



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# First Stage Announces New Managing Director **Daniel Grambow**

*-A Milwaukee native, Grambow brings his collaborative spirit and strategic administrative skills to lead the organization into its next chapter-*

**MILWAUKEE – Oct. 16, 2023** – First Stage today announced the appointment of its next managing director, **Daniel Grambow**. Grambow brings more than a decade of nonprofit management and artistic education experience to First Stage along with a background in developing diverse audiences, cultivating new donors and fostering collaborative relationships in the community.

“We’re excited to welcome Daniel to First Stage and what he will bring to not only our organization but the Milwaukee performing arts and education communities,” said **Chris Marschka**, board president, First Stage and SVP, market manager for PNC Commercial Banking in Wisconsin for The PNC Financial Services Group. “Daniel’s background encompasses a number of critical skills First Stage will need to navigate the future as we explore new ways to enhance the organization while maintaining the core values upon which we were founded, specifically transforming lives of young people and their families through theater.”

Grambow will officially join First Stage today and will lead alongside Artistic Director Jeff Frank, who has been with the organization for nearly 28 years.

For the past four years, Grambow has served as the managing director of the Chautauqua Opera Company and Conservatory, part of the Chautauqua Institution, a not-for-profit educational center in Chautauqua, New York. In this role, he headed the opera programming for the Institution, advanced the organization’s development and fundraising goals and oversaw productions and events. Additionally, Grambow led the organization through the COVID-19 pandemic, leading his staff in the pivot to virtual content. Prior to this, he served in roles with

The Floating Opera Company and Chicago Opera Theater in Chicago, Illinois, as well as the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration in Cleveland, Ohio. Grambow holds his bachelor's degree in music from the University of Miami, master's degree in music from the Cleveland Institute of Music and his Master of Science in leadership for creative enterprises from Northwestern University.

"I'm thrilled to be coming home to Milwaukee and bringing my passion, talents and enthusiasm to First Stage. Like so many young people in the area, I was first introduced to live theater through First Stage. To be able to now lead the organization is incredibly special for me," said Grambow. "I cannot wait to inspire the next generation of Milwaukee artists in this community and build upon First Stage's strong foundation by bringing education, programming and performances to more of Milwaukee's youth."

Grambow succeeds Betsy Corry, who announced her retirement earlier this year after a collective 17 years with the organization.

Link to headshot for Grambow can be found here:

[drive.google.com/file/d/18VC8xrdvoZE0gHz0mAmaBDkx5vBFQEs8/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/18VC8xrdvoZE0gHz0mAmaBDkx5vBFQEs8/view?usp=sharing)

First Stage recently debuted their 2023/24 season with the world premiere of DREAM, QUICKIE! DREAM!, a play inspired by the life of Donald "Quickie" Driver. To learn more about First Stage and this season's productions, visit [firststage.org](https://firststage.org).

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### **About First Stage**

Founded in 1987, First Stage is one of the nation's leading theaters for young people and families, and a driving force behind the creation of the best and most innovative plays for family audiences, theater training programs for young people, and education initiatives for its schools and community.

First Stage produces plays that honor the young person's point of view, include diverse and traditionally underrepresented voices and inspire meaningful conversations. First Stage has presented more than 70 world premiere productions that address important subject matters relevant to today's youth. The Theater Academy is one of the nation's largest high-impact theater training programs for young people (3-18 years old). Through a challenging curriculum taught by professional teaching artists, the Academy nurtures life skills through stage skills and includes the Next Steps Program that tailors Theater Academy classes to the needs of autistic young people. As Wisconsin's leader in arts-integrated education in schools, First Stage's dynamic Theater in Education Programs cleverly blend theater activities with standard curriculum – allowing more than 10,000 students annually to learn traditional academic subjects through creativity and self-expression.

First Stage ensures that all programming is not only accessible to its community but that it is reflective of the community it serves. In order to do that, First Stage relies on its community of donors. With an annual operating budget of \$5 million, more than half of First Stage's revenue comes from generous contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, government sources and the United Performing Arts Fund. Join First Stage's community of donors with [a contribution today](#) and transform lives through theater.

First Stage is a member of TYA/USA, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education, Milwaukee Arts Partners and is a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF). [firststage.org](http://firststage.org).