors are invited to participate in the AWB Melodies outreach program, visiting schools, hospitals and local community venues to educate and entertain the community. This year AWB Juniors performed *How Spiders Came to Be, The Tale of Arachne*. It was a darling performance "set in Greece" and held at the Agnes Irwin School in May. Our youngest actors, ages (4-14 years) literally shined – costumed in purple and black togas accented with glitter, sparkles and sequins. They sang and danced amidst a backdrop from ancient Greece- stealing the hearts of the crowd.

# AWB Masters

For many years, AWB programs offered an immediate sense of belonging, in a nurturing and supportive community for children and teen participants. Many of our teen participants have grown up and become young adults. AWB's original program model anticipated participants aging themselves out by the age of 30. This has not happened. AWB participants want and need more. AWB is committed to serving current participants and keeping a high retention rate among existing participants. Due to demand and need to expand our programs to serve our existing population, this year in celebration of AWB's 15th Anniversary, we launched the AWB Masters' Program for adults.

In June, AWB held a three full-day program at Inglis. Equipped with theater professional Nathan Flowers, from The Tisch School of the Arts in New York City and Sharon Geller, from Philadelphia, they helped to support AWB's Artistic Director, Neill Hartley, the inaugural program launched. Each day was approximately eight hours long, with two-hour long segments and three breaks in between sessions for meals, socializing and guest speakers. The first day began with script analysis where participants dove into the words used to create Shakespeare's Macbeth. The use of language was examined methodically looking closely at the script. Participants discussed the precise words chosen for the story, learned about the background and its meaning and tried to understand and embrace the thoughts, emotions, and feelings of the characters. Participants contemplated individually, in small groups and collectively for a deeper understanding of the power of words we choose to speak and use. On the second day, participants attended two master classes. Sharon taught a movement, script and monologue class and Nathan focused his workshop on improvisational techniques. The final day included a review of the weekend's work and preparation for a showcase performance in the facility. The 3-day workshop culminated with an hour-long presentation by the participants.





## AWB Acting Lab

Acting classes develop participants imagination and build their creative muscles. For a population that is sometimes restricted by physical limitations, allowing participants to imagine scenarios that push them beyond their physical experience becomes vital for these individuals. The AWB Acting Lab creates a forum for participants to stretch intellectually, verbally, emotionally, pushing individuals beyond their personal limits.

Due to the strength and longevity of our program, and in celebration of our fifteenth year, AWB has expanded in both depth and breadth – creating new curriculums and serving more children, teens and adults with our unique acting and theater programs.

This year, three six-week Acting Lab Programs were held at Inglis. Participants were introduced to the fundamentals of acting and an intermediate-transitional acting platform. The Lab will give AWB the opportunity to serve new participants and build capacity in our program. Additionally, long-term AWB participants are given an apprenticeship in order to obtain the skills and discipline used by professional artist to open up more job possibilities and future career opportunities in theater and beyond.

Each 6-week program is taught by theater professionals with the assistance of a long-term AWB actor; therefore, providing AWB participants that have been with the program for over 10 years, an apprenticeship with paid job experience as a theater arts educator.

In March, AWB launched their first outside theatre education class, the “AWB Acting Lab” at Inglis in Philadelphia. With sufficient funding AWB will continue offering acting classes collaborating and partnering with other organizations serving physically disabled communities.

## AWB Melodies

One of AWB's greatest gifts to society is its ability to promote diversity appreciation. Performances at schools, summer camps, retirement homes, and hospitals introduce community groups to AWB. Educating and collaborating with other arts organizations allows AWB to share their passion for theater arts to a larger community base and educate audiences about disability awareness, acceptance and inclusion. The AWB Melodies program includes social outings and field trips.

The Melodies outreach program brings anywhere from 5 to 20 actors together for a mini-performance at schools, summer camps, retirement homes, hospitals, and community events to entertain audiences and educate on the importance of disability awareness and to emphasize diversity appreciation. As part of the melodies program, in February, **AWB performed at the Kimmel Center**, filling the entire space, as part of Philly Theatre Week, sponsored by Theatre Philadelphia. In March, AWB Melodies did an outreach performance and Q & A at the Green Street Friends School. In April, AWB held its fourth annual Hero Award at Water Works in Fairmont Park, where we honored Lauren DeBruicker, an attorney and advocate for people with disabilities. There were 12 AWB Senior members who did a live performance at the event. In September, AWB Melodies performed at Bryn Mawr Day. AWB held two workshops on disability awareness with Haverford College. Founder Christine Rouse and staff members engaged with Haverford College students collaborating with both the classics and sociology departments. Additionally, Christine Rouse visited the Impact Center and spoke with 20 students involved with the Impact Center. In October, AWB held a disability awareness outreach programs at The Haverford School for boys. AWB provides four to twelve outreach workshops, social outings and field trips for its actors to form stronger ties with their fellow peers and build disability appreciation and awareness.

In 2019 AWB Melodies held 4 outreach workshops, 3 community performances and 1 social outing.



Acting, theater and drama creates a platform for individuals to experiment and find their "voice". Participants learn that it's ok to step outside their comfort zone, try something new, and that one can continue to evolve and grow throughout life. On a softer note, it's just plain fun and participants experience a great deal of joy and laughter at the workshops, performances, outreach programs and socials.



## 2019 Fourth Annual Hero Award

This year marks the 4th Annual Hero Award which was held at Water Works in Fairmont Park, where nearly 200 guests honored Lauren DeBruicker, who is an Assistant US Attorney and advocate for access and independent living for people with disabilities. The Hero Award is given to a community leader with a physical disability who displays remarkable efforts to overcome adversary, enhance awareness, reduce stigma and increase community access for disabled individuals. Lauren embodies the definition and gave an inspiring acceptance speech touching every heart in the room. We celebrated with a gourmet dinner, dessert, wine, beer and champagne. AWB Melodies did a live performance, followed by a live auction and live hand-raise appeal. Over \$80,000 was raised at this year's event. The evening was a phenomenal success!







# AWB 15th Year Celebration

## AWB BOARD MEMBERS

**Lisa Goldschmidt**  
Board Chair

**Melissa Clark**

**Kim Crowley**

**Christine Rouse**

**Choppy Rouse**

**Michael Rouse**

**Erik Strid**

**Mary Thomas**

**Elena White**

## AWB STAFF

**Christine Rouse**  
Founder and Executive Director

**Neil Hartley**  
AWB Sr. Artistic Director

**Maria Ceferatti**  
AWB Jr. Artistic Director  
and AWB Sr. Music Director

**Jules Catania**  
Managing Director

**Jennifer Huth**  
General Manager

**Maria Payne**  
AWB Treasurer and ESF accountant

I was introduced to AWB in 2016 when our friend, AWB Board member Erik Strid, invited my husband David and me to serve on the inaugural Hero Award Benefit Committee, honoring Tim Mahoney. A little research confirmed that not only was AWB a non profit with an amazing story and mission, but in an unexpected way, struck a very personal cord. At the time, our older daughter had spent two summers and a full year after college graduation at a camp for disabled and seriously ill children outside Atlanta, Georgia. Camp Twin Lakes focuses on giving campers experiences they would otherwise be excluded from due to the physical limitations of disabilities and illness and the equipment that accompanies them. The experiences she had at camp ultimately led her to pursue a nursing degree. Similarly, our younger daughter had just discovered her passion for musical theatre, and now has set her sights on pursuing a BFA in musical theatre when she attends college in 2021. So while it was AWB's informative website and our daughters' combined passions that first led us to accept Erik's invitation, it was meeting Christine and hearing her speak at that first event that inspired me to want to be more involved with AWB. When Christine speaks about her experience and what inspired her to found AWB, it is impossible not to be awed by her courage, passion and drive.

A year after the first Hero Award, Christine asked me to join the Board. The inception of the Hero Award began an exciting new era for AWB. Recognizing leaders in the community expanded AWB's exposure. Staff was added, allowing for, among other things, additional grant applications to be

written and ultimately awarded. This in turn allowed new programs to be discussed and soon realized – including performances at Philly theatre week, including the Kimmel Center, a Master class in conjunction with Inglis House, and a collaboration with Haverford College (to name just a few). The Hero Award event has consistently sold to capacity thanks to increased marketing and the use of social media. The board expanded and included a diverse group with a breadth of knowledge and experience, reflecting the AWB community, AWB administration and actors' families, as well as professionals in law, finance and philanthropy. I love to work with the AWB team to brainstorm ideas for projects, new and in the works. Specifically, as the 15 year anniversary was approaching, I coordinated with Jules and Jen to plan an appropriate celebration that would reflect a cross section of AWB families, board members and supporters. Bringing the whole community together as a reminder that the dream Christine had is still strong and still growing. Because the nature of the program does not always allow for the different groups to mingle, it was a priority to have an event where everyone could feel celebrated and valued. The whole is definitely greater than the sum of its parts thanks to the fearless vision of Christine. AWB continues on a steady path offering children, teens and adults an opportunity and a forum to discover and pursue their passion for the stage and acting. My eyes have been opened to a creative and talented population that truly exists without boundaries and as a board member, I am proud to commit to that mission.

– **Melissa Clark, AWB Board Member**



# An Extraordinary 2019! AWB's Year in Pictures

## AWB Collaboration With Haverford College

In August, AWB was approached by Haverford College to collaborate on a project that they have on campus for their students. The scale and scope of the project involves four entities working together: Haverford College, Philadelphia Area Creative Collaboratives (PACC), a non-profit organization (that's where AWB fits in) and an artist (for our project there are actually two.)

Philadelphia Area Creative Collaboratives is an independent entity that is based at the John B. Hurford '60 Center for the Arts and Humanities at Haverford College. Supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, PACC explores the role of the arts in effecting civic change and encouraging sustainable participatory

communities of engagement. In partnership with local non-profit organizations, artists, Haverford faculty and students, the initiative creates a regional hub coordinating a network of partners and activities within the Philadelphia area.

The two Haverford faculty involved in this project are Shelly Ronan, Sociology professor, and Hannah Silverblank, Classics professor. Christine has had speaking engagements in both of their classes and students have come to the September workshops and AWB Acting Lab classes at Inglis to volunteer. AWB received a monetary grant of \$3,000.00 for its participation. Each student in Hannah and Shelly's classes produced an independent project and

provided a professional photographer for AWB who photographed the dress rehearsal, shooting backstage candid's and archival photos of the show.

**A final projects expo by the HC students was held on Thursday, December 5th at 4:30 PM in the HC library.**  
HC and PACC created a project website which you can view here: <https://collaboratives.haverford.edu/bodies-assembled/>



# A 15 Year Snapshot of AWB 2004-2019



# How You Can Help

## Specialty Sponsorships

### SENIOR SHOW SPONSOR

**\$25,000**

This donation will cover all costs for 2 productions by our AWB Sr.'s.

### JUNIOR SHOW SPONSOR

**\$20,000**

This donation will cover all costs for our AWB Junior production.

### "STAGE MANAGER"

**\$15,000**

This donation will cover costs for set design, sound and light for one year of productions.

### "WORKSHOP SPONSOR"

**\$10,000**

This donation will cover workshop fees for one year of AWB rehearsals (12 workshops).

### "COSTUMER"

**\$5,000**

This donation will cover costume and prop costs for one year of productions.

### AWB PROGRAMING

- builds confidence & self esteem
- encourages self expression
- opens doors to future passions and opportunities
- offers a platform for families
- provides a social outlet
- supports connectivity amongst all participants

Visit our website and click on "Support Our Stars" to donate today. You can also visit our website to purchase tickets to our upcoming performances!

[actingwithoutboundaries.org](http://actingwithoutboundaries.org)

For more information please contact Jules Catania at [jcatania@esfcamps.com](mailto:jcatania@esfcamps.com)

## Sponsorship Opportunities for General Operations of AWB

### EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

\$10,000+

### PRODUCER

\$5,000 - \$9,999

### DIRECTOR

\$2,500 - \$4,999

### LEAD ACTOR

\$1,000 - \$2,499

### ENSEMBLE

\$500 - \$999

### PATRON (SHOW ONLY)

\$250 - \$499

## How Your Donation Helps

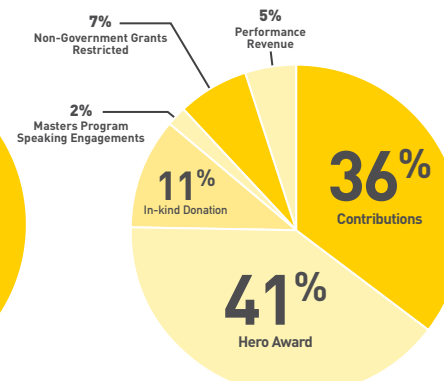
For One Year	\$5000	\$2500	\$1000	\$500	\$250
TRANSPORTATION	X	X	X		
SPACE, SET, LIGHT, SOUND	X	X		X	
MUSIC & SCRIPTS	X	X			
COSTUMES	X		X		
AWB SOCIAL	X				X

## 2019 Financial Report

### EXPENSES



### REVENUE



## Take A Bow!

### THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS, DONORS AND SUPPORTERS!

#### \$30,000+

Widener Memorial Foundation

#### \$20,000+

Connelly Foundation

#### \$10,000+

The Philadelphia Foundation- Gerry Lenfest Legacy Fund  
The Sylvia W. and Randle M. Kauders Foundation  
Mary Thomas

#### \$5000+

ESF Camps  
Lisa and Matthew Gillin  
Michael Gretz and the Gretz Family  
Lumen Foundation  
Paula and Mark Solomon

#### \$2,500+

Azeez Foundation  
CourtSense Tennis Training Center  
Eileen and Michael Dougherty  
Haverford College (PACC)  
Inglis  
Anne and Tim Mahoney  
Permit Capital Advisors, LLC  
Cathy and Edward Quinn  
The Aileen K. and Brian L Roberts  
Marlyn Schiff  
The Victory Foundation

#### \$1,000+

Carra Cote Ackah and Amachie Ackah  
The Addis Group, Beyond Insurance  
Dorothy and David Binswanger  
Thomas Bock  
Jules and Michael Catania  
Melissa and David Clark  
Concentus Wealth Advisors  
Girls Grant Making Club of Agnes Irwin School  
Michele Rae Kirkland  
Donald Kurz  
Helen and Richard Leaman  
Main Line Health  
Thomas Manion  
Mary Jane Raymond  
Reed Smith

Choppy and John Rouse  
Karina and Michael Rouse  
Robin and Timothy Trautman  
Villa Maria Academy Alumnae Association  
Connie and Sankey Williams

#### \$500+

Tayla Fishman and Max Apple  
Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church  
Maripeg Bruder  
William Buck  
Cornerstone  
David McDowell  
Henkels & McCoy, Inc.  
Jackson Medical Equipment Company, Inc.  
Kim and David Lengel  
Tara and Stephen McDonnell  
Raya Coiffure & Boutique  
Karen and Mark Robinson  
Larry and Clara Schreiber  
Roberta and George Shell  
Temple Contemporary at Temple University  
Jane Thomas  
Steven and Janine Voudouris  
Elena and Dennis White

#### \$250+

Terrill Barnard  
Charles Bernicker  
Elinor and James Buck  
Robin Cohen and Boutique W  
John DeBruicker  
Lauren DeBruicker  
Eveline and Tjerk Debruin  
Fr. Kevin Gallagher  
Kavitha and Vipin Goyal  
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Hoffman  
Caren and Daniel Jones  
Margaret and Gary Jones  
Mr. and Mrs. Andy Lewis  
Mick Keelan  
The McDevitt Company  
Mr and Mrs. David Morris  
Mary Beth and Joseph Seaman  
Mr. Richard Walling  
Christopher West  
Eowyn West  
Joan and Leonard West  
Louella Style

#### \$100+

Soo Abboud  
Greg Ackerman  
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Anderson  
Maria Ceferatti and Ron Bonenfant  
Rob Dieckert  
Robert DeNinno  
Shruti Engstrom  
Michael Evanko  
French Creek Farm  
Susan Gambescia  
Debra Grossman  
Susan Hoffman  
Mr. and Mrs. John W. Irvine  
Paul and Margaret Hondros  
Lucy Klain  
Megan and Thomas King  
Brendan Lake  
Maria and Patrick Payne  
Mary Jane Raymond  
Emily Riley  
Katie Samson  
Maria and Stephen Schreder  
Karen and Erik Strid  
Janice Smith and Reuben Wade  
Rehana and Gordon Uehling  
Nirypa Umapathy  
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Wasley  
Nile Weber  
Barb Whitson  
Judy and Carey Verger

#### UNDER \$100

Bryn Mawr Cleaners  
Sandra Fink  
Linda Fossi  
David Ingram  
Jeannie's Deli  
Tjerk Debruin  
Pamela Johnson  
Stephen Kuerschner  
Timothy Lederer  
Kelly Mabin  
Margaret Malley  
Linda Schwartz  
Marilyn Trainer

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[www.ActingWithoutBoundaries.org](http://www.ActingWithoutBoundaries.org)

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750 E. Haverford Road  
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

E [info@awb2004.org](mailto:info@awb2004.org)

**"I BELIEVE THERE ARE NO BOUNDARIES IN THE WORLD OF ACTING REGARDLESS OF ONE'S DISABILITY. I WANTED TO CREATE A PLACE WHERE KIDS COULD GET INVOLVED IN THEATER, FORM FRIENDSHIPS AND GAIN CONFIDENCE. OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS, AWB HAS DONE THAT AND SO MUCH MORE."**

**- CHRISTINE ROUSE,  
AWB FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

