

CCC hires new theater director

CLACKAMAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE WELCOMES JAYNE STEVENS

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Jayne Stevens is the new part-time theater director here at Clackamas Community College. She has been at CCC since Fall Term 2022 and has many plans coming up for the Theatre Program. The Clackamas Print interviewed Jayne about her thoughts on becoming the new theater director and her knowledge in the field of directing.

The Clackamas Print: What is your name and occupation?

Jayne Stevens: My name is Jane Stevens; I am the assistant managing director for Clackamas Repertory Theatre and the part-time theater instructor at Clackamas Community College.

TCP: Are you currently the full-time theater director at CCC now?

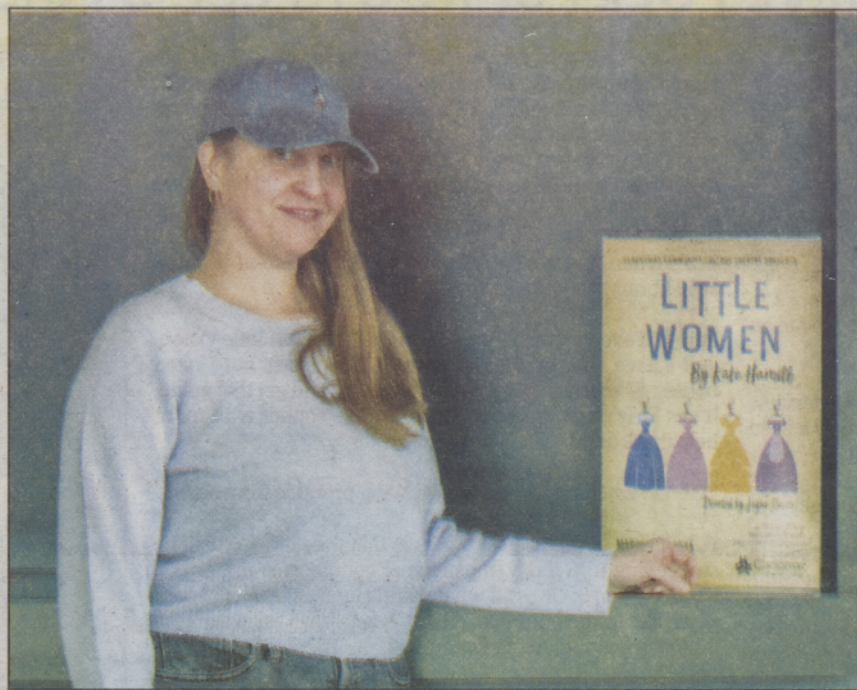
Stevens: Right now I'm part-time. I hope someday to be full-time. The department has been going through some changes and I don't think they've decided what they're doing at this point. For now, I'll be teaching this term and I will also teach in the spring so the students who have been a part of the program will have the same instructor for the entire year.

TCP: What are your plans for teaching here at CCC? Are there any upcoming events that are scheduled?

Stevens: Yes. Little Women will be our winter play that runs from March 2 through March 12. There's the Student Showcase performances; that's where the students show what they've been working on all term. Also, in the Repertory Theater, we have our annual gala on April 15. That's a fundraising event where we raise money for our summer productions.

TCP: When our students join the theater program, do you think of any benefits or scholarships when they enroll?

Stevens: The department does offer



Portrait of Jayne Stevens promoting her production of Little Women. Photo by Grant Pauli.

tuition waivers and students can apply for these. What that is, is it's a waiver that covers your tuition for the entire term. That's for classes outside of the theater department, as well. So if a theater student applies, gets the waiver approved, they could get their tuition paid for. The reason why the department offers these is because we understand the amount of time and commitment that is required for successful theater. We also understand that students have to live and eat, so this way they can maybe supplement what a part time job would be. That way they can be a part of the play and do the rehearsals.

TCP: When did you first start directing plays?

Stevens: I started my theater journey as a small child. I did community theater all through high school and then I actually came to CCC in 2001. That's when I started my path and took a theater class.

I really enjoyed it, and then I thought, "Hey, maybe I will go to school for this." I continued on my education journey and ended up getting a master's degree in theater from Portland State University. During my time in that program, I did a lot of directing. I also directed at CCC as a student, but my first professional directing job was in 2016 called "One Slight Hitch" in the Clackamas Repertory Theater for a comedy by Louis Black. He's a comedian who only wrote one play and it was actually pretty funny.

TCP: When did you start teaching at CCC?

Stevens: I started teaching Fall Term 2022. My positions were Production Manager and Administrative Assistant. I wasn't fully an instructor yet but when you're a director, there's lots of teaching moments between you and the actors.

TCP: When did you first start teaching?

Stevens: In 2007 I came back here and

I was an artist in the residence. So this was after I had gone to PSU and obtained my undergraduate in theater. I came back and for the 2007-2008 school year, I did help teach the acting classes. That was my first step into teaching and at that point, I wanted to continue with theater. From there, I went to get my master's degree. During my time in the master's program, I did teach acting, but never officially.

TCP: How is the environment when you're teaching? How do you like it at CCC?

Stevens: I feel like it's pretty laid back. I let students call me by my first name Jane. I still get a little shocked when I hear Professor Stevens or Ms. Stevens. So I'd say I'm pretty laid back. I try to make everybody feel comfortable because I think when people are having fun and feeling safe, that's when the best work happens. When we're putting up walls and retracting ourselves, then it's really hard to express yourself artistically. So I try to make people feel as comfortable as I can so that we can make the best art together.

TCP: Is there anything else you'd like to share with the students?

Stevens: Another thing I didn't say is that the Clackamas Repertory Theatre has the Season Auditions in early winter. Students should know that it's available because what we do in the summer is all paid. It's a way that we can give back and a new way that students can earn money. We actually pay them to participate so I think that could benefit them. Even if you're not a theater student, you might still want to do that in the summer. I mean, making a play can be fun.

Jayne Stevens plans to become the full-time director here at CCC and encourages students to come visit the theater for our upcoming winter play in March, Little Women. Anyone who is interested in joining the theater program and receiving benefits, contact jaynestevens@clackamas.edu via email.

This interview has been edited for clarity and space.