



## NEWS RELEASE

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# **GOODSPEED MUSICALS AWARDS 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL ANDREW A. ISEN PRIZE TO ALEXANDRA OLINYK**

## **ANNUAL PRIZE DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING EMERGING MUSICAL THEATRE PROFESSIONALS**

*EAST HADDAM, CONN., MARCH 4, 2019:* Goodspeed Musicals is delighted to announce that Alexandra Olinyk has been selected as the first recipient of **The Andrew A. Isen Prize at Goodspeed Musicals**. This award is funded through a generous gift given by DC-based entrepreneur and musical theatre devotee Andrew A. Isen and was created to give young people who are in the early stages of professional development financial assistance and encouragement to focus on artistic excellence in musical theatre.

Upon learning of the decision, Ms. Olinyk, recently a journeyman carpenter at Goodspeed said, “I am excited and honored to be chosen by the Goodspeed committee for the first annual *Andrew A. Isen Prize*. Thanks to Mr. Isen’s generosity I will be able to accomplish my goal of becoming a technical director by pursuing an MFA in technical direction. This award will truly impact my future.”

Mr. Isen served on the selection committee and is thrilled with the result. “This was our dream – to honor young theatre artists in the beginning stages of their career, especially those who are rarely recognized for their vital contributions,” Isen said. “Alexandra has demonstrated her passion for and dedication to pursuing a career in musical theatre. She is an outstanding young woman and I am delighted to support her in her goal of becoming a technical director.”

Goodspeed’s Executive Director, Michael Gennaro, is also enthusiastic about Ms. Olinyk’s selection. “It was a difficult selection process as we had so many truly outstanding applicants. In

the end, Alexandra's application stood out. We couldn't be more proud of her work at Goodspeed and see a bright future ahead for her." He added, "We are grateful to Andrew Isen for sponsoring this award which directly supports our mission to develop and train young professionals to become future leaders in musical theatre."

The Andrew A. Isen Prize at Goodspeed Musicals is the first-of-its-kind prize dedicated to supporting emerging musical theatre professionals across all disciplines. Given annually, this prize recognizes a young person between the ages of 20 and 29 who has demonstrated excellence in their work during the previous Goodspeed Musicals season. Chosen by a committee of theatrical professionals, the honoree will be awarded \$5,000 to aid in their pursuit of a career in musical theatre. The establishment of this award with Goodspeed Musicals will also serve to enhance Goodspeed's efforts to recruit exceptional apprentices, technicians, designers and other theater professionals.

For more information about employment opportunities at Goodspeed Musicals, please visit [www.goodspeed.org](http://www.goodspeed.org).

Under the leadership of Executive Director Michael Gennaro, Goodspeed Musicals is dedicated to the preservation, development and advancement of musical theatre and is the first theatre in the nation to receive two Tony Awards (for outstanding achievement). Goodspeed produces three musicals each season at The Goodspeed in East Haddam, Conn., and additional productions at The Terris Theatre in Chester, Conn., which was opened in 1984 for the development of new musicals. Goodspeed also maintains The Scherer Library of Musical Theatre and The Max Showalter Center for Education in Musical Theatre. Goodspeed gratefully acknowledges the support of United Airlines, the official airline of Goodspeed Musicals; the official audio sponsor Sennheiser; and official auto sponsor Hoffman Audi. Goodspeed is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts.

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