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**NORTH SUBURBAN
YMCA**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kidstage Productions Finds New Home at North Suburban YMCA

Northbrook, IL: August 2015 – Kidstage Productions, a non-profit theater group for children in Northbrook and the surrounding suburbs, has announced new shows that will be staged for the Fall 2015 season. Formerly housed at the Northbrook Park District, Kidstage will now run rehearsals at the North Suburban YMCA and present performances at the Gorton Center in Lake Forest.

When Kidstage and the Park District parted ways in May 2015, it left the 24-year-old organization in limbo with a long list of involved families but no rehearsal or performance space. Howard Schultz, NSYMCA President/CEO, reached out to Kidstage Producer Jeanne Seffren about the possibility of using the Y's multipurpose studios as rehearsal spaces. Seffren was thrilled at the prospect.

"When Howard contacted me about giving Kidstage a home at the Y, I got chills. It was the perfect answer for us," Seffren recalls. "The Y has been so helpful and wonderful. They really value supporting all kinds of groups in the community. I can't say enough about them."

Kidstage's new endeavors will include an expanded program, with separate shows for children in grades 1-5 and grades 6-12. Younger children will perform the musical *Wonderland*, based on Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*. Older youth will present the Tony award-winning Broadway classic *The Wiz*. Auditions will be held September 9 and 10 at Temple Beth Shalom, 3433 Walters Avenue in Northbrook. Rehearsals will begin the following week at the YMCA. Performances will be held in December at the newly-renovated Gorton Center Theater in Lake Forest.

Kidstage is also proud to welcome Dr. Gregory C. Dennhardt as its Artistic Director. Dr. Dennhardt, affectionately known as "Doc" to generations of local young performers, holds a Ph.D. in Theatre from the University of Illinois and was the founder of the Northbrook Children's Theatre where he headed the educational classes, camps, and productions for over 33 years. His theatre program was recognized for excellence by the Illinois Arts Council as a Grant Recipient for 15 consecutive years. He joins veteran Kidstage staff members including Seffren, Sheila Walowitz, Tommy Rifkin, Directors Sharyl Friedlander, Laural Reinhardt, Julie Walsh, and Musical Director Julie Crossen.

“We are delighted to be part of the continuation and growth of Kidstage,” notes Howard Schultz. “They have a wonderful legacy with hundreds of families in our community. The program inspires confidence and teamwork for all the children involved, values that are consistent with the Y’s focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.” For more information about Kidstage Productions, contact Jeanne Seffren, jeanne@kidstage.org or visit www.kidstage.org.



Photo Caption: Kidstage Productions has announced auditions for two new shows this fall. Rehearsals will now be held at the North Suburban YMCA in Northbrook, with performances at Lake Forest’s Gorton Center.



Photo Caption: Longtime children's theatre company Kidstage Productions will now hold its rehearsals at the North Suburban YMCA. From left: NSYMCA CEO/President Howard Schultz, Kidstage Producer Jeanne Seffren, and Kidstage Board Member Oscar Dahl.

About the North Suburban YMCA

The YMCA is a not-for-profit entity and relies on donations to make services available for all families and individuals in its 15-city region. All board members are volunteers, who donate their time, talents and financial resources. Located at 2705 Techny Road in Northbrook, the YMCA has served the northern suburbs of Chicago for over 45 years. The Y is about youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility, providing programs and services that address the needs of our diverse community and are accessible to all. For more information or to make a donation, contact Barb Flanagin at 847-272-7250 or bflanagin@nsymca.org, or visit www.nsymca.org.