

ASOLO REP EDUCATION & OUTREACH

For Immediate Release

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Asolo Rep Presents its Annual Documentary Theatre Project: *Faces of Change* on March 19 and 20

(SARASOTA – February 20, 2015) Asolo Repertory Theatre presents *Faces of Change*, its annual documentary theatre project, on March 19 and 20 at 7:30pm in the FSU Center for the Performing Arts Cook Theatre, and March 23 at Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center. Produced by the theatre's award-winning Education & Outreach Department, the project takes the stories and experiences of community members and transforms them into an engaging theatrical reading of an original script created from local residents' own words. Each reading will be followed by a community conversation. Admission is free; however, tickets are required. Tickets for Cook Theatre performances are available by visiting Asolo Rep's Box Office, located in the lobby of the theatre, 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, by visiting <http://www.asolorep.org> or calling 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388. Tickets for the performance at Fogartyville are available by calling 941.894.6469.

This year's *Faces of Change* project, directed by Ria Cooper, Asolo Rep's Education & Outreach Specialist, is inspired by the theatre's production of Pulitzer Prize-winner David Lindsay-Abaire's *Good People*. Set in South Boston, *Good People* takes a look at the "haves" and "have-nots," questions the American Dream, and explores what makes "good people." *Faces of Change* explores the same central themes of *Good People* – class, community, and difficult choices in times of economic hardship – but through stories that have been experienced by local community members and residents.

Individuals and representatives of local organizations, including Blessing Bags, Boys & Girls Clubs of Sarasota County, Family Promise, Fogartyville Community Media & Arts Center, Friendship Center, Oasis Middle School, Healthy Start,

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Resurrection House, Safe Child Coalition, Salvation Army, SPARCC, Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness, Trinity Without Borders, and YMCA Schoolhouse Link have collaborated to introduce the project to area residents with stories to tell.

“Our aim, with this kind of theatre-making, is to provide an opportunity for community-building and education,” said director Ria Cooper. “The interest is not in providing answers, but in raising questions. The *Faces of Change* project offers us the unique chance for some critical inquiry and reflection about our community and who we are.”

Faces of Change is a collaborative documentary theatre piece that is created entirely from the narratives shared by community members through a series of story circles, interviews, theatre games and activities, and performed by those same community members. It uses theatre to create connections and explore the connections that already exist.

“I think great things will come out of the conversations because the conversations come when people open their minds and toss aside the barriers,” said Sarasota Commissioner Carolyn Mason, one of the project’s interviewees. “Then the words come out, and people express themselves. Then things start to happen for the better.”

Faces of Change is sponsored by the Koski Family Foundation, the SunTrust Foundation, and the Gannett Foundation.

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