

GETTING THE LEAD

FOSTER WALTER, THE LEAD ROLE IN THE FROZEN MUSICAL, GETS READY FOR SHOW NIGHT

As a kid, Junior Foster Walter always looked up to her mom as an influence. Her mom was on Broadway and has always been a big role model in her daughter's life. Growing up in a music-oriented household, Walter was easily introduced to theater as well as music.

"I have always loved theater and have always been surrounded by it. My mom was a performer so we would constantly travel with her when we were babies and be backstage during her shows. Then when I was seven years old, I saw the musical 'Wicked' and it changed my life. I remember sobbing after she sang 'Defying Gravity.' I turned to my mom, and I told her 'That's what I'm going to do one day,' and I've had a deep love for theater ever since," Walter said.

After this point, Walter knew she loved dance and theater and knew she wanted to continue to pursue it. She created goals of being a Broadway star following in the footsteps of her mom. Throughout Walter's life, she has participated in countless shows to get her to the point she is today.

"I've done an acting intensive at Denver Center Performing Arts and just got back from an intensive called ArtsBridge that was hosted in Ohio. I had to audition to get in and they brought the top faculty of Musical theater (MT) from all the top 10 schools/programs for MT in the US. That was such an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime, experience," Walter said.

Fortunately, Castle View had the opportunity to compete to win the rights to the musical Frozen and won. Since the summer going into the 2023-2024 school year, the theater program has been working nonstop to perfect the show for November. From casting to set production, Walter along with her peers, have been at the school early in the mornings and staying late after school.

From the minute Walter found out the next show, she knew she wanted to get the lead of Elsa. Walter worked every day to prepare for the long stressful

audition process. She was scared after the first round of auditions but found out she had callbacks.

"That night they posted a callback list for the final day. We spent the first couple hours singing through songs with each other and by ourselves. Then we did scenes with the guys to see chemistry with one another. We ended it with singing the bed of 'Let It Go'" Walter said.

After a long week filled with emotions, the cast list came out.

"When the cast list came out I screamed with joy. I found out while I was getting gas and just started sobbing. It was such a surreal feeling. I was so overwhelmed with joy and pride. All my hard work had paid off," Walter said.

After castings, the real hard work began.

"I have rehearsals every day. It used to be from 3:00 pm-5:30 pm and on Saturdays 9:00 am-4:30 pm. Now we are rehearsing every day after school until 6:30 and for the final few weeks we will have rehearsals until 10:00 pm," Walter said.

On Oct. 27th, 2023, tickets went up for sale and sold out in the first 48 hours, which has never happened before.

"I'm so excited for Frozen. It's cool to see how far I've come. It's such an interesting full-circle moment. I can't wait to share all the magic with everyone on stage," Walter said.

She believed her hard work would pay off and she's not proving anybody wrong.

Written by Katherine King and Photos Courtesy of Maximus Balcom

Seniors Tate Rust as Olaf and James Stanley as Kristof, collaborate on stage during the musical to make the last shows as good as possible. "We put so much hard work into the musical it's great to see the outcome," Stanley said.

Lead dancers of the Musical Frozen dance to Olaf's 'In Summer' on Nov. 18, 2023, in the Castle View Auditorium. "I just love seeing the audience and the progress the whole cast has made when we perform," junior Emma King said.



Junior Foster Walter entertains the crowd as her role of Elsa in the Musical Frozen on Nov. 18, 2023. "When the cast list came out I screamed with joy. I worked as hard as possible at every show to make it the best as possible," Walter said.

On Nov. 18, 2023, as the last show approached, senior Tate Rust walked on stage with confidence the crowd would love his character. "The costume, character, and overall experience was just so exciting," Rust said.

As tension rises between the two characters, seniors Leah Taylor and Ashton Showers play their roles to keep the crowd interested in their chemistry.



Senior Leah Taylor as Anna falls into James Stanley's arms while he plays Kristoff in the musical Frozen on Nov. 18, 2023, in the auditorium.

FOLLOWING THE SPOTLIGHT

MRS. WALTER'S BACKGROUND IN THEATER

For all of theater teacher Mrs. Rochelle Walter's life, she knew she wanted to do theater through either music or choreographing. She has been doing theater as long as she can remember and it has brought her to where she is today.

"Performing has just always been my livelihood and it's how I've made my living. It's pretty much been the only thing I've ever loved to do so it was never really a question that I wasn't going to do that somehow," Walter said.

Theater is widely known as a place for diverse groups of people to explore their identities and express emotions in a safe environment. Walter is the quintessential idea of a thespian in the theater world and her passion is contagious for many.

Walter wants to share her knowledge and joy for theater. She shares her passion with her students with big hopes for kids to have safe spaces and to surround them with the right kind of people.

"I think my biggest thing is the fact that we love to create a community down here where people feel connected to one another. I want them to feel like a small family, and feel like they get to explore and create, all in a safe place. But more than anything, I just wanted my own kids to be able to be around like-minded people," Walter said.

While being a teacher, she also raised her kids and they have grown up around music and theater. As they grew up, they became more and more interested in the idea of following their mom's steps.

"When you're a teacher, you pretty much live at the school. I start teaching at 6:45 and I'm not done until the late evening and feel guilty that I'm not around my kids, especially when they were really little," Walter said.

Walter's daughters ended up asking to be in plays and have loved them ever since and as a bonus got to be with their mom longer.

When Castle View won the rights to Frozen, Walters' daughter Foster Walter knew she wanted the lead role of Elsa. With this, many people began to talk about favoritism with Walter's daughter getting the lead role. But in reality, people don't see the real hardships of being a mom and teacher to your own kid.

"I will always be harder on my kids than I ever would on anyone else. And I'm not the only one in that room during auditions. There are five of us making that decision, and so many things that go into that, that people are unaware of," Walter said.

Walter is proud of her students and their hard work in and out of rehearsal. As opening night approaches, Walter gets increasingly excited to see the hard work she and her students have put in for months upon end.

Written by Sophi Pinello

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