

## Emma Wahl's Statement Regarding Her WEST Fellowship Project

Two of my biggest passions are musical theater and helping people who are less fortunate than me. Over the years, I have been able to combine these interests by raising money for great causes like Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, Children's Miracle Network, and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Two years ago, I learned about another wonderful organization called Artists Striving To End Poverty (ASTEP), which provides creative arts and AIDS education for poverty-stricken children. ASTEP has "adopted" four locations to be recipients of its programming for poor children: India, South Africa, New York City and rural Florida. ASTEP sends professional actors to work with young people who have no access or exposure to arts education. Its mission is to engage and empower these children with the goal of increasing their self-esteem and making them self-sufficient.

One of the ways that ASTEP raises funds for its programs is by producing concerts featuring performances by Broadway actors and actresses. With the incredible support of ASTEP founder Mary-Mitchell Campbell and Hathaway Brown School, where I am an eighth-grader, I have been working on a unique, two-year project to produce ASTEP's first benefit concert in this part of the country, right here in Cleveland. This event, called "**For Good**," will be held on Monday, April 13, 2009, in the *Performing Arts Center at Cuyahoga Community College's Eastern Campus in Highland Hills Village, Ohio*.

Mary-Mitchell Campbell is one of the busiest and most well-respected music directors on Broadway. Some of her recent work includes her Tony Award nominated music direction of the critically-acclaimed Broadway revival of COMPANY, LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE, and the upcoming ADDAMS FAMILY MUSICAL. She is a special person with enormous talents who has devoted so much time and effort to helping disadvantaged people around the world. She will come to Cleveland to be the musical director of "**For Good**."

Four Broadway stars are currently scheduled to perform in “**For Good.**” Additional performers will be announced at a later time. **Tituss Burgess** has appeared in the original casts of many recent Broadway musicals, including GOOD VIBRATIONS, JERSEY BOYS, and most recently, as Sebastian the Crab in the hit Disney musical, THE LITTLE MERMAID. He currently stars as Nicely-Nicely Johnson in the Broadway revival of GUYS & DOLLS. **Julia Murney** most recently played Elphaba in the Broadway production of WICKED, and appeared in the original Broadway cast of LENNON. On T.V., Julia has been featured on episodes of *Sex and the City* and *Law & Order*. **Alexander Gemignani** has appeared in many of Stephen Sondheim’s recent Broadway productions, including ASSASSINS, SWEENEY TODD, and SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE, and recently starred in Sondheim’s ROAD SHOW. In addition, he starred as Jean Valjean in the latest Broadway production of LES MISERABLES. **Lauren Kennedy** has starred in many hit musicals on Broadway, in London, and around the country, including Monty Python’s SPAMALOT, LES MISERABLES, SIDE SHOW, SUNSET BOULEVARD, and Jason Robert Brown’s THE LAST FIVE YEARS. Along with Mary-Mitchell Campbell, the performers will be accompanied by some of Cleveland’s best musicians.

This special evening begins at 7:30 p.m. We also will hold a raffle for unique Broadway prizes, including private backstage tours of some of New York City’s hottest shows, as well as theater memorabilia signed by KRISTIN CHENOWETH and other stars, with all proceeds to benefit ASTEP.

This is the first time in Cleveland that any teenager has organized such an important fundraiser featuring this level of talent. “**For Good**” will give Broadway fans in our community a chance to enjoy an evening of Broadway hits and other lesser-known songs performed by these incredible New York actors in an intimate setting, while supporting ASTEP, an organization I’m proud to be a part of. It will be a night to remember!

All seats in the *Performing Arts Center* are reserved and are priced at \$25 for students and \$50 for general admission. VIP seats, priced at \$100, will include admission to the post-concert reception with the artists, photographs with

the artists, preferred seating, and one of the special Broadway prizes (memorabilia or backstage tours in New York). A portion of the ticket price is tax-deductible. Tickets can be purchased online at <http://ForGood.tix.com>. Additional information about "For Good" and my WEST Fellowship can be found at [www.HB.edu/ForGood](http://www.HB.edu/ForGood). If you have any questions, please e-mail them to [ForGoodConcert@mindspring.com](mailto:ForGoodConcert@mindspring.com) .