



# Special Gifts Theatre, Inc.

Opening Doors to New Possibilities

June 2008

*Special Gifts Theatre (SGT) is not-for-profit organization that provides children and teens with special needs, a unique, creative drama experience enabling personal growth while breaking down stereotypes related to disabilities within the community at large.*



## Executive Director's Corner: Defining Success

*By Susan B. Field, Founder & Executive Director*

We are all reveling in the close of our most successful season to date! The dictionary defines success as "receiving a favorable or desired outcome." At Special Gifts Theatre (SGT), we define success in many different ways.

First and foremost is the success and pride we feel as we see the smiles and high fives that are shared by SGT students and peer mentors alike. Not only do these moments occur during this final curtain call, but during every class where trust and friendships grow weekly.

Success is creating an SGT Early Childhood Program this year that is proving with practice and clinical research, the powerful impact of utilizing the creative arts on a young child's cognitive and affective learning.

We have an incredibly successful professional and dedicated staff that is SGT's most valuable resource. Each staff member brings their talent, creativity, compassion and patience to SGT each day, as they provide hands-on help necessary to meet the varying range of needs of our students.

The ultimate success rests with the leadership of our Board of Directors. Their generous donation of time and

talent not only ensures we remain true to our mission, but drives us forward as we begin navigating a plan of geographic expansion. This plan will provide more children with special needs the opportunity to thrive, grow and SUCCEED while enjoying the thrill of being part of a team.

The most important tenant of success is to not rest on your laurels, but use it as a stepping-stone to future successes. With that in mind, SGT is proud to announce that we are actively pursuing avenues to expand not only our Early Childhood Program (ages 3-6 years) and our Musical Theatre Program (ages 8-21 years), but to initiate plans to begin a Creative Drama Program (ages 7-10 years) in 2009-2010. The sequencing of our programs will focus on developing each child's skills through a variety of age appropriate curriculum. Simultaneously, we are pursuing ways to share SGT techniques and programming in other locations.

All this is possible because we have reached out to you... the families and the communities we service and you have responded. With your continued support, you will continue to help us define success in ways we never dreamed of!

## 2008 Recipient of the "Harvey L. Miller Making a Difference" Award

It is with great pleasure and sincere appreciation that we awarded, Beth Rothschild, a seven-year staff member of Special Gifts Theatre with the 2008 Harvey L. Miller Making a Difference award. This award was created to honor Harvey Miller; a founding member of our Board of Directors, for his ability to make a difference in so many lives. Beth, lead choreographer, carries on this special quality as she dances her way into the hearts of so many students, parents and staff involved in our program. We are so thankful and fortunate to have Beth Rothschild working so hard to make a real difference in our program and world!



**Beth Rothschild**

## Kids Helping Kids

Special Gifts Theatre continues to be amazed by the number of kids who continue to support the efforts of SGT. Through the organization of fundraisers, monetary donations and/or sacrificing their own gifts to help SGT grow and reach so many other children with special needs is phenomenal!

*A special thanks to:*

**Trevor Thoma**, first year peer mentor, who explains he believes that “making a donation to make it possible for kids with special gifts to perform a play and ignore their differences is money well spent.” **Sammie Metz**, SGT student, who asked for donations to go to SGT in lieu of presents for her 10th birthday. **Alexa Giterman**, was so touched as she witnessed her first SGT performance that she went back to school and organized a bake sale for SGT.



Susie Field attends a bake sale at Maple School, Northbrook, where all proceeds benefited Special Gifts Theatre. Top Row (left to right): Megan Perlos, Emily G, Hannah Rosenson, Shiri Aljadef Bottom Row (left to right): Zoey Sideris, Molly Newman, Hanna Hampton, Alexa Giterman, Leah Sussman

## Read What They're Saying About SGT:

*A new SGT teacher expresses why she joined SGT:*

“The reason I sought out becoming part of this organization is simple. Professionally, I was a little frustrated after a school assignment where I saw kids being looked at as needing to change in order to “fit” into their school environment. Then, I attended “The Wizard of Oz” and saw a place where for a little while, the world changed to fit these specially gifted children. As an occupational therapist, functional, purposeful, meaningful activities are buzzwords we use a lot! I felt in my heart that day I saw the SGT production that these words fit precisely and why the actors and

actresses shined that day on stage! I have never seen this exemplified so beautifully and so meaningfully anywhere else.”

*Parents grow too who are involved in SGT:*

“Most parents are strong advocates for their children. I suppose we are no exception in the IEP Board Room. We advocate for our child the best we can. However, we do have a fault I suppose and that is focusing sometimes more on what our child CAN'T do. SGT believed our child could do things BEFORE we did! Thanks for proving us wrong. Thanks for giving our child a chance to see a change to see what

CAN be done! You provided the environment, we provided the kid. Thank you ever so much from the bottom of our heart.

*Outside Professionals notice the difference:*

“Your live hearts and hopeful minds model what I hope to inspire in some small way to our students. The work you do can only be sustained because of what you have become to each other. Your community of adults paves the way for miracles to occur. They demonstrate a place where the presence of God is obvious, and they help us all see the work as it was intended, through the eyes of children.”

### SGT Donations

We now take credit cards! If you would like to support SGT, you can donate at anytime by going to [www.specialgiftstheatre.com](http://www.specialgiftstheatre.com). We have a credit card form that you can download, complete and mail in or simply call 847.564.7704 and we will do it for you!

### SGT Board of Directors

Len Rubin, Chairman  
Judith Bregman  
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