

Nominee: Flagstaff Youth Theater
Category: Organization

It is the mission of Flagstaff Youth Theater to provide children and their families the exciting experience of the stage while receiving quality instruction in performing arts.

Participation in Flagstaff Youth Theater productions and workshops is open to children, teens, and adults. Performances are available to all ages of the Flagstaff community.

Flagstaff Youth Theater was founded and is run by Gina Harris, Sara Drye, and Mike Armenta. During most of every year, these directors provide workshops and performances for children and adults throughout Flagstaff. **THEIR WORK IS ALL VOLUNTEER; THEY RECEIVE NO SALARIES** for what is essentially a second full-time job for each. They work long hours choosing, and often writing, material that is suitable for children and families. For each production, they are dedicated, energetic, and provide a wonderful environment in which children and adults can work, learn, and perform together. Their many productions are fun and educational and provide an excellent opportunity for children to grow and shine in ways they may not get to in school or their other activities.

Flagstaff Youth Theater, in a usual year, puts on at least three productions and often more. Every fall they produce a full musical play with participants of all ages, from small children through adults. Recent examples include "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "Alice in Wonderland," and "My Son Pinocchio: Gepetto's Story." Each spring they produce a musical with complex dancing involving teens and adults. Recent examples include "Fame" and "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Each summer there is an updated version of a Shakespeare play with an unusual setting. These productions, with teens and adults, have included "The Tempest in Space" and "Much Ado About Nothing," set in a 1950's high school. They also do a Christmas program and several versions of "Stories to Stage" for children through adults. Some of their performances start as acting workshops, and all of them allow participants to help with costumes,

sets, stage crew, and other aspects of theater production. For their unselfish dedication (for no pay), they deserve recognition and appreciation from the city of Flagstaff.

Flagstaff Youth Theater does collaborate with other arts and educational organizations. They provide workshops, education, and worthwhile experiences for children and adults. Many people stay with them for years, grow up in the organization, and go on to perform with other groups such as NAU, Theatrikos, Flagstaff Light Opera, and choirs and dance companies throughout Flagstaff. They impact families as they provide an excellent opportunity for family members, even of different generations, to learn, work, and have fun together.

Flagstaff Youth Theater contributes to arts, education, families, cooperation, and fellowship in our city and helps make it a better place for us to live.

Please see Flagstaff Youth Theater's website for more information:

<http://www.flagstaffyouththeater.com/>

http://www.azdailysun.com/entertainment/arts-and-theatre/article_902a6ba8-2227-5c08-813b-5eb3face4653.html