



Department of  
Performing Arts  
COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES • AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

# The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Music and Lyrics  
WILLIAM FINN

Conceived by  
REBECCA FELDMAN

Book By  
RACHEL SHEINKIN

Additional Material by Jay Reiss

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine

Originally produced on Broadway by

David Stone, James L. Nederlander, Barbara Whitman, Patrick Catullo  
Barrington Stage Company, Second Stage Theatre

Based upon C-R-E-P-U-S-C-U-L-E, an original play by The Farm.

The Barrington Stage Company workshop of *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* was originally co-directed by Michael Barakiva and Rebecca Feldman.

Thursday, October 21- Saturday October 23, 2021 at 8:00pm

Saturday October 23, 2021 at 2:00pm

Friday, October 29 - Saturday October 30, 2021 at 8:00pm

Saturday October 30, 2021 at 2:00pm

Harold and Sylvia Greenberg Theatre

Karl Kippola, director and choreographer

Jason Arnold, light designer

Nathan Beary Blustein, music director and pianist

Sydney Moore, costume designer

Neil McFadden, sound designer

Barbara Tucker Parker, costumer designer

Samina Vieth, scenic designer

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee  
Is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).  
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.  
[www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

### **Singularity (sing-gyuh-LAR-i-tee).**

Definition: a trait marking one as distinct from others; strangeness by virtue of being remarkable or unusual; a peculiarity. Used in a Sentence: If you want friends, avoid singularity.

### **Alienation (eyl-yuh-NEY-shuhn)**

Definition: the state of being an outsider or the feeling of being isolated, as from society; disassociation; estrangement. Used in a Sentence: Special people should expect alienation.

### **Projection (pruh-JEK-shuhn)**

Definition: a prediction or an estimate of something in the future; the attribution of one's own attitudes, feelings, or desires to someone or something as a naive or unconscious defense against anxiety or guilt. Used in a Sentence: Little Wally, our need for you to become a doctor isn't projection; we just want what's best for you.

### **Community (kuh-MYOO-ni-tee)**

Definition: a group of people having cultural, religious, ethnic, or other characteristics in common; similarity or agreement. Used in a Sentence: While you may choose your community, you are stuck with your family.

This play is populated with the intelligent, the talented, the odd. This singularity too often makes the characters feel freakish and alone. Children (adults, too) most often want to fit in, to be like everyone else. We all experience this sense of alienation and isolation. The projection of parents, peers, and institutions creates enormous pressure to achieve “success,” often leading us to do what we think we should, rather than what brings us happiness. If we are lucky, however, we encounter a like-minded community of family and friends that share our quirks – people who love us in spite of (or maybe even because of) our singularity.

I first directed this musical at AU in 2012. This production marks the only time I've directed a production here more than once. In early 2012, my son was two. Now, he is 12 – the age of the characters inhabiting this play. So, I understand these kids differently now. I love them more, or at least differently. I feel an even greater desire to protect them. And the increased rage, discord, and volatility of the world in which we now live makes this musical's message of love and empathy that much more important.

The National Spelling Bee (now known as Scripps National Spelling Bee) began in 1925. Millions of children, ages 8-14, participate in local spelling bees each year from the United States, Europe, Canada, New Zealand, Guam, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Roughly 250 regional winners compete in the nationally televised finals.

## THE FARM

**The Farm** was founded in 2000 by Rebecca Feldman, Artistic Director. It is a collective of writers and performers, including Jay Reiss, Dan Fogler, and Sarah Saltzberg. The Farm's interest is in the role of improvisation in creating new work for the theatre. The Farm initially designates a two-week intensive period in which to discover, develop, and rehearse a play from the impulses borne mainly out of the pressure of a deadline. Previous projects include *Super* (at Atlantic Theatre Studios), *Why I Hate Florida* (workshop at White Wave in DUMBO) and *C-R-E-P-U-S-C-U-L-E* (at the Present Company Theatorium in October 2002), on which *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* is based. The character and original dialogue of "Beth Marguiles," "Vice President Douglas Panch," "Mr. Barfee," and "Logan Schwarzengrubenierre" were created by Rebecca Feldman, Jay Reiss, Dan Fogler, and Sarah Saltzberg, respectively.

# CAST

## The Spellers

Chip Tolentino.....Bret O'Brien  
Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre.....Nicole Klokiw  
Leaf Coneybear.....Carson Young  
William Morris Barfée.....Patrick Donoughe  
Marcy Park.....Rosie DeLuca  
Olive Ostrovsky.....Cate Ginsberg

## The Adults

Rona Lisa Peretti.....Natasha Sookrah  
Vice Principal Douglas Panch.....Eli Jensen  
Mitch Mahoney.....Jasmin Edrington

*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* is performed without intermission.

# ORCHESTRAL MUSICIANS

Erin Patton, flute  
Yannick Joseph, clarinet  
Charles Degen, saxophone  
Madeleine Corrigan, cello  
David Hobbs, synthesizer  
Erika Johnson, percussion

## ARTISTIC PRODUCTION STAFF

Director and Choreographer.....	Karl Kippola
Music Director.....	Nathan Beary Blustein
Scenic Designer.....	Samina Vieth
Light Designer.....	Jason Arnold
Costume Designer.....	Sydney Moore, Barbara Tucker Parker
Sound Designer.....	Neil McFadden
Assistant Director and Co-Choreographer.....	Rebecca Bailey
Stage Manager.....	Rhea Mehta
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Andrew McMichael
Production Manager.....	Greg Anderson
Technical Director & Assistant Production Manager.....	John Stahr
Costume Shop Manager.....	Barbara Tucker Parker
Lighting & Audio Coordinator.....	Erin Sullivan
Scenic Charge Artist.....	Meaghan Toohey
Assistant Scenic Charge Artist.....	Meghan Zettell
Front Of House Mix Engineer.....	Alli Peterson
Production Assistant.....	Lily R. Burka
Wardrobe.....	Emma R. Dorsch
Wardrobe.....	Laura E. Ellis
Wardrobe.....	Laura M. Manoukian
Follow Spot Op.....	Elijah M. Kelly-Taylor
Sound Board Op.....	Evelyn Micacci
Light Board Op.....	Lily E. Fowler
Mic Tech.....	Alexandra G. Plummer
Mic Tech.....	Rebecca I. Zane

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Jason Arnold (Lighting Design)** has designed lights for over forty shows in the Greenberg Theatre, including *Pippin* (set and lights), *Assassins*, *The Wolves*, *The Government Inspector*, *Little Women* (set and lights), *Dracula*, *Measure for Measure*, *Spring Awakening*, *The ThreePenny Opera* (set and lights), *The Who's Tommy*, *The Wild Party*, and *Cabaret*. He has designed for many local theatre companies, including Arena Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre, Theatre J, Constellation Theatre, Rep Stage, Adventure Theatre, Imagination Stage, 1st Stage, and Keegan Theatre. He is a professorial lecturer in technical theatre and design at American University. He received a BA from Vassar College and an MFA from Brandeis University.

**Rebecca Bailey (Assistant Director & Co-Choreographer)** is a senior Musical Theatre and Public Relations double major from Newport Beach, CA. Her credits include *Too Much Unhappy* (Stage Manager), *OVERTURE 200222020* (Stage Manager), *How to Succeed...* (Ensemble/Dance Captain), and *Pippin* (Player). Rebecca is so grateful to have been a part of this process. She would like to thank the entire team and cast and her family and friends for being so supportive!

**Nathan Beary Blustein (Music Director & Pianist)** is a Professorial Lecturer of Musical Theatre in the Department of Performing Arts at American University. He serves as music director for AU productions, which most recently include the premiere of *Too Much Unhappy* and *Miss You Like Hell*. Dr. Blustein completed his Ph.D. in Music Theory at Indiana University last August. His dissertation is titled "Through Arrangements of Shadows: Experiences of Reprise in Stephen Sondheim's Leitmotivic Musicals."

**Rosie DeLuca (Marcy Park)** is a senior Musical Theatre major with a minor in Communications from Andover, MA. Her previous credits include *Too Much Unhappy* (Nat), *The Birds* (Prometheus), *The Government Inspector* (Osip), *Peer Gynt* (Peer Gynt) [BADA] and *The Crucible* (Betty Parris). Rosie is beaming with joy to be performing one of her favorite shows with some of her favorite people in her last DPA production of undergrad. The cast and crew have had the best time spelling together and she can't wait for you all to spell along with them!

**Patrick Donouge (William Morris Barfée)** is a senior Interdisciplinary Studies and Theatre Arts double major from Altoona, PA. His previous credits include *The Boy Detective Fails* (Fenton), *Let Me Just* (Alex), *Miss You like Hell* (Motel Clerk), and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Orin). Patrick is really excited to be doing theatre in person again with the help of such an amazing and creative cast and crew.

**Jasmin Edrington (Mitch Mahoney)** is a sophomore International Relations major from Baltimore, MD. She is very excited to be in her first show at American University! She's enjoyed working with all of the wonderful cast and crew, and hopes you enjoy the show!

**Cate Ginsberg (Olive Ostrovsky)** is a senior Musical Theatre major, Communication Studies minor from Dallas, TX. Cate's previous credits include *Let Me Just* (Kim), *Miss You Like Hell* (Ensemble), *The Birds* (Ensemble) and *Overture 2018*. She sends thanks and love to her besties, Karl, and Nathan!

**Eli Jensen (Vice Principal Douglas Panch)** is a senior from Monkton, VT with a double major in Musical Theatre and Film and Media Arts. His previous credits include *Carrie* (Ensemble) and *How to Succeed* (Ensemble). Eli says the cast and crew are remarkable people who know how to make a long rehearsal into a fun adventure for everyone. He wishes everyone luck in your future endeavors.

**Karl Kippola (Director & Choreographer)** is an Associate Professor and director of the theatre/musical theatre program in his nineteenth year at American University. He holds a BA in drama from the University of Montana, an MFA in Acting from Wayne State University, and a PhD in Theatre from the University of Maryland. His book, *Acts of Manhood*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan. Kippola has worked professionally as an actor and director for over 30 years on well over 100 productions. At American University, he previously directed *Kiss Me, Kate*; *Of Thee I Sing*; *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*; *Hamlet*; *Urinetown*; *The Country Wife*; *Tartuffe*; *Oklahoma*; *Company*; *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* [2012]; *Guys and Dolls*; *The Alchemist*; *The Lower Depths*; *No, No, Nanette*; *Allegro*; *Little Women*; *The Crucible*, *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying*, and *The Women*.

**Nicole Klokiw (Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre)** is a senior Musical Theatre and Sociology double major from New York, NY. Her previous credits include *The Women* (Peggy) and *Let Me Just* (Naya). Nicole sends thanks to the DPA for helping her become who she is today. We love you Karl!

**Neil McFadden (Sound Design)** Neil's sound and lighting designs have been heard (or seen) in many area theatres, including Arena Stage, Studio Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Olney Theatre, Adventure Theatre, Rep Stage, Longacre Lea, Everyman Theatre, Flying V (where he is a company member), Venus Theatre, and Round House Theatre (where he was the Resident Sound Designer for eleven years). An eleven-time nominee, Neil received the Helen Hayes Award for his design of Round House's *Heathen Valley*. He has designed several national tours and Off-Broadway productions. Neil is also a musician and composer: he has played in many area shows; he also performs with several rock/blues bands, and as a solo acoustic performer. Love to Elizabeth.

**Andrew McMichael (Asst. Stage Manager)** is a senior Biology major, Theatre Arts minor from Gaithersburg, MD. His credits include *Boy Detective Fails* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Theory of Relativity* (Assistant Stage Manager) [Wildwood], and working as Assistant Technical Director at Camerata Musical Theater Camp.

**Rhea Mehta (Stage Manager)** is a junior Psychology & Theatre Arts double major from Beaverton, OR. Her previous credits include *Capstone: 8 Minutes* (Assistant Stage Manager) and *Too Much Unhappy* (Assistant Stage Manager). She sends thanks to the cast and crew for a great show!

**Sydney Moore (Costume Design)** is the resident associate costume designer and assistant costume shop manager for the Greenberg Theatre. She holds her BA in Technical Theatre & Design from Winthrop University and her MFA in Production Design from The George Washington University. Recent credits include *Airness* (Keegan Theatre/First Stage), *West By God* (Keegan Theatre); *Reykjavik* (Rorshach Theatre); *Dog Sees God*, *The Explorer's Club*, *Grand Concourse* (Prologue Theatre, Founding Artist).

**Bret O'Brien (Chip Tolentino)** is a senior Musical Theatre major and Business and Entertainment minor from Mountainside, NJ. His previous credits include *Miss You Like Hell* (Mo), *Significant Other* (Zach/Roger), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Seymour; AU Players), *How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* (Mr. Twimble) and *Carrie: The Musical* (Ensemble). Bret is ecstatic to be in this role! He would like to thank his cast/crew-mates, family, and loved ones for the support!



**Barbara Tucker Parker (Costume Shop Manager/Design Consultant)** is the full-time costume designer for the Greenberg Theatre. She received the American University Award for Outstanding Service in 1992. Since joining AU in 1985, she has designed and constructed costumes and accessories for theater, dance, opera and music theater. Several productions have won regional American College Theater Festival competitions. The AU production of *They Shoot Horses, Don't They* traveled to Russia for the 7th International Festival of the Volkov Theatre. A Washington DC native, her work includes most local professional theaters.

**Natasha Sookrah (Rona Lisa Peretti)** is a senior Musical Theatre major, Business and Entertainment minor from Schenectady, NY. Her previous credits include *The Pliant Girls* (Claude), *The Women* (Ensemble) and *The Boy Detective Fails* (Ensemble). Natasha says it has been an absolute joy to be Rona Lisa Peretti and work with such a wonderful cast and crew. She sends thanks to Nathan and Karl for being so supportive and giving them the opportunity to return to the stage!

**Samina Vieth (Scenic & Properties Design)** is thrilled to be back at American University after a 2-year hiatus and is so excited to return to live theatre! Her most recent design here was the 2019 production of *The Government Inspector*. By day she works for the federal government and by night she moonlights by creating scenic designs around the DMV area. Recent scenic design work includes: Catholic University: *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*; American University: *Spring Awakening*, *The Lower Depths*; Imagination Stage: *Wiley and The Hairy Man*, *The Miraculous Adventures of Edward Tulane*; Adventure Theatre: *How I Became a Pirate*; Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival: *The 39 Steps*, *Beauty and the Beast*. Samina holds an MFA in scenic design from Florida State University. More of her work can be seen at [hellosamina.com](http://hellosamina.com).

**Carson Young (Leaf Coneybear)** is a sophomore Musical Theatre major from Baltimore, MD. His previous credits include *Addams Family: The Musical* (Conquistador/Ancestor, Death) [McDonogh School], and *Metamorphoses* (Orpheus and Eros) [McDonogh School]. Carson loves being part of the Spelling Bee cast and he can't thank the cast and crew enough for everything!

## SPECIAL THANKS

Antoinette Doherty  
Ace Kippola  
Lisa Arakaki  
Shakespeare Theatre Company

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