



*Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy announces  
cast and crew of sophomore  
High School Musical Production  
Featuring 50 students from 20 High Schools*

Monday, January 15, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Everybody get ready to “cut loose”! After many interviews, auditions, and multiple callbacks, the Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy is proud to announce the amazing cast and technical team of talented youth that has been assembled for the sophomore High School Musical Production of *Footloose*, which dances onto the stage of the **St. Jacobs Country Playhouse** from **February 14 to February 25**.

Now in its second year, the Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy High School Musical Production boasts a company of high school students who are not only taking centre stage, but also filling key offstage roles including directing, lighting, sound, running crew, stage management, and wardrobe alongside the respective Drayton Entertainment department heads serving as their mentors. This year, 50 students from 20 high schools will come together to bring to life the highly anticipated follow-up to last year's sensational, sold-out inaugural production, *Legally Blonde*.

The Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy is committed to generational change and aims to dismantle the financial, cultural and physical barriers that have traditionally existed in arts education. As such, the High School Musical Production Program is offered 100% free of charge.

Drayton Entertainment's Associate Artistic Director and Director of Education **David Connolly** will direct and choreograph. Connolly's impressive résumé includes numerous Drayton Entertainment productions including *Mamma Mia!*, *Kinky Boots*, *Annie*, *Hairspray*, *Disney's Newsies*, and the popular family pantos *Wizard of Oz*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *Cinderella*.

*Footloose* is an explosive story about a city teenager who moves to a small farming town where rock music and dancing have been banned. It features dynamic songs that expand on the movie's original score, including hits from the bestselling, Oscar-nominated soundtrack.

“There's a great story of what it means to be a family, of what it means to be a friend, and what it means to face adversity,” says **Connolly**. “*Footloose* celebrates the wisdom of listening to

young people while guiding them with a warm heart and open mind. It's a perfect match to the mission of our Academy."

"*Footloose* marks another exhilarating chapter in our High School Musical Production Program, a testament to the profound impact of arts education on young minds," says **Alex Mustakas**, Artistic Director of Drayton Entertainment. "This program is more than a stage production; it is a platform for students to discover their voices, build confidence, and learn invaluable life skills that will inspire a lifelong love for the arts, emphasizing the vital role of creativity in shaping well-rounded individuals and vibrant communities."

The award-winning, not-for-profit theatre company has been steadily growing its training offerings for young performers over the past several years, including launching its new, state-of-the-art training hub, the Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy. Its mission is to provide performing and technical arts training opportunities anchored in the Drayton Entertainment brand of live theatre excellence, facilitated by professional industry mentors.

The following is a complete list of cast and crew involved in creating Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy's High School Musical Production of *Footloose*.

**PRDG (French High School)**

Max Sahadeo

**Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute**

Cece Ndiwa

**Centennial Collegiate Vocational Institute**

Ronan Hayes

**Eastwood Collegiate Institute**

Chase Oudshoorn

Saturn Chow

Sharon Nwoko

Zoe McWhirter

Zoe Thompson

Alastair Yantha

Aspen Walsh

Chloe Lukezich

Cole Raper

Erin Tell

James Wright

Lauryn Hayden

Sullivan Thompson

Stephen Blake

**Galt Collegiate Institute**

Nicholas Johnson

**Guelph Collegiate and Vocational Institute**

Ailidh Connelly

**H.B Beal Secondary School**  
Mackenna Van Massenhoven

**Homeschooled**  
Ayla Coates  
Madeline Young

**Huron Heights Secondary School**  
Jason Li

**Kitchener Waterloo Collegiate and Vocational School**  
Addison Robert  
Joey Mathers Scholl  
Grace O'Regan  
Jack Griffioen

**Laurel Heights Secondary School**  
Nathanael Olenewa

**Medway High School**  
Luke Anderson

**Recently Graduated**  
Ryan Vale  
Adrienne Enns

**Ressurrection Catholic Secondary School**  
Emily Buchanan  
Sydney Kedmencz

**Rockway Mennonite Collegiate**  
Kira Panda  
Alyssa Panda  
Ariba Idrees

**St Benedict's Catholic Secondary School**  
Charleigh Perry

**St Davids Catholic Secondary School**  
Connor Foran  
Lucas Coutts  
Willow Kalka  
Abbey Brown

**St James Catholic High School**  
Tayo Thomas

**St Mary's Catholic Secondary School**  
Ashley Rye

**St. Michael Catholic Secondary School**  
Evie O'Toole

**Waterloo Collegiate Institute**

Anna Castro Castro  
Alex Caldarelli  
Carter Johnston  
Kyri Friedman  
Christina Kulikov  
Addison Joseph

The sophomore Drayton Entertainment High School Musical Production *Footloose* is on stage from **February 14 to 25** at the **St. Jacobs Country Playhouse**.

*Footloose* is proudly sponsored by **Brad Carr and Susan Wagler of West Montrose**. The 2024 Season Sponsor of all Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy Programs is the **Heffner Group of Companies**.

Tickets are \$42.50 for adults, \$32.50 for youth under 20, and \$37.50 for groups of 20 or more. HST is applicable to all ticket prices. Tickets may be purchased by calling toll free at **1-855-drayton (372-9866)**, or online at **www.draytonentertainment.com**.

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