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## Village Theatre Announces Derek Watanabe as New Managing Director

### Watanabe Joins Artistic Director Adam Immerwahr as Co-Leaders of Acclaimed Professional Musical Theatre on the West Coast

**ISSAQUAH, WA (August 2, 2024)** – Village Theatre announces Derek Watanabe as its next Managing Director today. Watanabe will serve alongside Artistic Director Adam Immerwahr as co-leaders of one of the premier regional musical theatres on the West Coast.

Board President **Julie Bailey** said, “We are thrilled to announce Derek as our new Managing Director, especially given his impressive background and deep-rooted connection to Village Theatre. Derek was a standout finalist candidate during our first national search two years ago, and we are delighted that the timing now aligns perfectly with his availability. His expertise in building strong teams, fostering relationships with our communities, patrons, and donors, and his strong financial background will be instrumental in guiding our theater forward. Alongside Adam, we are confident their combined vision and leadership will enrich our theater’s legacy and secure our success for years to come.”

Derek Watanabe comes to Village Theatre after a distinguished and diverse career in engineering, business management and finance, bringing over 30 years of experience working with a wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations. He served on Village Theatre’s Board of Directors for 15 years, leading Village Theatre through a period of growth.

Artistic Director **Adam Immerwahr** said, “I very much look forward to partnering with Derek, the staff, and Board at this pivotal moment in Village Theatre’s history. Derek brings a deep understanding of Village Theatre and our community as well as a remarkable business savvy. I look forward to writing the next chapter of Village’s story with him, as we continue to grow and improve Village Theatre for our audience, artists, and staff.”

Managing Director **Derek Watanabe** said, “I am excited to step into the role of Managing Director for Village Theatre, an organization I have enthusiastically supported for over 25 years. Village has positive momentum, with an exciting season ahead and subscriptions growing. I look forward to using my skills and expertise to help Village focus on what it does best—making great art.”

**ABOUT DEREK WATANABE**

Derek Watanabe has been a Village Theatre patron ever since he and his family moved to Issaquah over 25 years ago. He and his wife have been long-term subscribers, donors, Village Originals members, and Village Theatre's KIDSTAGE and Institute parents. In 2005, Derek joined the Village Theatre Board, served as Board President, member of the Finance Committee, and Board Development Chair. While Board President, he helped lead Village through the construction of the Watjen Technical Studios, Hunt Family Theatre and Cope Gillette Theatre, as well as navigate a major recession and other financial challenges. Derek brings over 30 years of banking, finance and leadership experience, having worked with a wide variety of public, private and nonprofit organizations throughout his career.

Derek is originally from Honolulu and is married with 3 grown children. He holds a bachelor's degree in physics from Pomona College, a master's in electrical engineering from USC, and an MBA from UCLA. In addition to musical theater, he enjoys competing in triathlons, SCUBA diving and fine-tuning his homemade kombucha.

**ABOUT VILLAGE THEATRE**

Based in Issaquah, Wash., with operations in Everett, Wash., Village Theatre is a leading producer of musical theater 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 180 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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