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For release

## **SCERA's award-winning high school performance company to perform the school edition of "Les Miserables"**

(Orem, Utah) – One of the greatest musicals ever written has been specially adapted for students, and the high school age performers in SCERA Youth Theatre's award-winning youth performance team, Acting Up, will present "Les Miserables School Edition" on the mainstage of SCERA Center for the Arts March 26-April 3.

40 Acting Up members and their director Laurel J. Barham, recently returned from California where her students received the first place Sweepstakes Award for the second consecutive year at the Musical Theater Competition of America. Competing with youth companies from across the United States, Acting Up won a total of 19 awards, including solos duets and ensemble categories.

Reserved-seat tickets for "Les Mis School Edition" are \$8 for adults and \$6 for children (age 3-11), students (w/ID) and seniors (age 65+). They are available from 10am-6pm weekdays at the SCERA main office, 745 South State, Orem, by calling (801) 225-ARTS, online at [www.scera.org](http://www.scera.org) or at the door 30 minutes prior to the show if tickets are available.

Acknowledged as one of the greatest books and musicals ever written—and still running in major professional companies, Victor Hugo's compelling tale of one man's journey toward redemption and freedom was an instant hit with the masses when published in 1862 and has endured as a compelling story for nearly 150 years. It has been adapted for stage and screen several times, including the Tony-honored Broadway version that will be reprised in New York for its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The story focuses on paroled petty thief Jean Valjean's struggle for redemption after being shown mercy, a goal made excruciatingly challenging by Inspector Javert, whose only moral compass is the law. Javert relentlessly pursues Valjean, who triumphs despite adversity.

"These students are up to this difficult and inspiring music," says Barham. "It is thrilling to hear their rehearsals. The school edition cleans up a lot of the language while still keeping the powerful message of this Broadway masterpiece intact. It makes it perfect for the entire family."

Singing major roles are Jake Titensor, a senior at Orem High School, as Jean Valjean. Amy Kesler, a senior at Mountain View High School, is Cosette, and Andrew Scott James, a senior at Springville High School, will be Javert.

Other leads are Thad Nelson, Timpview High, as Marius; Ashlyn Hirschak, Mountain View, as Eponine; Barrett Penrod, Springville, as Thenardier; Linnea Pugmire, Orem, as Madame Thenardier, and Samantha Frisby, Mountain View, and Maddie Hall, Provo, alternating the role of Fantine; and Caleb Jenson, from Timpanogos High, as Enjolras.

SCERA President & CEO Adam J. Robertson is so proud of Acting Up. "I can't think of any group of young people who are better prepared to bring the emotion and inspiring music of this show to life. From what I've seen so far, this show is going to feature some fantastic vocal performances."

Assisting Barham are Kathryn Laycock Little, as music director/vocal coach, Sunny Watts as choreographer, Jordon Sorenson as assistant director and Meredith Hill as stage manager. Kelsey Seaver and Debbie Bowman are costumers, and Sarah Thorton is set designer.

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