



*production of*



Disney THE LITTLE  
MERMMAID

July 28 - July 1, 2023

Music by

Alan Menken

Book by

Doug Wright

Lyrics by

Howard Ashman & Glenn Slater

Originally Produced by

Disney Theatrical Productions

Orchestrations by Danny Troob

Incidental Music & Vocal Arrangements by Michael Kosarin

Dance Arrangements by David Chase



# Production Staff

Director - Shelley Johnson

Choreography, Staging and Puppetry - Josh Sassanella

Assistant Vocal Director - Kim MacDonald

Stage Manager - Gavin Kling

Costumes - Signa Shuff, Terri Turner

Lights - Corey Lee, Tory Reed, Andrew Hathaway, Grayson Kling

Sound - Andrew Hathaway, Grayson Kling

## SET & PROPS

Matt Kling, Craig Wehr, Andrew Hathaway, Mike Payne, Jenna Rosenbury, Alyssa Ropa, Mandy Kling, Ashlee Sells, Dakota Mackey-McGee, Brianne Lees

## SPECIAL THANK YOU

to the many Parent Volunteers who put in countless hours every single night to manage cast needs, work on sets, and more.

*Please join us in  
celebrating this yearly  
sponsor:*

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LEADS

# Our Cast

## **Alyssa Ropa**

Hi, I'm Alyssa and this is my 3rd show with Excelsior. I'm happy to be playing Ursula this summer as well as helping with the set design. I am a graduate of Northrop High School and am excited to attend Ball State University in the fall to major in Music Education, while actively being in their University Singers.

## **Aurora Miser-Buhite**

Hi, I'm Aurora. This is my 9th Excelsior show. I am a sophomore at DeKalb High School where I love being in show choir and theater. In my spare time, I am also a competitive dancer.

## **Arya Hovey**

Arya is 13 and has been performing for years, she enjoys being on stage whether singing or acting. This is her 3rd production with Excelsior and hopes for many more in the future. When she isn't being dramatic, she enjoys reading, painting, listening to music and putting together the perfect outfit.

## **Alyssa Martin**

Alyssa has been in 6 musicals before including Into the Woods, Seussical the Musical, Mamma Mia, 13, We Will Rock You, and Grease, all of which were performed at Garrett middle and high schools. She is excited to be playing the role of Jetsam in Excelsior's production of Disney's The Little Mermaid.

## **Bailey Hatfield**

Bailey is excited to be acting in Excelsior's production of Disney's The Little Mermaid. Enjoy the show!

## **Clara Foote**

Clara Foote will be a 5th grader at Canterbury School. This will be her fourth performance with Excelsior. She enjoys singing, acting, and being creative!

## **Cecilia Taylor**

Cecilia is excited to perform in her 4th Excelsior production. She is 8 years old and will be in the 4th grade this fall. Her favorite thing about theater is making new friends and seeing old ones. When not performing, Cecilia likes to do crafts.

## **Evan Dapp**

Evan is a recent graduate of Garrett High School and this will be his 5th production with Excelsior Arts Academy. He was involved in theater throughout high school and is going to be attending Ball State for pre-veterinary with a minor in business in the fall. This is Evan's second lead role within Excelsior. He is also a member of the Excelsior Singers.

### **Frankie Hedrick**

Frankie is 10 years old and is excited to be in her first production with Excelsior. She attends Lakewood Park Christian School. In her spare time, Frankie enjoys gaming on her phone, hanging out with friends, and LOVES swimming. Frankie said her favorite food is stuffed peppers and Christmas is her favorite holiday. If she could let everyone know one thing it would be that she is a crafty person that really cares about other people.

### **Gage Brzezinski**

Gage will be starting the seventh grade this fall at Dekalb Middle School. He has been involved with Excelsior Arts Academy since 2019. His favorite role was being Gad in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. In his spare time, Gage enjoys video games, reading books, telling jokes, and movie nights at home. If he could have one superpower, he would choose to have super speed

### **Grace Schoegler**

Hi I'm Grace Schoegler! I'm a junior at Leo High School! I was previously in Disney's The Little Mermaid this year at Leo! I was playing one of Ariel's sisters then and I am still playing one now! I have learned to grow and love these characters and I hope you get as much joy watching the show as I have being in it!

### **Isabelle Shenfeld**

Hello, I'm Isabelle Shenfeld and I play Ariel on the Wednesday and Friday performances! This is my first year doing theater, and in the spring, I was in another production of Disney's The Little Mermaid and I played the role of Flounder. I've also been in The Sound of Music, playing Marta. This is my first Excelsior show, and it has been a fun experience

### **Italy Basaldua**

My name is Italy Basaldua, this is my 1st Excelsior show. I have previously been in other productions through my school and other programs. I would like to thank my family and friends for helping to push me past my limits on stage and in life.

### **Jackson Hedrick**

I am excited to be part of Excelsior Theater. This is my 3rd Excelsior production. When I am not singing and dancing, I enjoy hanging out with my mom and sister. They are the best!! I am so close to earning my BSA Eagle award I can taste it!! Oh, I love my mom and am so happy that she has allowed me to be part of all the craziness that I am involved with. Also, I love my mom!!

### **Joshua Terwilliger**

Hello, my name is Joshua Terwilliger. I'm playing the role of King Triton. I can't wait to perform in more productions run by Shelly and Josh. I had a great time learning and playing King Triton and I hope you enjoy the show!

**Jaqueline Gracia**

Hi! I'm Jaqueline (Jaqui) and this is my 1st Excelsior show. I play the oldest mermaid, Atina. I just graduated from Lakeland Jr/Sr High and I was involved with the Show Choir for 3 years, along with managing football and doing cheer! I am in the Army National Guard and I plan to major in Psychology with a minor in Pre-medicine! We have worked so hard on the show and we all hope you enjoy it!

**Jonathon Ballard**

My name is Jonathon Ballard and I've been in theater for only a year so far and this is my first Excelsior show. Being here has been so fun and I plan to stay with Excelsior for as long as I can. The friends that I've made have been so wonderful and so kind. I strongly suggest that you join if you can, enjoy the show!

**Jacob Franks**

This is my first Excelsior production, although it is my third time being in Disney's The Little Mermaid. I made the decision to be in this show a day before the auditions, and I'm glad I made that decision, because I have met new friends, and have formed stronger relationships with the friends I already knew!

**Korey Sipe**

Korey is excited to be in her 1st production with Excelsior. She hopes that everyone enjoys the show!

**Klaire Ellis**

My name is Klaire Ellis. I am 12 years old and I am going into 7th grade this year at DeKalb Middle School. This my 1st show with Excelsior. I'm attending acting camp at Camp Potawotami. I'm so excited to be participating in Excelsior's production of Disney's The Little Mermaid.

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### Kartyr Sobol

Hi! I am Kartyr. I am currently in 7th grade at Eastside Jr/Sr High School. This is my first year with Excelsior. My favorite things are kitties and electronics. Please enjoy the show!

### Molly Reasner

Molly is 14 years old and will be a sophomore this year at Dekalb High School. She has been involved in theater since 6th grade and has enjoyed performing in 7 productions with DeKalb and Excelsior. Molly took part this year in the All State Honor Choir and received distinguished gold on her vocal solo at ISSMA State. She is also looking forward to her second year in Dekalb's show choir, Classic Connection. While Molly isn't singing, she also enjoys playing flute, and hanging out with her friends and family. She is looking forward to The Little Mermaid and the experience it will bring!

### Maleigha Kling

Maleigha is eight years old and just completed second grade at James R. Watson Elementary. Disney's The Little Mermaid is the 10th show she has been a part of. (Eight of those shows have been with Excelsior Arts Academy). Maleigha's favorite show so far has been Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat. Her favorite colors are black and green. Other favorites (in no particular order) include football, watermelon, snakes, root beer, and riding her scooter.

### Maya Sells

Hi, I'm Maya and I'm so excited to be playing Ariel on the Thursday and Saturday performances of my 9th Excelsior production! I'm going to be a Junior at Dekalb High School this year, and I've loved being in Show Choir and Theater there, as well as Excelsior.

### Marissa Rowe

I am thrilled to be in my first production with Excelsior! I have enjoyed watching my little brother Theo in all of the shows in this wonderful program, so I decided it was time to try it out! I am going into my junior year at Dekalb High School, where I am in multiple choirs, including the Classic Connection show choir. Theater is new to me, but I was very excited to try it! I hope you enjoy the show!

### Madyson Wilson

My name is Madyson Wilson, and I play a gull, maid, and sea creature. This will be my 11th play with Excelsior and my 15th play overall. This year, I will be going into my freshman year of high school. My favorite role I've ever been would have to be the stepmother in "A Tale of Two Tails."

### Macie Hathaway

Macie is 10 years old and starting her 6th-grade year at Dekalb Middle School. Disney's The Little Mermaid will be Macie's 9th show and 5th Excelsior performance. This is her first musical at Excelsior. She likes ventriloquists, so she likes to use the puppets in the Little Mermaid production, and she likes Josh's choreography.

**Michael Gulick**

Michael is going into 6th grade at DeKalb Middle School. He likes to play basketball and enjoys playing video games in his spare time. This is Michael's 2nd show with Excelsior.

**Maren Carnes**

Hi! My name is Maren, and this is my first Excelsior show! In this show, I play Aquata, one of Ariel's sisters! Besides this, I have done 4 other shows at my school. I will be a junior at Leo High School this upcoming school year and I am in my school's jazz choir! I love theater and it has helped me get out of my comfort zone. Besides theater, I also like to draw, paint, dance, thrift, and hang out with my friends! I'm so happy I've made new friends and grasped this opportunity! I hope you enjoy the show!

**MK Starr**

Hello, I'm MK Starr. I'm going to be a senior at Northrop High School. This is my first year performing with Excelsior, although I've done other shows before. I'm happy to be playing the role of Flotsam, the evil sea snake! Working on this musical has been an amazing experience. I've met so many wonderful people!

**Penelope Reasner**

Penelope is 10 years old and will be in 5th grade at James R. Watson Elementary School. The Little Mermaid is her third theatrical adventure. She just wrapped up her first big role as young Nala with the DeKalb Summer Theater Camp and enjoyed that tremendously. Penelope has had many singing opportunities including Circle the State, singing on her church worship team, singing for the Tincaps and performing for various events around town. When she isn't singing, she is using her imagination to entertain her little sisters, riding horses, crafting, playing video games or hanging with her friends and family. Penelope is looking forward to being a part of another fun performance!

**Sophia Eyster**

Hi! I am Sophia. I was in 3rd grade and going to 4th grade this fall. I've been in four plays including this one. I like to play outside. I love to sleep, and I love my z FAM.

**Sally-Ann Wiley**

Hi! My name is Sally-Ann. I attend DeKalb High School and I turn 15 this August. Disney's The Little Mermaid marks my 12th show with Excelsior and my 15th show overall! I have been performing with Excelsior for 4 years. I also enjoy summers and hanging out with my family and friends, especially my family here at Excelsior.

**Silas Refner**

Silas will be a junior this year. He loves acting and singing and has enjoyed his many experiences with Excelsior. He loves getting to play characters and seeing the world through the eyes of others in his roles. He is looking forward to helping bring to life this classic tale for new audiences to enjoy.

### Susan Anderson

Susan is in 7th grade. She loves theater. When she isn't on stage, she enjoys hanging out with friends and reading.

### Theo Rowe

Theo is going into 6th grade at Dekalb Middle School. This is his 6th production with Excelsior. He is so excited to be playing the role of Flounder! When Theo isn't performing, he is drawing or working on animations.

### Tucker Payne

Tucker has been starring in Excelsior productions since 2019! His favorite role was as Aesop in the production of classic fables, which he got to do twice! Tucker is enjoying his last summer before high school, busy with marching band, hanging out with friends and, of course, getting ready for Excelsior's production of Disney's The Little Mermaid!

### Titus Refner

Titus will be a sophomore this year. He is very outgoing and enjoys interacting with other kids while playing fun and interesting characters. He is very involved in many activities, but Excelsior holds a special place in his heart. Both Refner boys love their time with Kent and Shelly and the other actors involved in Excelsior.

### Ashton Stanley

Hello! I'm Ashton and I graduated from Northridge High School and I'm going to be attending IUPUI to study Political Science and Criminal Justice. In high school, I joined show choir, where I found my passion for music and dancing. I plan to continue that in college.

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## Our Board of Directors 2023-24

Ashlee Sells, President

Jenna Rosenberry, Vice-President

Holly Lantz, Treasurer

Sarah Payne, Secretary

Jama Smith

Craig Wehr

Stephanie Foote

Brianne Haiflich

Cynthia DeCook

Meg Littlejohn

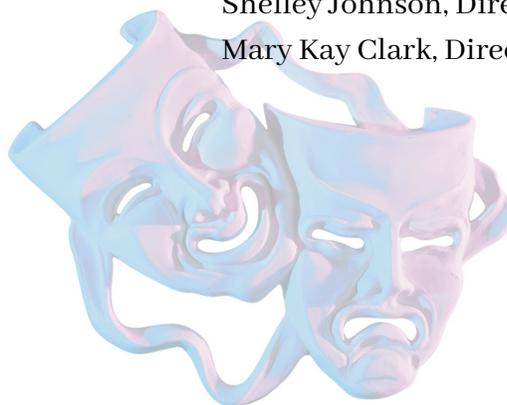
Mandy Kling

## Our Staff 2023-24

Kent Johnson, Executive Director

Shelley Johnson, Director of Music

Mary Kay Clark, Director of Drama





# MONTHLY DASHBOARD

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**Disney THE LITTLE MERMAID**  
**Ticket Sales**  
**\$5304 (as of 6/26)**  
**Grant Funded Senior Tickets**  
**\$100**

**DONATIONS THIS MONTH:**  
**\$104.50 (AS OF 6/26)**

**DONATIONS LAST MONTH:**  
**\$289.70**

**GRANTS RECEIVED THIS MONTH:**  
**OLIVE B. COLE FOUNDATION**  
**\$15,000**

2023-24 Season



**LITTLE MERMAID**  
June 28, 29, 30, July 1



**Charlie and the Chocolate Factory**  
Sept. 21, 22, 23

**It's a Wonderful Life, A Radio Show**  
(All Ages)  
Nov. 30, Dec 1, 2

**Charlotte's Web**  
(Youngest Cast)  
Feb 7,8,9



## THE GOOD WORD!

Excelsior has given my Kid's confidence. I am so happy with the friends they've made and fun they have had!! This is a group that shows love in it's work!

~ Nina Hedrick

## OLIVE B. COLE FOUNDATION GRANT

This grant is for physical improvements to our theater! Structural, visual, and safety improvements.

**OUR FIRST SET OF STUDENTS (2018) HAVE GRADUATED COLLEGE AND OUR IMPACTING OUR WORLD!**

We have graduates at:  
Women4Change, Green Corp, Ortho-Trauma Nursing, Culinary Arts, and more!

## OUR 2023 GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

- Alyssa Ropa-Ball State University
- Evan Dapp-Ball State University
- Jackson Hedrick - Lincoln Tech
- Matthew Hampton-Ball State University
- Courtney Barse-Grace College
- Keenan Brown-Purdue University
- Clayton Brown - University of Northwestern Ohio



# Let's Celebrate Our 2023 Grant Funders

(so far)

## **The James Foundation**

2023 Grant-a-Day Program

Senior Connections - Block Grant Funded tickets for senior communities to enjoy Excelsior productions and encourage our actors.

## **Community Foundation of DeKalb County**

(Voices Youth Funded Grants)

Senior Connections - Block Grant Funded tickets for senior communities to enjoy Excelsior productions and encourage our actors.

## **AWS Foundation**

Mighty Money Grant for Hearing Assist Project

## **Olive B. Cole Foundation**

Facility improvements to our new theater space. Physical staging needs as well as safety updates. (Drawings will be available soon at [ExcelsiorArtsAcademy.com](http://ExcelsiorArtsAcademy.com).)

## **Anonymous Grant Funder**

This surprise 2023 grant was given to fund utilities and basic daily needs as Excelsior staff and volunteers focus on improvements and safety updates to the new Excelsior Theater space.



## **Help us do more in 2023**

We invite you to help us do more by becoming a monthly donor to the Excelsior Arts Academy & Youth Theater.

Monthly gifts provide stability and encourage new participation in Excelsior at all levels. Families and volunteers consider financial health as well as monthly support as they make support decisions.

**In short, your monthly gift creates new and increased support in others.**

S c a n   h e r e   t o   g i v e