



Laurie Swigart has a burning passion for the creative discovery process of theatre and the way in which that process intrinsically changes the lives of those involved . That passion touches the lives of her cast members, young and old, and ignites a spark of “what if” that is possible with dedicated effort. She then fans the flames, encouraging those with whom she works to expand their experience in professional quality theatre not only on stage, but behind the scenes as well as from the audience viewpoint.

Her credentials include an Associate of Arts degree from UW-Richland, a Bachelor of Science in Education-Special Education from UW-Whitewater (magna cum laude), and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from UW-La Crosse (summa cum laude). She has given private lessons in piano and voice, and her students have regularly excelled at solo and ensemble competitions. In addition, her production credentials are extremely diverse, spanning everything from contracted high school productions to community theatre productions and variety shows, from Moliere to musicals, and from comedy to tragedy. A complete list of her credentials is available online at her theatre education website, Theatre on a Shoestring, <http://dreamcoat.org/docs/CV.pdf> .

These experiences, coupled with a very dedicated team of volunteers and an amazing network of professional contacts, give each of her productions a very solid foundation for a degree of professionalism difficult to achieve in either high school or community theatre.

Upstage Review Theatre Company (1999-2005, Sparta, WI), founded by Laurie, has touched the lives of hundreds of teens, offering them a glimpse of culture and a perspective on how it can be interwoven into the very fabric of their lives with amazing life stories evolving with each production. Young people who came to Upstage Review from every imaginable home life situation, many with a past record of behavioral or emotional baggage, have gained the ability to express themselves in a creative and productive manner. An amazing number of Upstage alumni have gone on to pursue careers in theatre or broadcasting areas, or in music and education.

In these days of drastic school budget cuts, fine arts programs are often the first to suffer. Laurie’s current endeavor, Dreamcoat Productions (Woodbury, MN), is an attempt to fill this ever-widening void in a timely and professional manner with a program of after-school and summer classes, workshops, and performances for students grades 7-12.