



## FOOTHILL MUSIC THEATRE SPELLS IT OUT WITH QUIRKY TONY AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

LOS ALTOS, CA (December 6, 2009) -- Multi-award winning **Foothill Music Theatre** presents the lovably loopy musical comedy **THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE**, the riotous tribute to the full spectrum of geekdom, where each eccentric contestant expounds on the trials and tribulations of being a really, really good speller through hilarious and charming candid confessionals, helmed by Award-winning director **Jay Manley** and with musical direction by **Mark Hanson** of Foothill productions *The Pajama Game* and *My Fair Lady*. A spunky, irresistible production riddled with improvisation, audience participation, and sunny, clever musical numbers, **SPELLING BEE** finally gives nerds, oddballs, and those picked last for kickball the limelight that they richly deserve. **SPELLING BEE** plays **February 19, 2010 – March 7, 2010** at the **Lohman Theatre** at Foothill College in Los Altos. For tickets (\$10-\$26) and information, the public may visit [www.foothillmusicals.com](http://www.foothillmusicals.com), or call the box office at (650) 949-7360.

**SPELLING BEE** showcases the joys and pitfalls of cut-throat competition between six lovable loner kids (played by adults) as they spell their way to the top: sweet and sheepish Leaf Coneybear, a child of hippies who makes his own clothes; Olive Ostrovsky whose best friend is literally a dictionary; Logainne “Schwartz” Schwartzandgrubennier, the lisping politico with two overbearing fathers; Marcy Park, the over-achieving academic all-star; chubby misfit William Barfee (pronounced “Bar-FAY”) who uses his “magic foot” to spell out the words on the gymnasium floor; and last year’s winner, Boy Scout Chip Tolentino, whose chance to defend his title is compromised when something quite unexpected pops up. Presiding over the spelling bee are perky real estate agent Rona Lisa Perretti, once a champion herself, and her reluctant co-host Vice Principal Panch, whose jaded, bitter utterances balance Perretti’s unadulterated enthusiasm. The judges pepper the bee with improvised quips, bizarre contestant introductions, and deliciously absurd and utterly unhelpful sentence examples for each spelling word. In

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addition to the six bookworms making their way up to the mic, audience members selected before the show also get a shot to take home the trophy and risk being escorted off stage by Mitch Mahoney, the bee's recently-paroled Comfort Counselor, armed with a juice box and a hug for disqualified spellers. While the contestants come from very different backgrounds, they all share the same fears of inadequacy and cherish dreams of acceptance, approval, and, ultimately, the golden trophy. *USA Today* declared **SPELLING BEE** "a winning experience for everyone" and *The New York Times* hailed it as "outrageously funny. . . in essence, 'A Chorus Line' with pimples."

**SPELLING BEE** includes Foothill veterans such as **David Cates** (Theatre on San Pedro Square, Foothill Music Theatre, Mirrorball Theater) as Leaf Coneybear, **Kristin Walter** (Bay Players, California Theatre Center, Foothill Music Theatre) as Rona Lisa Perretti, **Alicia Teeter** (Hillbarn Theatre, Foothill Music Theatre, California Musical Theatre) as Olive Ostrovsky, and **Kateri McRae** (Foothill Music Theatre, Palo Alto Players, Broadway by the Bay) as Logainne "Schwartzzy" Schwartzandgrubennier. Making their debuts at Foothill Music Theatre are **David Patrick Mister** (South Bay Musical Theatre, Palo Alto Players, Hillbarn Theatre) as William Barfee, **Katie Chaidez** (Theatre Q, Palo Alto Players, City Lights Theatre Co.) as Marcy Park, and **Scott White** (Symphony Silicon Valley, Lyric Theatre, Palo Alto Players) as Vice Principal Douglas Panch. The cast also includes newcomers **Ryan Millena** as Chip Tolentino and **Jordan Sangalang** as Comfort Counselor Mitch Mahoney.

**Foothill Music Theatre**, under the artistic direction of Jay Manley, has won Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards for Outstanding Production, Outstanding Ensemble Production, and Best Direction, among others. The company has also garnered numerous Dean Goodman Choice Awards, awards from the Los Angeles-based Drama-Logue, and kudos from myriad Bay Area critics for its sharp, handsomely mounted productions of *The Producers*, *Bat Boy: the Musical*, *The Pajama Game*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Brigadoon*, *Ragtime*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Guys and Dolls*, *West Side Story*, *Oklahoma!* and many other musicals.

#### **FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** Multi-award winning **Foothill Music Theatre** presents the lovably loopy musical comedy **THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE**, the riotous tribute to the full spectrum of geekdom, where each eccentric contestant expounds on the trials and tribulations of being a really, really good speller through hilarious and charming candid confessionals, helmed by Award-winning director **Jay Manley** and with musical direction by **Mark Hanson** of Foothill productions *The Pajama Game* and *My Fair Lady*. From Marcy Park, the over-achieving academic all-star, to chubby misfit William Barfee (pronounced "Bar-FAY") who uses his "magic foot" to spell out the

words on the gymnasium floor, **SPELLING BEE** finally gives nerds, oddballs, and those picked last for kickball the limelight that they richly deserve. *USA Today* declared **SPELLING BEE** “a winning experience for everyone” and *The New York Times* hailed it as “outrageously funny. . . in essence, ‘A Chorus Line’ with pimples.”

**WHEN:** February 19, 2010 – March 7, 2010

**SHOWS:** Thursdays-Saturdays at 8pm; Sundays at 2pm  
Plus 2pm Sat 2/27 & 2pm Sat 3/6

**WHERE:** Lohman Theatre, Foothill College, at the bottom of the hill  
12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022  
Parking Lot 8 provides direct and easy access to the theatre. Visitors must purchase the required parking permit for \$2. Foothill College is located off I-280 on El Monte Road in Los Altos Hills.

**TICKETS:** \$26 General Admission; \$24 Seniors (65 and over); \$18 Students; \$10 Children 12 and under. Special “Early Bird” savings for all orders received by February 12; applies to online, mail and phone orders! For more information, please visit [www.foothillmusicals.com](http://www.foothillmusicals.com). Tickets also available by phone at: (650) 949- 7360.

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**PHOTOS:** For high res photos, please visit <http://www.cb-pr.com/press/spellingbee.html>