



ACTOR BIOS

Pearl Alvarado (Growly) is thrilled to join Places! Productions for her debut musical theatre performance as a werewolf in *We Are Monsters*. She is a 6-year old homeschooler going into the 1st grade. She enjoys dancing, drawing, playing the piano, and her favorite color is hot pink. Pearl is grateful to Ms. Allison for providing stellar voice instruction, the production team for all of their hard work they have put into this show, and her family for their support.

Bennett Andersen (Grizzly) is excited to be making his musical theater debut with Places! Productions. When he's not singing and showing off his dance moves, Bennett enjoys basketball. He would like to thank his sister, Paisley, for showing him the ropes in theater.

Paisley Andersen (Sunny) This is Paisley's first show with Places! Productions, and she is loving every moment. Her prior theater experience includes ensemble in *Aladdin, Jr.*, Young and Middle Elsa in *Frozen, Jr.*, and the Princess (from the *Princess & the Pea*) in her school's production of *Character Matters*. When she's not pursuing her love of theater, Paisley enjoys writing, drawing, painting and pretty much anything artistic. She would like to thank all of the people who run Places!, who have helped her learn and meet new friends this summer.

Naomi Avery (Vanny/Vampire #4) is a nine-year-old homeschooled fourth grader. This is Naomi's second performance with Places! Productions. Naomi got her start in theater as an orphan in *Annie* at six years old and previously starred as Michael Banks in Places!

Productions' *Mary Poppins!* Other credits include Queen Titania in *The Little Mermaid*, Shopkeeper/Ensemble in *Aladdin Jr.*, Featured Ensemble in *SchoolHouse Rock Live! Jr.*, and a Pig in *The Little Red Hen*. In addition to Theater, Naomi does karate, show choir, plays piano and loves spending time with her friends.

Leighton Bereche (Varah) is 9 years old and entering 5th grade. This is her second time performing with Places! Productions, and she can't wait to take the stage as Varah! She previously starred in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Lion King*, *Willy Wonka*, *At the Bandstand*, and *Annie* at various local youth theaters. Outside of musical theater, Leighton enjoys tumbling and dance, as well as soccer and basketball. She would like to thank her director and the Places! team for this opportunity to perform for all of you today. Enjoy the show!

Faith Bujold (Fargoyle) is 9 years old and is full of life. She has always loved to sing and dance and is very outgoing. *We Are Monsters* is her debut in a musical, and she is absolutely thrilled. Faith's other hobbies include soccer, art and swimming.

Eden Chon (Targoye) This is Eden's first year at Places! Productions and her 4th show here. She is so glad for the opportunity to work with this cast and crew. She would like to thank her family and friends for coming to show their support!

Lacey Davis (Moonface) performed in Places! Productions' *At The Bandstand* as ensemble & Katie Nana in *Mary Poppins*. She was also a munchkin in *Wizard of Oz* & Chip in *Beauty & the Beast* in her school's productions. Lacey would like to thank all the crew for the amazing show & Places! Productions for bringing her into theater. She would also like to thank Mr. Ray for directing and that she was able to spend time with him and Mrs. Ray before 2 superstars were gone. Thank you to Miss Abby, Miss Lily, Mr Joseph, and Miss Allison for being my teachers.

Emma Douglas (Oozy Lumpa) is excited for her new role as Oozy Lumpa in the musical *We Are Monsters*. She has enjoyed this past year with her Places! Productions family playing Jane Banks in *Mary Poppins* and joined the Show Choir. Emma attends Basis Mesa School and is in their advanced Drama program. She was Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz* and recently played Lumiere in her school's production of *Beauty and the Beast*. Emma loves reading books in her free time and is looking forward to the 8th grade this fall!

Novalee Dunning (Vazel) is thrilled to be part of Places! Productions for her debut performance in *We Are Monsters*. At just 9 years old and entering 5th grade at Legacy Traditional, Novalee brings her prior experience from *Aladdin Jr.* chorus. When she's not immersed in the world of theater, Novalee enjoys exploring various artistic activities, playing soccer, swimming, and cherishing moments with her family and friends. She

extends her gratitude to the Places! Productions team for this incredible opportunity to perform.

Whitley Ferguson (Werepup) This is Whitley's very first theater experience and she has loved every second! Getting to spend time with her best friend Lucy while getting to sing and dance has been the best way to start summer vacation. Whitley would like to thank her family and the Martinez family for all of their support.

Scarlett Freehan (KC) loves to sing, read, and do anything creative!! She will be 13 in July and is going into 8th grade. She is homeschooled and will be attending Eagleridge on Tuesdays and Thursdays this fall! This is Scarlett's third play with Places Productions!! She was excited to hear that she got the role as KC!! She was in *At the Bandstand* as Darlene last summer, and Mrs. Brill in *Mary Poppins* last winter. She was also in the choir for *Seussical the Musical* at Queen Creek Performing Arts Center in 2018. She would like to thank Mr. Kasey for all his hard work with this play!! A big thanks to Mr. Joseph, Miss. Abby and Miss. Lily!! All of you are so wonderful!!

Julia Gawin (Jade) has performed in Desert Stages' production of *Annie* as the orphan Duffy. She also performed as Santa Claus in their production of *Elf Jr.* Julia was cast as Gretl in the *Sound of Music* with Archway Cicero, but that performance was cancelled during Covid. Julia has performed in various voice and piano recitals with New Covenant Arts Academy and studies voice with Mackenzie Nelson. She loves to sing, draw, swim, read, and play basketball. Julia is excited to be in her first production with Places! Productions.

Emily Johnson (Werewolf 3) attends Heartwood Montessori and has been performing in youth theater for the past 3 years. Some roles she has held were in *James and the Giant Peach* (Little Spider), *Matilda* (Student), and *Jack the Pumpkin King* (Witch). Emily would like to thank her parents for all of the love and support they've provided through her theater journey.

Cecily Kinnaman (Sunny) is an 11-year-old homeschool student who is thrilled to be performing in her fourth and fifth shows with Places! Productions this summer. Her favorite roles include *Bye Bye Birdie* (Mayor's Daughter), *At the Bandstand* (Judy) and *Mary Poppins* (Mrs. Corry). Ever since joining Places!, Cecily's love of dance has grown, and she is now also enjoying tap. Cecily wants to thank her musical theater besties for their support and inspiration.

Eliza Kinnaman (Puffy) is a 6-year-old homeschool student who is so excited to be performing in her second show with Places! Productions, after playing Barb in *At the*

Bandstand last summer. Some of her favorite roles she's had the privilege of playing are Young Anna and Piglet. When Eliza isn't doing theater, her favorite thing to do is play with her sisters. Eliza would like to thank Miss Allison for helping her sing.

Marliese Kinnaman(Targoyle) is a 9-year-old homeschool student who is thrilled to be performing in her second show with Places! Productions, after playing Janice in *At the Bandstand* last summer. Her favorite roles so far have been Winnie the Pooh and Pepper in *101 Dalmatians*. Outside of theater, Marliese enjoys building new Lego sets. Marliese would like to thank Miss Allison for all her support and encouragement.

Kennedy Kirkpatrick (Werepup) is thrilled to be in the cast of *We are Monsters* and is playing the role of a Werepup. *We are Monsters* is the second play that Kennedy has been in with Places! Productions. In her free time, she likes to do cheer, play with her brother and play with Barbies.

Neelan Kumar (Vank) was born in 2009 in Gilbert, Arizona and has lived in Mesa her whole life. She started taking voice lessons in August of 2017 and continued for 4 years. She then became interested in piano and began lessons in 2018 and continued taking lessons until 2021. Neelan is a student at BASIS Mesa and is currently learning the tenor saxophone in her band class. At school, she has been given many awards, such as citizenship and kindness certificates. Neelan joined NJHS in the 7th grade and became historian and parliamentarian of the organization in her 8th grade year. Neelan enjoys spending time with her family and friends, hiking, target shooting, and traveling. Neelan has visited many countries such as Italy, Switzerland, India, France, and Iran. Neelan joined Places! Productions in 2021 and has since been in *Pinkalicious*, *The Little Match Girl*, *Les Miserables*, *The Secret Garden*, *At The Bandstand*, *Mary Poppins*, and she is currently doing *We Are Monsters*, and *The Addams Family*.

Anna Lauritzen (Furrball) has loved playing Furrball in *We Are Monsters*. She last played Patty in *At The Bandstand*. She also enjoyed her role as a Sowerby/Crawford kid in *The Secret Garden* with Places! Productions. Anna loves art, gymnastics, & musical theater. Anna would like to thank Mr. Kasey and Lily for making the summer musical so fun!

Eliza Lauritzen (KC) is a twelve-year-old, homeschooled, triple threat. She is thrilled to be performing as KC in *We Are Monsters*, and Cousin Helga/Ancessor in *The Addams Family*. She loved playing the Bird Woman and a Chimney Sweep in *Mary Poppins JR.* with Places! Productions. Other credits include Cindy in *At The Bandstand*, Dreamer/Sowerby Child in *The Secret Garden*, a Tapping Gull in *The Little Mermaid JR.*, and a Newsie in *Newsies JR.* Eliza is so thankful to receive training under the direction of Allison Zuccaro, and loves her Places! Productions family.

Owen Lauritzen (Vreddy) is excited to be Vreddy the Vampire in *We Are Monsters*. He performed in Ballet Etude's production of *The Nutcracker* as Fritz this past year; performing in all 14 shows. Owen played Michael in *At the Bandstand* with Places! Productions last summer. He loves legos, baseball, and musical theater. Owen thanks Mr. Kasey and everyone at Places! who made this experience a great one!

Olivia Malabanan (Vladimir) is proud to perform for the stage as Vladimir the vampire in *We Are Monsters* and as Penelope Addams in *Addams Family* after her debut in *Mary Poppins* last year. She is a 7th grader who enjoys the arts, playing viola, and volleyball. She looks forward to growing in this craft and wants to thank her friends and family for their support.

Kendal Martinez (Tooth) is 9 years old with an incredible passion for singing and musical theater. Most recently, Kendal has been recognized as the youngest student to qualify for top 15, NATS Nationals and looks forward to traveling with fellow students to Knoxville at the end of this month. She has loved playing Tooth in *We Are Monsters*. Her most recent role was Neeius in *Mary Poppins*. She also enjoyed her role as a Sowerby/Crawford Kid in *The Secret Garden*. Kendal loves everything musical theater from singing to the set and props! Kendal would like to thank Ms. Allison for her continued guidance and support. And a big thank you to Mr. Kasey, Lily, Abby, Jackson and Joseph for making the summer musical so much fun!

Lucy Martinez (Werewolf 4) has loved playing Werewolf #4 in *We Are Monsters*. Lucy has attended several musical theater camps at Queen Creek Performing Arts Center, However, this will be her first official musical theater show. Lucy would like to thank Ms. Allison for the opportunity to be a part of Places! Productions. And a big thank you to Mr. Kasey, Lily, Abby, Jackson and Joseph for making the summer musical so much fun!

Ashton May (Vampire 1), an 11 year old 6th grader, is excited to perform in *We Are Monsters*. His most recent appearance was in Places! Productions 2024 production of *Mary Poppins Jr.* as Michael Banks. He has also appeared in several school productions over the years, including *Pinocchio*, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Cinderella* and *Wizard of Oz*. He has been in music classes since he was 2 years old and learned to play the glockenspiel, keyboards and ukulele! He also loves creating TikTok videos, playing Roblox with friends and drawing. Ashton would like to thank his parents, family and friends for their continued support along with Allison Houston for cheering him on and encouraging him and the Places! Production Team for supporting young talent!

Farrah McArthur (Oozy Lumpa), age 12, is so excited to be performing in her first summer show with Places. Farrah most recently played the title roles in *Mary Poppins* with Places! and *Oliver Twist* with Limelight last summer. Prior to that, Farrah performed with Places! Productions for both *The Secret Garden* in the role of Mary Lennox, and *Les Miserables* in which she played the role of *Young Cosette*. Music and performing have always been a

passion of Farrah from the start. In the past year, she has won awards and accolades for her poem recitations (The Bard Competition) reciting verses from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as well as multiple singing competitions (NATS) placing first in both categories of classical and musical theater 2 years in a row. Her all-embracing love of the theater is easily witnessed in every rehearsal and performance. She would like to thank Allison Houston for her diligent voice coaching and continuous encouragement and her family members for their unwavering love and support.

Lia McArthur (Westerly), age 8, is thrilled to be performing in her first summer show with Places! She is very excited to play the role of Westerly in *We Are Monsters*, a big step up from being an ensemble member in her first show with Places!, *Mary Poppins Jr.* Lia loves school and actually placed first in the Bard Competition (poem recitation) this year. Lia is also an Xcel Gold competitive gymnast with USA Youth Fitness Center. She has also performed in *The Nutcracker* and *The Halloween Show* with Studio R. She would like to thank Allison Houston and the entire artistic team of *We Are Monsters* for giving her this opportunity. She would also like to thank her family for their love and encouragement.

Payten Moore (Werewolf 5) is 7 years old, and this will be her first musical with Places!

Annie Richardson (Valissa) is 10 years old and entering 5th grade at Cortina Elementary. She is so excited to be performing in her first show with Places! Productions! She previously enjoyed several roles with Center Stage Academy including Ensemble/Cindy-Lou Who in *Seussical Jr.*, Handmaiden in *Aladdin Jr.*, Sergei in *Matilda Jr.*, and Oaken in *Frozen Jr.* Annie would like to thank Ms. Allison for her incredible vocal instruction and the *We Are Monsters* production team for creating such a fun and positive learning experience and performance opportunity!

Milo Self (Werewolf 1) is so excited to be performing in his first show ever! He is also very excited to be starting 1st grade in the fall. Besides singing and dancing, Milo's favorite activities are swimming, jumping on the trampoline, and playing with his cousins. He loves pizza, roller coasters, and Halloween.

Maria Stallings (Jade) is preparing to begin 7th grade and attends Legacy Charter School of Chandler. She has been performing in local plays with Places! Productions as well as her school for the past few years as well as taking voice lessons in Gilbert, Arizona. She loves performing on stage, acting, singing and dancing. She has past performances in shows such as *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *The Lion King*, *Rock and Roll Forever*, *Frozen*, *The Secret Garden* and *Mary Poppins*. She would like to thank her parents, Laura and Sean, her sister, Samara and her grandparents, Charles and Beverly for the love and support.

Jayda Vannoy (Fargoyle) is very thankful to be returning to the stage with Places!

Productions. She also played The Poor in *Urinetown*, Chimney Sweep 4 in *Mary Poppins*, and Nancy in *Bye Bye Birdie*. She also sang her first season in the show choir, Presto.

Zander Zahorka (Westerly) is an eleven-year-old homeschooled student. This is his 2nd time performing with Places! He's excited to be working with Kasey in *We are Monsters* and for his human character, Westerly. He was previously Michael Banks in Disney's *Mary Poppins Jr.* He is excited to follow in his brother's footsteps to be performing on stage. When Zander isn't rehearsing, he can be found reading, gaming, or practicing Karate. He is thankful for Places! helping him grow and to love theater more.

CREATIVE BIOS

Abby Gordon (Assistant Director) recently graduated from ASU with her degree in Engineering. She was most recently seen at Places! as Becky Two Shoes in *Urinetown*, Martha in *The Secret Garden* and had the incredible opportunity to direct *Rock and Roll Forever* last year. She will next play Shelby in the summer's *Steel Magnolias*. She is so excited to be back on the production side of Places! this summer.

Kasey Ray (Director) is thrilled to return to his treasured role as Director of *We are Monsters*. Previous directing credits include *At the Bandstand*, *Harmony High*, *Beauty and the Beast Jr.*, and *Pinkalicious*, the latter two serving as co-director with his beautiful wife, Alyssa. As always, all of his gratitude to Ms. Allison, Mr. Joseph, Ms. Abby, and Ms. Lily for once again doing all of the hard work while he takes all of the credit. Additional praise and thanks to Ms. Allison and Places! Productions for granting him this undeserved opportunity; directing these shows has been one of the highlights of his theatrical career and brings him tremendous joy.

Lily Saba is thrilled to be once again choreographing for Places!. Lily is a Junior at ASU for Sports Journalism. Before working for Places!, she has been seen on stage as Amy March in *Little Women*, Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde*, and Penny Pingleton in *Hairspray*, all with Places! Productions. When not choreographing, you can find her at the Arizona Diamondbacks working as an MLB Dancer. She extends her gratitude to Allison, as always, for allowing her to grow as a performer and a choreographer. Lily is forever proud of her kids and would also like to thank Abby Gordon, Kasey Ray, and Joseph Strode for their continuous support.

Joseph Strode (Music Director) originally from Mississippi where he got his BFA in musical theatre from the University of Mississippi. He is the director of Ping (show choir), and previously music directed Places! Productions of *Rock and Roll Forever* and choreographed *Mary Poppins Jr.* His past credits include *Bye Bye Bride*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *Footloose* at Hale Center Theatre. *The Secret Garden* and *Little Women* at Places! Productions. *Chicago*, *Assassins*, *Macbeth*, and *Hair* at Ole Miss Theatre, as well as performing at the historic Grand Ole Opry and Carnegie Hall. He would like to thank his family and fiancé for their unbelievable support.

Allison Zuccaro (Music Director) is the Founding Artistic Director of Places! Productions. She graduated from ASU in 2012 with a BM in Music Theatre and Minor in Justice Studies and performed as a member of Actors' Equity Association before deciding her heart was truly in teaching and directing. Over the last 20 years, she performed in over 30 productions and has now directed over 40. She runs a private voice studio in Queen Creek and is a board member for the National Association of Teachers of Singing. She thanks the amazingly talented *Addams Family* cast and crew, Breona, Rachel, Heather, Mills, and Jackson for their wonderful work on this show, the Places! Board, all of our incredible volunteers, her brilliant parents, her supportive husband John, YOU for supporting the arts, and Liz Rhodes, who, for the last 17 years, encouraged Allison to pursue her dreams and believed in her more than she ever believed in herself.