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2018 Season Presenting Sponsor**

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Leapin' Lizards! Muny announces full cast, design and production teams for centennial season *Annie*

ST. LOUIS (May 24, 2018) – The Muny announced today its full cast, design and production teams for the theatre's centennial season production of *Annie*, July 18 - 25. *Annie* is proudly sponsored by Edward Jones.

"This show remains one of the most beloved musicals ever," said Muny Artistic Director and Executive Producer, Mike Isaacson. "This incredible company will bring it to thrilling life on our grand Muny stage."

Joining the previously announced Christopher Sieber (*Warbucks*) and Jennifer Simard (*Miss Hannigan*) are Peyton Ella (*Annie*), Britney Coleman (*Grace Farrell*), Holly Ann Butler (*Lily*), Jon Rua (*Rooster*), John Scherer (*FDR*), Madeline Domain (*Tessie*), Kennedy Holmes (*July*), Samantha Iken (*Pepper*), Trenay LaBelle (*Duffy*), Ana Mc Alister (*Molly*) and Ella Grace Roberts (*Kate*). An irresistible ensemble completes this cast, including Patrick Blindauer, Maya Bowles, Chloe Davis, Julie Hanson, Michael Hoey, Abigail Isom, Madison Johnson, Zachary Daniel Jones, Graham Keen, Rich Pisarkiewicz, Whit Reichert, Rochelle Scudder, Josh Walden, and Rebecca Young. The company will also be joined by the Muny Kid and Teen youth ensembles.

As previously announced, *Annie* is directed by John Tartaglia and choreographed by Jessica Hartman with music direction by Colin Welford.

The design team leading this production includes scenic design by Michael Schweikardt, costume design by Leon Dobkowski, lighting design by Nathan W. Scheuer, sound design by John Shivers and David Patridge, video design by Rob Denton, wig design by Kelley Jordan, with production stage manager Larry Smiglewski.

CHRISTOPHER SIEBER (*Warbucks*) returns to The Muny where he portrayed King Herod in *Jesus Christ Superstar* last summer. Sieber made his Broadway debut alongside Susan Egan in *Triumph of Love* (starring Betty Buckley and F. Murray Abraham). Other Broadway and West End credits include: *Beauty and the Beast* (Gaston), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel's Prince), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Trevor Graydon), *Chicago* (Billy Flynn, multiple engagements), *Monty Python's Spamalot* (Sir Galahad, original Broadway and West End casts, Tony nomination), *Shrek the Musical* (Lord Farquaad, original Broadway cast, Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics and Drama League nominations), *La Cage Aux Folles* (Georges, opposite Harvey Fierstein) and *Matilda* (Agatha Trunchbull). Touring credits include: *La Cage Aux Folles* (Albin, opposite George Hamilton). Television credits include: *Two of a Kind*, *It's All Relative*, *Sex and the City*, *Elementary*, *The Good Wife*, *Ed*, *Law & Order SVU*, *Guiding Light*, *All My Children* and *Another World*. Sieber has performed with the Toronto Symphony and the New York City Opera.

JENNIFER SIMARD (*Miss Hannigan*) is a Tony, four-time Drama Desk, two-time Drama League and Lucille Lortel Award nominee. Broadway credits include: *Disaster!* (Sister Mary Downey, Tony nomination); *Hello, Dolly!* (Ernestina); *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (starring opposite Mo Rocca) and the original companies of *Sister Act* and *Shrek the Musical*. Off-Broadway credits include: the original companies of *Forbidden Broadway: SVU*, *The Thing About Men* and *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. Film credits include: *The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas*, *Wish You Were Dead* and *Sisters*. Television credits include: *The Good Wife*, *Law & Order*, *Law & Order SVU*, *The King of Queens* and *Younger*. Twitter @simardjennifer and Instagram @thejennifersimard

PEYTON ELLA (*Annie*) Credits include: NBC's *The Sound of Music Live!* (Gretl) starring Carrie Underwood, the title role in *Annie* (Paper Mill Playhouse and Westchester Broadway Theatre), *Grey Gardens* (Lee Bouvier, Ahmanson Theatre), Live from Lincoln Center's *Show Boat* (young Kim), *The Late Show with Stephen*

Colbert (opposite Matthew Broderick), *Gypsy* (Netflix), *Whistle Down the Wind* (live recording at 54 Below), *School of Rock* (Summer), *A Little Princess* (Kids of the Arts, Signature Theatre). Peyton is thrilled to be following in the footsteps of her mother, who played an orphan and the title role of Annie in the original Broadway production.

BRITNEY COLEMAN (*Grace Farrell*) Muny debut! She was last seen onstage in St. Louis in the first national tour of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. Broadway credits include Heather in the recent revival of *Sunset Boulevard* starring Glenn Close and *Beautiful* (Lucille). She recently made her NY City Center Encores! debut in *Hey, Look Me Over!* alongside Carolee Carmello. Favorite regional productions include: *Camelot* starring Robert Sean Leonard (Guenevere, Westport Country Playhouse and Two River Theater), *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Silvia, The Old Globe), *Into the Woods* (Cinderella, Theatre Under The Stars), *The Pajama Game* (Babe, Arena Stage) and *Dreamgirls* (Deena, North Shore/Marriott Lincolnshire/Fulton Opera/Maine State). BFA: The University of Michigan. www.britneycoleman.com

HOLLY ANN BUTLER (*Lily*) returns to The Muny after playing Sheila in last summer's *A Chorus Line*. Other Muny: *Holiday Inn* (Lila Dixon). Broadway/off-Broadway: *On the Town* (Flossie, Claire u/s), *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (Hedy/Smitty u/s), *Grease* (Rizzo u/s), *Happiness, Anyone Can Whistle*. First national tours: *Evita* (Eva u/s), *Flashdance* (Alex u/s), *Shrek the Musical* (Wicked Witch, Fiona u/s), *Jersey Boys* (Lorraine). Regional: *On the Town* and *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (Sacramento Music Circus), *The Miracle Worker* (Queens Theatre), *Leading Ladies* (Arts Center of Coastal Carolina), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Drury Lane, Jeff Award nomination), *Cats* (TUTS), *The Honeymooners* (Paper Mill Playhouse). Film/TV: *Looking for Trouble*, *SeaQuest 2032*, *Figure It Out*.

JON RUA (*Rooster*) returns to The Muny, where he choreographed last season's *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Broadway: *SpongeBob SquarePants* (Patchy the Pirate), *Hamilton* (Charles Lee/Ensemble, u/s Hamilton, original Broadway company), *Hands on a Hardbody* (Jesus Pena), *In the Heights* (Sonny/Graffiti Pete). Selected off-Broadway: *Kung Fu*, *Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*. Selected regional: Old Globe's *Somewhere* (Alejandro, Craig Noel nomination.), *Bring It On: The Musical* (Twig), The Muny's *West Side Story*. Film: *Fall to Rise*, *First Reformed*. TV: *Blue Bloods*, *Law & Order*, *Verizon*. Digital: Mas Mejor. Choreography: Phish, *SpongeBob SquarePants* (Assistant Choreographer), *Aida* (Muny), *Isn't It Romantic?* (upcoming film); *Love Found*, *Celebrity Wife Swap*, NBA, NYMF 2016 *Freedom Riders*, Broadway Bares, Capezio A.C.E. Awards. He has

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danced for Mariah Carey, Phish, Don Omar, Soulja Boy, among others. Instagram @jonrua1, Twitter @jonrua, Youtube @JonRua

JOHN SCHERER (*FDR*) Muny credits include: *Young Frankenstein*, *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*, *The Addams Family*, *Spamalot* and *Mame*. He has appeared on Broadway in *LoveMusik*, *By Jeeves* and *Sunset Boulevard*. Off-Broadway credits include: *Dames at Sea*, *Olympus On My Mind* and *Preppies*. Other New York credits include: *The Most Happy Fella* (NYC Opera), *Out of This World* (City Center) and the Actors Fund Benefit of *Funny Girl*. He has toured nationally in *42nd Street*, *Cats*, *White Christmas*, *Mame* and *Hello, Dolly!* Regional credits include: the Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, Goodman Theatre, Goodspeed Opera House and many others.

MADELINE DOMIAN (*Tessie*) Muny credits include: *A Chorus Line* (Young Bebe), Disney's *The Little Mermaid* (Children's Ensemble), *The Wizard of Oz* (Munchkin). Proud Muny Kid since 2017.

KENNEDY HOLMES (*July*) Previous Muny credits: *Hairspray* (Little Inez) and kids ensemble in *Aida*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *All Shook Up* and *Newsies*. Currently, Kennedy is a 2018 Muny Kid and Stages St. Louis Triple Threat. Stages credits: *Annie* (Pepper), *James and the Giant Peach* (Sponge), *Snoopy* (Lead role) and *Godspell* (Bless the Lord).

SAMANTHA IKEN (*Pepper*) Muny debut! Recent credits include: *Shrek the Musical* (Teen Fiona, Missouri Baptist University), *Zombie Prom* (Toffee, Gateway Center for Performing Arts) and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Children's Ensemble, Stages St. Louis).

TRENAY LaBELLE (*Duffy*) is a proud straight "A" student. Trenay is currently a Muny Kids Touring Troupe member for the 2018 season. She is thankful for every opportunity that allows her to do what she naturally enjoys, and looks forward to what the arts have to offer.

ANA Mc ALISTER (*Molly*) Previous Muny credits include: *A Chorus Line* and *Young Frankenstein*. Ana has also appeared at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in *All My Sons* (Bert).

ELLA GRACE ROBERTS (*Kate*) is thrilled to be back on The Muny stage after her debut last summer in *A Chorus Line* as part of the youth ensemble.

Link for more information: <https://muny.org/annie/>

About the show:

Annie has a book by Thomas Meehan, music by Charles Strouse and lyrics by Martin Charnin.

Leapin' lizards! Everyone's favorite plucky, irresistible orphan is back! Based on the popular 1920s Harold Gray comic strip, *Little Orphan Annie*, *Annie* is considered one of the most acclaimed musicals of all time. This seven-time Tony Award-winning family favorite features unforgettable hits like "It's the Hard Knock Life," "Easy Street" and the iconic Broadway standard "Tomorrow." You can bet your bottom dollar this is one beloved, multigenerational Muny favorite guaranteed to entertain the entire family.

The seven shows in the 2018 Muny season are: **Jerome Robbins' Broadway** (June 11-17), **The Wiz** (June 19-25), **Singin' in the Rain** (June 27-July 3), **Jersey Boys** (July 9-16), **Annie** (July 18-25), **Gypsy** (July 27-August 2) and **Meet Me In St. Louis** (August 4-12). For more information, visit muny.org.

Season and single tickets are currently on sale for this historic season. In addition, Muny gift cards for the 100th season are now available online and at The Muny Box Office. For more information, visit muny.org or call (314) 361-1900.

World Wide Technology and The Steward Family Foundation have once again made a leadership gift to continue as the Muny's 2018 Season Presenting Sponsor. They became the first overall season sponsor in the history of The Muny in 2014 and continue that role through 2018.

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[The Muny's](http://muny.org) mission is to enrich lives by producing exceptional musical theatre, accessible to all, while continuing its remarkable tradition in Forest Park. As the nation's largest outdoor musical theatre, we produce seven world-class musicals each year and welcome over 370,000 theatregoers over our nine-week season. Now celebrating 100 seasons in St. Louis, The Muny remains one of the premier institutions in musical theatre.

For more information about The Muny, visit muny.org.