

Dear POPs Families,

First and foremost, Mark and I, along with our staff and board members want to let you know that you are in our thoughts and that we wish you, your families, and friends abundant health as we continue to 'stay safe at home.' As a small non-profit performing arts company, we have been trying to navigate these difficult times by using innovation, perseverance, and hope in an effort to be there for our students. We also want to express a heartfelt thank you to those who have reached out to express their support for POPs during these tough times.

We find ourselves rapidly adapting and changing course with new information being released daily. Therefore, with input from many different stakeholders, we have come to the difficult decision that due to the increasing crisis of COVID-19, school closures, Hermosa Theater closure, and the uncertainties all of this brings, we will be concluding our Spring productions at the end of April.

How we plan to move forward...

**POPs Online Conservatory:** We are going to create an abundance of live and pre-recorded classes for our POPs students who want to continue engaging in the performing arts and meeting with the POPs staff and fellow cast mates. These new programs will consist of dance, improv, scene work, make-up classes, Cozy Q&A, voice, acting, make your own movie, dance parties and more! Our goal is to launch the first week of May and you will get more details as we, once again, adapt. We are hopeful that this will alleviate stress and be a place for our students to move, create, and stay connected. The goal has been and always will be to create a magical and safe place for children to practice being who they are and develop who they want to be through the art they love.

If there is one certainty to celebrate in this period, it is the living proof that the human spirit and the arts are indomitable. While there is no substitution for live performance shared with others, your children have been showing up for their Zoom rehearsals with big smiling faces, ready to learn and grow. Our educators have worked and will continue to work double time prepping videos, eagerly awaiting the opportunity to teach their students weekly and see them shine. It is a reminder that no matter how we may feel from moment to moment, we aren't alone.

I thank all of you who have held with us during these challenging times. Be assured that our goal is to continue to be creative to ensure that there is a POPs to come back to when your children are ready to return. As a not-for-profit organization, your donation, perhaps now more than ever, will allow us to weather this storm and reopen as soon as possible.

**Things coming soon:**

- Online auction May 1-10<sup>th</sup>
- POPs online Conservatory starting in May
- Tentative summer workshop from July 6<sup>th</sup>- 24<sup>th</sup>
- 24-hour Musical dates (TBD)

A quote that continues to resonate with me during this crisis: President of the Segerstrom Casey Reitz said it best, *“These are tremendously challenging times, unprecedented in our lives. We are living in one of those extreme moments in the history of our planet that will be written about, talked about and analyzed and theorized about for decades. Every family today will have their stories of what it was like to be alive now. We think of you as family. You mean the world to us. So, please, follow the guidelines that our government and health officials have given to us: Stay safe, Stay home.”*

With Immense Love and Gratitude,

Julia and Mark Mirkovich

Co-Executive Directors