

## Brewer, Whole Backstage “Guys and Dolls” and the Snead State Connection



by Katherine Brewer, The Whole Backstage Theatre

Johnny Brewer, Speech and Communications Instructor and former Director of Theatre at Snead State Community College, will direct the Whole Backstage Community Theatre's 49th annual summer musical, "Guys and Dolls", June 17-26. Brewer began his career at Snead College in 1994 after serving as band director and drama teacher for the Etowah County School System, where he was awarded the system's Secondary Teacher of the Year, and Jacksonville State University's Teacher Hall of Fame Finalist.

Upon joining the Snead State faculty, Snead College President Emeritus, the late William H. Osborn, asked Mr. Brewer to head and build an integrated community and student-oriented theatre department, giving opportunities to college students, and involving area schools as well. Mr. Brewer proudly served in that volunteer capacity with the Snead State Theatre Department for 10 years. Each year, Brewer focused one production on community and local school involvement, and one student-led and student-cast production with Snead State Theatre scholarship recipients and other Snead College students.

During this decade, Mr. Brewer had several successful production entries as the only community college in Alabama participating in the American College Theatre Festival. With productions such as, *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller, *The Lion in Winter* by James Goldman, and Frank Loesser's, *Guys and Dolls*, Brewer and Snead Theatre earned national attention and accolades. Along with outstanding reviews by theatre professionals across the United States, Snead garnered 11 coveted Irene B. Ryan Awards for individual student performances on the national competition stage.

Brewer directed *Guys and Dolls* for the Snead Theatre Department in 1998 and again in 2012 and will be directing this favorite again for the Whole Backstage in Guntersville this summer.

Recognized as the longest standing Arts organization in North Alabama, the WBS will be celebrating its 49th/50th season with this production. *Guys and Dolls* last took the WBS stage in 1995 with sell-out performances, under Brewer's direction.

Snead College plays an important role in this 2022 Whole Backstage production of *Guys and Dolls*. There are numerous Snead graduates and transient students in the cast of this Runyonland musical set in the 1950s heyday of Broadway. John Everett Brewer, Irene B. Ryan Award Recipient and Presidential Scholarship recipient 2012-13, along with Snead Theatre Scholarship recipients, Ashleigh Walker Harris and Tony Wildfong, portray three of the four leads with Megan Mitchell, who participated in several Snead Theatre productions under Mr. Brewer's direction.

Other Snead Alumni Theatre Scholarship recipients in the cast and crew are April Russell, Kory Duquette and Connie Ables.

The following is a list of current cast members who have an association with Snead State Community College:

- Dr. Thomas Darnell – Snead student 1970-1971*
- Jan Price – Snead student 1970-1972*
- Dana Thomas – Snead student 1985-1986*
- Katherine Ables Brewer – Snead student and Parsonette 1975-1976, Snead Theatre participant*
- Chris Hemphill – Snead student, Arab Center 2000*
- Sue Bilke – Snead student and Snead Theatre participant 2006*
- Megan Mitchell – Snead Theatre participant*
- Chris Rhodes – Snead Theatre participant, AS in Business Administration 2010*

- Larry Davis – Snead Theatre participant, Snead student 1985*
- Hannah Leach Yost – Snead Theatre participant and Dance Line Scholarship 2010-2012*
- April Duquette – AS in Music Performance, Theatre participant, Piano Scholarship 1997-1999*
- Tony Wildfong – AS in General Ed and Snead Theatre Scholarship recipient 2009-2001*
- Ashleigh Walker Harris – Snead Theatre Scholarship recipient 2010-2011*
- John Everett Brewer – AS Degree in Communications, Presidential Scholarship recipient 2012-2014, and Snead Theatre participant*
- Josh Hood – AS in General Education, Presidential Scholarship 2015-2017*
- Kevin Russell – Jazz Band Scholarship recipient, speech student with Mr. Brewer 1997*
- April Russell – Snead Theatre Scholarship recipient 1999-2001*

- Kory Duquette – Snead Theatre Scholarship recipient 1997-1998*
- Connie Ables – Snead Theatre Scholarship recipient*
- Emma Hinote – Dual Enrollment upcoming fall of 2022*
- Mallory Howe – Dual Enrollment, speech student with Mr. Brewer 2003-2005*
- Millie Claire Woodard – Dual Enrollment and summer student*
- Josiah Rains – Snead summer student Noah Logan – Snead summer student*
- Andrea Oliver – Dual Enrollment and summer student, Snead Theatre participant and currently serves on Snead Advisory Board*
- Anna Claire Vaughn will be attending Snead on a Theatre Scholarship this fall*

Brewer said, "Just like the Whole Backstage, Snead State has had and will continue to have a profound impact on our community, and it is an honor to work with both institutions. I am truly blessed to work with folks whose lives have crossed paths with both my WBS family and my Snead family."

Mr. Brewer invites everyone to come see the show. More information can be found at the Whole Backstage Theatre's website, [www.wholebackstage.com](http://www.wholebackstage.com).