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Office of Public Relations

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**ETC presents New Version of Classic Tale, *Pollyanna*, Jan. 23-27  
World Premiere of Musical Adaptation by PSU Professor of Story by Littleton Author**

**PLYMOUTH, N.H.** —The Educational Theatre Collaborative (ETC), a two-time Moss Hart Award winner for excellence in community and children’s theater, celebrates its 14th season with an original musical theatre production of *Pollyanna*, adapted for the stage by PSU Professor of Education Trish Lindberg.

Performances are January 23–26 at 7 p.m., and January 26 and 27 at 2 p.m. in the Hanaway Theatre at the Silver Center for the Arts.. Ticket prices are \$22-20 for adults and \$18-16 for youth and seniors. Call the box office at (603) 535-ARTS to purchase tickets. The box office is located in the Silver Center on the PSU campus and is open from noon to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and during performances. Tickets may also be purchased online at [silver.plymouth.edu](http://silver.plymouth.edu).

**The Story**

*Pollyanna* is the heartwarming tale of a young orphan whose positive spirit transforms everyone around her. Following the death of her parents, Pollyanna goes to live with her dour maiden Aunt Polly in a small New England town. Pollyanna’s legacy from her father was an optimistic attitude, exemplified by “The Glad Game” which helped Pollyanna to find something to be glad about in every situation and to stand up for what she thinks is right. Pollyanna becomes known as “The Glad Girl,” transforming the dispirited town into a pleasant and healthy place to live.

Pollyanna’s optimism is tested, however, when she becomes paralyzed in an accident. But, the town rallies around her, teaching Pollyanna an important lesson.

**The PSU Production**

The musical theatre adaptation is based on the best-selling 1913 novel of the same name by Littleton, NH author Eleanor Hodgman Porter, and the production has been completed in partnership with Plymouth Elementary School, Friends of the Arts and Pollyanna of Littleton New Hampshire, Inc.

Directed by Lindberg, who is winner of the 2007 Excellence in Education Award from the New Hampshire Department of Education, and the 2007 Excellence in Children's Theatre Award from the New Hampshire Theatre Awards, the show is choreographed by PSU alumni Michael David Stoddard and Amanda Whitworth, with musical direction by Kenneth Roberts. The score has been composed by Will Ogmundson, with additional music by Cynthia Bizzarro and Kenneth Roberts.

“Using a book written by a New Hampshire author was intriguing to me. I also felt that the book had an important message for Americans to hear in the 2007,” said Lindberg. “Often in our society a ‘Pollyanna,’ someone who looks on the bright side of a situation, is considered obnoxious. Why? Isn't it better to view your glass half full rather than half empty?”

A family musical, *Pollyanna* features an intergenerational cast of more than 50 children and adults, including the talents of professional, University and community players.

### **The Cast**

Pollyanna will be portrayed by 15-year-old Alyssa Dumas of Manchester. Her Aunt Polly will be portrayed by mezzo-soprano Eva Nagorka of Plymouth. Other feature roles include: Nancy, Miss Polly's maid, portrayed by PSU alumna Natalie Roy of Atkinson; Jimmy Bean, Pollyanna's young orphan friend, portrayed by Sam Zuk of Littleton; Dr. Chilton, portrayed by Bill Bolton of Plymouth; the curmudgeonly Mr. Pendleton, portrayed by Robb Dimmick of Providence, R.I., and Reverend Ford is portrayed by PSU Dean of Students, Tim Keefe, of Plymouth.

### **The Director Says**

“My biggest hope is that the audience will be moved emotionally by this production,” said Lindberg. “I believe that for a piece of art to truly be aesthetic, there must be an emotional component. I want the audience to experience these characters in a three dimensional way and to be able to live the story with them.”

Music Director Kenneth Roberts also directs several organizations in the U.K., and has conducted and performed as a solo pianist and accompanist at halls, theatres and palaces throughout England, Europe and the United States.

Will Ogmundson, Composer, is well-known throughout New England as a pianist and music teacher. He composed the music for the last two NorthEast Shakespeare Ensemble productions at the Lebanon Opera House and is currently working on this summer's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Michael David Stoddard, choreographer, has toured with several companies, and

performed in *Your Mother!* and *Best Half Foot Forward* in New York City. Stoddard returned to the area to start his own production company, Stoddz Productions, and is pursuing a master's degree in education at PSU, where he is also Program Director for Friends of the Arts and a choreographer for the touring company, TIGER. Stoddard choreographed the 2007 ETC production, *Beauty and the Beast*.

Amanda Whitworth, choreographer, has danced for numerous companies and choreographers and has taught more than 100 master classes at universities, private and public schools across the nation. Whitworth received the J.S. Seidman Award from her alma mater, NYU–Tisch School of the Arts, the Monticello Award for choreography from Regional Dance America and the Friends of Dance Award from Goucher College. She is an adjunct instructor and interim director of dance at Plymouth State University where she earned an M.Ed.

### **The Educational Theatre Collaborative**

ETC is a community arts organization sponsored by Plymouth State University, Friends of the Arts, and Plymouth Elementary School. The performance concludes an intense month of rehearsals, a Children's Arts Festival on Jan. 12, with workshops for students in grades kindergarten through five; an extensive art display incorporating themes from the production, a luncheon with characters from the show on Jan. 26, and an Integrated Arts Conference for artists and educators also on Jan. 26.

For additional information about ETC programs contact Lindberg via e-mail to [plindber@plymouth.edu](mailto:plindber@plymouth.edu) or by telephone at (603) 535-2647.

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[Ed Note: Media information is available online at

<http://www.plymouth.edu/news/media/index.html> Media interviews are welcome. Call Bruce Lyndes at (603) 535-2775.]

Plymouth State University (PSU) is a comprehensive regional university offering a rich, student-focused learning environment for both undergraduate and graduate students. PSU offers 42 majors and 62 minors in programs that include education, business, humanities, arts, and natural and social sciences. The College of Graduate Studies offers coursework that promotes research, best practices and reflection in locations on- and off-campus as well as online. For non-traditional students, PSU's Frost School of Continuing and Professional Studies offers working professionals opportunities to pursue an undergraduate degree by attending classes in the evenings, weekends and online. Located in a beautiful New England setting, Plymouth State University has been recognized as one of the "Best in the Northeast" by *The Princeton Review*.