

Midwest (Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Illinois)

During the past week, Brad Price and Christine Lynam were at Christ the King School in Oklahoma City casting, rehearsing, producing and performing *Cinderella*. The entire experience was tremendous for the children, the teachers, the parents and our entire school community. The performance was fantastic; it was a significant accomplishment for the entire cast, including Brad and Christine. We truly appreciate the educational, artistic and cultural benefits Missoula Children's Theatre has brought to our community.
Oklahoma City, OK

When I heard my name called for the cast, I was so happy! I couldn't wait to start rehearsing that night. I always look forward to going to rehearsals. The actor/directors Michael Pizzuto and Scott McGee were great! They took care of things well and they were fun. I learned that you could be as loud as you want on stage, but off stage you couldn't even whisper to have a great show. I was "daughter" in the play. I love to act and enjoyed being in the play.

Granger, IN

Our director team, Chad and Maggie, were delightful, enthusiastic and outgoing. They obviously enjoy their work and enjoy sharing their talent and love of the theatre. We are pleased with the quality of MCT. They are excellent representatives for your company.

Lenexa, KS

Greetings from Clinton Missouri. Thank you for what you have done to make this summer's MCT production very special. Thank you, too, for sending us Amber Lynch and Eric Day. From the moment we met them we knew the week would be rewarding. What we did not know was just how rewarding it would turn out to be! Amber's teaching experience was excellent in her work with the children. She knew how to organize and get the work accomplished. Her manner kept children working and realizing how much they were progressing. Amber dealt with changes in a calm and confident way. I believe we learned faster this year than in our three previous productions. I realize that our program is growing and students are learning what to expect. However, Amber kept us on target in a most professional yet relaxed way. Students felt good about their accomplishments. Amber's talent and personality helped the week flow and kept us energized as we learned. Eric was a great example of how MCT includes children and how everyone can be a part of the theatre. During our registration, we noticed a woman arriving with several children including a boy in a wheelchair. While they were still in the parking lot, Eric asked me if the boy was there to audition. After I replied that I didn't know, Eric said, "I'm going out and make him feel welcome." As it turned out, the boy, Alex Charron, was not there to audition, but the woman he was with was his caregiver. Alex had been involved in an accident with a gun the year before. When he met Eric and Amber and learned about the week, he wanted to stay. His parents agreed. This was the first real outing for Alex since the accident. Alex was amazing! He even spoke his lines and was an inspiration to all of us. ERIC MADE THIS HAPPEN! He took Alex as his personal mission and gave a lasting gift to Alex. Amber and Eric were EXCELLENT! No question! Theater needs more friends like the two of them. They are great ambassadors for MCT not because it is their job but because of the kind of people they are. Enough praise for their work cannot be put into a letter. Please congratulate them for the unselfish work they did here in Clinton. It was a blessing for us to have them as our tour team. We wish them the best and know that their lives will be full because of the way they care for others.

Clinton, MO

Last week, Jenny Woodruff and Kevin Johnson came to our campus to direct and act in *Cinderella*. Artistic Director Charles Rogers and I would like to commend them for the superior job that they did. The workshop/production was presented by the Arts Education program, a program that is only a year old. Since its conception it has been our intention to bring and present only the best, even if that means less presentations, workshops, master classes, etc... Without hesitation, Jenny and Kevin have been among the best teachers we

have had in the past year as part of the Arts Education program. As a new program, we presented 63 workshops and master classes, and 14 performances with national and international artists last year. Having been a teacher for 25 years, rarely have I seen the teaching techniques, patience, purpose, talent and genuine love for children that these two displayed during the entire week. Furthermore, they brought the kindness and integrity that we hope all teachers show towards their students. Jenny and Kevin have represented MCT, teaching and youth in the most positive way. When I spoke to them about how pleased we were they immediately referred to the excellent training and teaching philosophies given to them by MCT. Thank you for the fine work your organization is doing and for the positive impact these two young people have made on our community.
Overland Park, KS

This was the most marvelous children's event we've ever had. We hope we will always have directors as wonderful as Emily and Peter. PLEASE SEND EMILY ANNE SMITH TO US NEXT SUMMER!
Three Lakes, WI

I felt the need to thank you, and to tell you how impressed I am with MCT. In July, Brett and Erin came to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, to do *Sleeping Beauty*. My son reluctantly agreed to audition, because I knew he would be great. When he got the part of the king, he was very distraught. He thought that he would get a smaller part, and was very nervous to get a big part. Brett and Erin did an outstanding job of making him feel comfortable. In fact, he has never been more focused, or more responsible. He worked hard to learn his lines. I was very proud of him. I was also very impressed with the entire week. I have done theatre myself, and I am a second grade teacher. I've also done productions with my students. I learned a lot from watching their audition process! Please let Brett and Erin know how wonderful they are. Please continue with this very valuable program. I hope that my son will have another opportunity to do Missoula Children's Theatre. He began as a child who was afraid to go on, and ended up complaining that he only got to do two shows! Thank you so much. It was a tremendous experience.
Fond du Lac, WI

Hi There! Thank you so much for promoting and supporting Missoula Children's Theatre to the PTO & Incarnation. We thought that it was an incredible program for many kids to get the opportunity to get involved in all aspects of the arts of participating in a play! From the props, direction, costuming, studying lines and performing. All in one week! That was incredible!! It gave all the students involved the experience of seeing how much time, effort and planning it takes to produce a show at such a young age. For many, this was their first exposure to theatre!! This experience promotes self-esteem, self-expression, communications, imagination and creativity! It was truly a fabulous program!! Thanks again for your efforts and extra time you gave after school all week assisting the theatre program. We truly appreciated it very much. Thank you.
Dayton, OH

Recently, two of your actor/directors, Diana Calderazzo and Chad Neuman, were in Basehor, Kansas, and put on one of your plays. My son Matthew was fortunate enough to be chosen to appear in the production. While going through his book bag I found his script. He had forgotten to return it. I hope this doesn't hinder any future productions of this play. I would like to add that Matt enjoyed himself thoroughly during the rehearsals and performances. This was a very positive experience for Matt and he is anxious for next year's production. I myself was very impressed with the level of professionalism that Chad and Diana showed during production and with the compassionate way they interacted with the children. I also look forward to next year's production and hope that my son can again be a part of it. Thank you so much for all you do for children. Your organization is truly a benefit to them. Have a wonderful day, and I again apologize for any inconvenience the missing script has caused.
Bonner Springs, KS

We love the shows. They are such delightful variations of the fairytales. I have observed our young actors over the years combine intense learning with FUN. A TREMENDOUS EXPERIENCE! Thanks
Spencer, WI

During the past week Scott Davis and S.Anne were in Oklahoma City at Christ the King School. This is the fourth year that we have had a Missoula Children's Theatre performance at Christ the King. It was fantastic again this year. Scott and S.Anne did a great job. They were pleasant, diligent in their work and well organized. They worked well with the children who participated, as well as the teachers, the principal and a number of parents. The performances were a big hit and a tremendous success. Our school community has benefited in a number of ways from your services. Each year a number of children have the opportunity to participate in a high quality performing arts production. The Missoula tour directors have provided excellent workshops for the entire student population, where they have taught the children about staging, costumes, props, make-up and acting. The performance permits the parent-teacher organization to raise funds from ticket sales and other ancillary activities, such as sales of photos and videos. The school community enjoys the performance, especially those whose children have a role in the production, no matter how small it may be. We have hosted a Missoula tour director at our home each year, and this year we hosted Scott. He was very nice to our four children while he was here (including our two girls, who attend Christ the King School and participated in *Treasure Island*). You should be pleased to have him as a Missoula tour director. Both Scott and S.Anne should be given high marks, based on the experience at our school. Thanks for your good work with our school and other schools throughout the U.S. and the world.

Oklahoma City, OK

The students responded very well to Karen and Thad. They made a significant difference in the lives of two children who have been rather introverted. The cast represented all levels of academic skills as well as all socio-economic levels. MCT productions do a superb job in that area. I send an invitation via bulk mail to each household in the Edgar school district regardless if their children are enrolled in the public or private school, and regardless of whether the household does/does not have children. If they pay taxes they get an invitation! We run the MCT as a whole community project. It has brought the private and public school into a more collaborative mode! MCT is very well received in this community. We did a "Walk Through Storyland" exhibit that showcased art, drama and reading activities our staff and students did in the preparation of *Tales of Hans Christian Andersen*. Thank you for a wonderful program.

Edgar, WI

Sage and Justin were incredible! They instantly bonded with the kids, yet commanded their respect. They accomplished so much in their short time here. The fruits of their work will blossom for years. They were great ambassadors for your organization. Your excellent reputation is well deserved. We are so glad that you came to our community. The enrichment of our youth will transcend to so many facets of their lives, for the rest of their years. A quality experience for all.

McCook, NE

As usual the Tour Actor/Directors were superb and everyone is amazed that such a performance could be done in such a short period of time. Keep up the good work! Everyone in our town and the surrounding communities believes this is what the students have needed for some time. We tell everyone that they should have you in their community.

Woodward, OK

Can't wait to hear what '05 brings. Many positive comments from the community tell us that this program needs to come back again and again!

Green Lake, WI

All of our students really enjoy MCT – you have a great reputation here. We appreciate the affordability also.

Imperial, NE

Nellie and Mary did a remarkable job of handling our children. This is an excellent opportunity for our students – one that will always be a splendid memory of their early school years.

Fort Wayne, IN

The tour/actor directors do a fabulous job casting the students. They have made a difference in many lives. MCT is a super program because for one week it does not matter who you are, what you've done, how you spell your name or where you learn (regular ed, special ed). Everyone is a member of the MCT show. If you auditioned and you were cast, you are an equal!

Edgar, WI

We hope to have this presentation annually. It gives us an opportunity to reach the children in our community and expose them to a wonderful learning experience. Based on the size of the audiences, we will have much more participation next time.

Ponca, OK

We just wanted to thank you for the great week our children had working with Julie Nooner and Heather Marsh-Prelesnik presenting *Rumpelstiltskin*. The two leaders were excellent in directing the cast in the local production and they were obviously talented in acting as well. The comments from parents and participants alike were all favorable and the children who were in the show had a wonderful time.

Centerville, IA

With each residency, respect and admiration for Missoula Children's Theatre grows in our community. MCT dependably provides clever scripts, delightful scores, creative costumes, imaginative sets, and most importantly well-trained, excellent personnel which inevitably results in an exciting and successful experience for all involved. I continue to be astounded at MCT's uncanny ability to select high quality staff, and then provide them with the training to not just produce a really good show, but also enables the creation in just one week of a well-rounded, fun-filled learning and growing experience with the arts for over 60 thrilled and enthusiastic youngsters with diverse needs, strengths, and weaknesses! Additionally, because of MCT residencies, Darke County Center for the Arts wins good will and support from parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends of those youngsters involved, engendering current and future interest and participation in the arts from a broader segment of our community. As I am retiring in September, this will be my final opportunity to work with your exceptional organization; however, I have no doubt that DCCA's relationship with MCT will continue to benefit our community well into the future. Thank you so much for all of your assistance which has allowed DCCA to accrue multiple benefits from our association with Missoula Children's Theatre.

Greenville, OH

Heather and Julie were well-trained, well-disciplined and fun, earning the respect and affection of the students with whom they worked. Well-plotted movements and colorful costumes contributed much to the professional look of the well-crafted production.

Greenville, OH

Reggie and LeAnna were great with the cast. I don't know where they get the patience but they never got rattled, were never short-tempered and as anyone could see, they were true professionals. We certainly wish them well in their future careers.

Whiteman, MO

Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide our area children with such a positive musical theater experience! It was exactly what we were looking for to introduce children's musical theatre to our community! Bravo to you and your staff for truly making a positive impact on the lives of children! Much success to you in the future.

Oconto Falls, WI

One little guy, a second grader, who doesn't have a great home life, beamed after his first show, "They clapped for us, they really clapped for us. I have never had anyone ever clap for me. That was awesome." His eyes have never sparkled quite like they did on that night.

La Grange, IN

For the fifth year Janie, a wheel-chair bound girl, was cast in a Missoula production. In prior years she wanted her mother to push her chair and be with her most of the time. This year she told her mother that she could take care of things herself and that mother could do something else during the rehearsals. It was such a growing experience for her as she realized friends were nearby in case of need, but she had gained much independence due in great part to the confidence she found in her Missoula participation.

Indianapolis, IN

Our best example is from the season we used had *Rumpelstiltskin*. The young man chosen for the part was a special education student. He did not have many friends or much success in school. When he got the part, everyone was so surprised and just knew he could not learn his lines. He was the first one to know all of them and played the part to perfection. What a self-esteem booster. All the kids were saying nice things to him.

Purcell, OK

My daughter was diagnosed as having ADD at a very early age. She had a very difficult time being able to focus on ANYTHING for more than just a few minutes. Her experience with MCT literally changed her life. She was given the opportunity to be a part of a cast that was full of fun but also part of a group that was held accountable for their role in the production. She was given additional one on one direction as needed -- but eventually she was able to become so confident in her own abilities, that she didn't require any more attention than anyone else. I watched her learn how to interact with a student who was visually impaired (SHE learned how to be a helper, instead of being the one who always needed help). Nearly ten years later she is still involved with MCT. ADD is a lifelong struggle. I think one of the most valuable life-lessons occurred when one of the MCT Actor/Directors told my daughter that she, too, has struggled with ADD but has come to embrace it.

Nebraska City, NE

A mother stated she knew she would have no homework problems during the week of Missoula because her daughter would study more intently and have her work done on time. She said, "The week of Missoula is the most productive time in my daughter's school year."

Indianapolis, IN

Our goal is to integrate the arts into the classroom. This residency took arts into English, drama, and music classes.

Oxford, OH

One of the great aspects of MCT coming to our community is that we are a small community (7,200) that has three school systems -- Public School (K-12), Catholic School (K-12) and NCECBVI (K-12) which is a school for the visually impaired. MCT is a great opportunity for the kids to meet and work together as a cast. The kids have formed friendships that carry through their entire school year. When the kids show up for auditions, it is like a reunion because some of them haven't seen each other for a year even though we all live in the same community.

Nebraska City, NE

I saw 65 elementary and middle school students sitting in their groups in the lunchroom, waiting to go on for their second show. There was NO fooling around, no shouting, no running or walking around the room. Everyone was in makeup and costume. They were quietly playing a game that I did not know the rules for, but they were tuned in to Jennifer and Michael, as if they were radios tuned to a channel. And they were all on the same channel!

Decorah, IA