



Village Theatre Renames its First Stage Theatre 'Hunt Family Theatre' in Honor of Long-Time Executive Producer Robb Hunt

Brand new theatre marquee unveiling to take place October 14 at 5:00 p.m.

ISSAQUAH, WA (October 12, 2022) – Village Theatre today announced that it has renamed its Issaquah-based, First Stage Theatre, the original theatre, in honor of its long-time executive producer Robb Hunt, who retired this past June 2022 after 43 years of leadership. On Friday, October 14 at 5:00 p.m. the organization will unveil the newly minted marquee in celebration of Robb Hunt's legacy in Issaquah and with Village Theatre.

During his 43-years, Robb Hunt built the nonprofit from a community theatre to a nationally recognized theatre institution whose industry impact can be felt by countless artists, theater-goers, and community members around the world. As Executive Producer, Robb Hunt oversaw all aspects of the organization, leading the artistic and business operations, and driving the financial stability of the company forward. During his tenure, Robb Hunt has guided the organization to incredible financial stability, having led the successful acquisition of five properties it operates from, including owning the Francis J. Gaudette Theatre, First State Theatre, and the Craig & Joan Watjen Technical Studios in Issaquah, as well as partnering with the City of Everett to manage the Everett Performing Arts Center and Cope Gillette Theatre in Everett. Prior to the pandemic, Village Theatre commanded a \$15 million operating budget, hosted 220,000 guests a year between its Mainstage, Village Originals, and KIDSTAGE programming, and reached the incredible milestone of serving 20,000 season ticket holders for its Mainstage season.

Village Theatre Board President Jill Klinge said, "It is fitting that the renaming of First Stage - the original Village Theatre location - also be a moment to recognize the tremendous contribution of Robb Hunt over the past 43 years. He has made an everlasting impact on Village Theatre and its community, and we are filled with excitement and pride to honor that legacy in this way."

Visit Issaquah Director of Business Development, Christy Garrard said, "Legacy is what makes a small town a big deal. Robb Hunt guided the growth of Village Theatre here in Issaquah through the years as a powerful and collaborative member of this community -- in doing so, he created a legacy for the family name, and established Issaquah's art legacy in the region."

Of the renaming, Robb Hunt said, "It's an honor to see the original theatre building renamed the 'Hunt Family Theatre' – not only have I invested so much of my life to the organization, but my whole family spent a lot of time in that building. That was the building I performed in in the early years. My mother performed there, My daughter has performed in KIDSTAGE and Mainstage productions and still works in the administrative office. My other children and my wife and her kids have all been involved in or performed in KIDSTAGE in that building - it's really a family affair, so the renaming just means the world to all of us."

The community is invited to attend the new First Stage marquee unveiling on Friday, October 14 from 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. at Vino Bella (99 Front St N, Issaquah). Immediately following the unveiling, join Village Theatre and Robb inside the newly named Hunt Family Theatre for the annual **Sing It Forward** fundraiser in support of Village Theatre's Youth Education programs. Learn more at villagetheatre.org.

ABOUT VILLAGE THEATRE

Based in Issaquah, WA, with operations in Everett, WA, Village Theatre is a leading producer of musical theatre in the Pacific Northwest. Producing entertaining, quality productions since 1979, Village Theatre has grown into one of the region's best-attended theatres. Through its Village Originals program, Village Theatre is nationally recognized for its contribution to the development of new musicals, having supported the creation

of over 175 new works to date. Village Theatre also takes pride in nurturing tomorrow's audiences through its Youth Education programs, serving thousands of young people and their families annually.

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