

# MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS FOR THE ARTS

---

EXECUTIVE SEARCH • PLANNING • ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

---

## **POSITION PROFILE** **SYRACUSE STAGE** **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** **SYRACUSE, NY**

### **BACKGROUND**

Syracuse Stage (“Stage”), Central New York’s premier professional theatre, seeks its next Artistic Director, who will join Managing Director Carly DiFulvio Allen to lead this storied organization. Founded in 1974, Stage has produced more than 300 plays in 48 seasons including a number of world, American, and East Coast premieres. Each season 60,000 patrons enjoy an adventurous mix of new plays and bold interpretations of classics and musicals featuring exceptional theatre artists. America’s leading writers, actors, directors and designers work and/or have worked at Stage and recent seasons have included new works by Brian Quijada, Rogelio Martinez, Ty Defoe, resident playwright Kyle Bass, Keenan Scott and others. Stage has launched two Broadway transfers since the pandemic – Thoughts of a Colored Man (2022) and How to Dance in Ohio (2023) – and has produced other commercially enhanced pre-Broadway productions. In 2023, Stage received \$1 million, the largest gift in the theatre's history, to support new work at Stage and the biennial Julie Lutz New Play Festival.

In addition, Stage maintains a vital educational outreach program that annually serves over 30,000 students from 24 counties (more information below). A solid core of subscribers and supporters helps give Stage a vibrant artistic presence in Central New York, and a slate of award-winning community partnerships and programming connects the theatre with its neighbors. Stage was awarded the 2025 Lucille Lortel Foundation Indigenous Theatremaker Award, for preserving, uplifting, and elevating Indigenous storytelling and theatremakers. Additional support from government, foundations, corporations and Syracuse University helps to ensure the continued role of Stage as a valued cultural resource for the community.

As the nonprofit, professional theatre in residence at Syracuse University, Stage has been integral to the success of the Department of Drama, one of the leading undergraduate theatre programs in the country. While embedded in the University, Stage is a separate 501(c)(3) organization, governed by its own Board of Trustees.

More information can be found on their website: <https://www.syracusestage.org/>

## MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Syracuse Stage is a deeply values-rooted organization with a priority on “people first.” There is a strong commitment to the community and to education.

### Mission:

*Syracuse Stage tells stories that engage, entertain, and inspire us to see life beyond our own experience.*

### Vision:

*Reimagining what’s possible for regional theatre—through active inclusion, innovative outreach, and bold productions—Syracuse Stage shapes the cultural and social vitality of Central New York, enriches the Syracuse University student experience, and fosters change in ourselves, our communities, and our world.*

### Core Values:

#### **PEOPLE**

*Actively including diverse individuals, communities, ideas and perspectives.*

#### **PASSION**

*Commitment to integrity, excellence and enthusiasm in our work.*

#### **CURIOSITY**

*Fostering an innovative and adaptive environment that elicits wonder.*

*Syracuse Stage stands firmly against discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, gender, national origin, citizenship, ethnicity, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, veteran status or any other status protected by applicable law to the extent prohibited by law.*

*We seek to foster an environment where our community has access to the resources, support and experiences needed to thrive. We value gathering people of all backgrounds, lived experiences and perspectives. We strive to create an environment, both internal and external, where all individuals feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued.*

## LEADERSHIP

### **Carly DiFulvio Allen, Managing Director**

Carly Allen joined Stage in 2025 as Managing Director, after a twenty-year career in some of New York’s most celebrated commercial and non-profit theatres. Most recently, she served as Associate General Manager at Disney Theatrical Group, working on the Broadway, North American, and International tours of *Aladdin*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and others. Previously, she was the Company Manager of Roundabout

Theatre Company's Todd Haimes Theater, where she managed over 25 Broadway productions. Originally from Rochester, NY, she attended Ithaca College and has taught theatre management at Pace University. She lives in Syracuse with her family. A full bio may be found [here](#).

### **Board of Trustees**

Syracuse Stage is governed by a Board of 45 individuals, including educators, volunteers, and business and community leaders. There is an Executive Committee of 10 trustees. Seven trustees are faculty and staff members of Syracuse University, appointed by the University's Chancellor. The Board Chair is Richard Driscoll, Senior Vice President of NBT Bank, and the Board President is Brett Padgett, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Syracuse University. On July 1, 2026 board member Colleen Gaetano will assume the role of Board Chair.

### **CURRENT ENVIRONMENT**

Stage's location on the northern edge of campus perfectly positions it to connect the University to the broader Syracuse community via performing arts and performing arts education. Its facilities are shared with the Department of Drama. Mainstage productions occur primarily in the Archbold Theatre, a 499-seat proscenium.

Stage production and technical personnel build most productions in onsite scenic, prop, and costume shops (scenic painting occurs in a separate location nearby). These individuals also support approximately five additional productions of the Department of Drama. There are ten artist housing units a short walk from Stage.

The upcoming 2026-27 season is composed of three plays and three musicals, including two world premieres, a LORT co-production, two co-productions with the Department of Drama, and one commercially enhanced pre-Broadway production. The projected 2026-27 budget is approximately \$9.5 million (up from a 2025-26 budget of \$8.9 million). In 2025-26, approximately 26% of income came from contributed and in-kind sources, 46% from earned income, and 28% from the University. Additionally, approximately three Stage staff positions are considered University employees and paid through the University (though charged to Stage).

There are 52 full-time staff positions and up to 170 part-time, seasonal and contract positions. Stage operates on LORT C1 AEA, SDC and USA contracts.

Stage has robust education and community engagement programs, overseen by the Artistic Director. These include the following:

- Theatre for the Very Young (ages five and under), touring to preschools and daycare facilities;
- An annual Children's Tour (grades K-5) across four counties (in association with the Department of Drama);
- Ginny Parker Young Playwrights Festival (grades 9-12), an annual ten-minute play festival (in association with the Department of Drama);
- Young Adult Council (grades 9-12), a monthly workshop;

- Sensory Friendly Performances;
- Community Partnerships with multiple organizations in Syracuse.

## ABOUT SYRACUSE

Syracuse is the 5th largest city in New York State, with a population of approximately 650,000 in the metropolitan area. The surrounding region has beautiful towns and is known for lakes, apple picking, and snow sports. The area also has the benefit of being affordable relative to many other major urban centers; Syracuse's average cost of living is approximately half of that in Brooklyn, NY, for example. The city has an international airport and is within driving distance of NYC, Buffalo, Rochester, Albany, Toronto, Montreal, and other major cities. Winter sports like skiing and snowshoeing are popular, with Labrador Mountain and other resorts nearby. Along with Syracuse University, the area is home to the Everson Museum of Art, a handful of theatre and performing arts venues, the soon-to-open Harborview Aquarium, and two SUNY schools. Syracuse is anticipating major changes in the coming years: semiconductor manufacturer [Micron Technologies recently broke ground on its new campus](#) in Syracuse's northern suburbs, slated to be the largest semiconductor plant in the U.S. with 9,000 new permanent jobs projected for the coming years; in addition, there is a significant project to remove Interstate 81 from the center of Syracuse by 2028, replacing it with neighborhoods and an urban boulevard and linking Stage to downtown. <https://www.visitsyracuse.com/> ; [Data USA: Syracuse](#).

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

In many ways, Syracuse Stage is in a good position relative to its peers. It has a strong artistic reputation and niche in the region and a dedicated, experienced team. Here are some key areas to note:

- Stage has a mutually beneficial relationship with Syracuse University, with financial support, systems for communication and collaboration in place, and artistic and academic value to both partners. That said, the relationship does involve collaborative expectations for Stage – several of Stage's staff fill dual roles serving the University's Department of Drama and many departments fully support both Stage and SU productions. There are pressures on shared performance spaces and calendars; and coordination around issues such as facility improvement, public messaging, and fundraising is required.
- Stakeholders say that the SU/Stage relationship is exceptionally strong at present, though maintaining these strong relationships may require especially thoughtful stewardship due to staff changes. There is recent turnover in key roles at Syracuse University, including the Chancellor ([Mike Haynie](#) was recently appointed) and the Chair of the Department of Drama ([Eleanor Holdridge](#) was recently appointed). The current Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts is expected to depart after the 2026-27 academic year.
- Stage's financial position is reasonably strong relative to many peer organizations, with a moderate cash reserve and posting only one deficit in the past decade. It benefits from a recent track record of coproductions and commercial enhancement, as well as the University's cash and in-kind support towards its budget. However, the organization is anticipating a modest deficit in FY27 (after a healthy surplus in FY26) and has continued work to do to rebuild the true financial sustainability necessary to support its robust ambitions. The organization is currently working

- with a consultant for a capacity assessment to better position the theatre for success in this work.
- The staff/board dynamic is healthy, and Stage has many supporters who have been involved for years. Growth potential remains in developing the patron experience and growing Stage's fundraising, as the theatre builds its visibility and impact in the region.
  - By all accounts, Stage has a truly people-centered culture. It did not lay off or furlough staff during COVID, a move that built trust and good will that resonates through today. People report working at or near capacity, especially around enhanced productions, and there is an opportunity for the new Artistic Director to make advances in collaboration, communication, and capacity-building among the staff, in collaboration with the Managing Director.
  - The Syracuse region is anticipating significant growth and transformation in coming years (see "About Syracuse") and Stage is seen by many of its constituents as an important contributor to the region. Stage will benefit from continued clarity and louder storytelling about its impact and brand, and the new Artistic Director will play an important role in this public-facing, relationship-building work.

## **PRIORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Artistic Director reports directly to the Syracuse Stage Board of Directors and co-leads the organization with the Managing Director. The key priorities of the position include the following:

- Develop and steward Syracuse Stage's artistic vision and curate theatre seasons of extraordinary quality that engage, entertain, and inspire the Syracuse community.
- Oversee all creative teams, productions and artistic initiatives, ensuring that the season is well produced, that artists are supported, and that the Stage / SU staff have what they need to excel in their work.
- Serve as part of the Stage/Syracuse University leadership team and cooperate productively with SU staff and leadership. Note: the new Artistic Director may have the opportunity and option to teach in the VPA College, but this is not a requirement of the position.
- Co-lead Syracuse Stage's long-term strategy, collaborating with the Managing Director to develop organizational vision and strategic choices, and ensuring that the Stage mission, goals and objectives are rigorously pursued.
- Develop a highly collaborative relationship with the Managing Director and Board, helping steward the resources of the theatre in a prudent manner.
- Co-lead, inspire, manage and develop the Syracuse Stage staff, nurturing a workplace that is people-centered, inclusive, and productive.
- Build contributed revenue and serve as an ambassador for Syracuse Stage in the region, building and sustaining relationships with existing and new Stage Board Members, stakeholders, funders, government representatives, partners, and audiences.
- Become a leader in Syracuse and ensure that Stage is a strong contributor to the wider community. This includes overseeing the Stage education and community engagement departments and other public-facing initiatives, such as pre- and post-show talkbacks.
- Note: it could be useful for this role to be held by a practicing theatre director/artist, but that is not required.

## QUALIFICATIONS

While no single individual will likely possess all of these qualifications, the Search Committee will make their evaluation based on the following criteria:

- Artistic vision and the ability to inspire through artistic choices.
- Proven track record in curating /producing seasons and supporting the work of other artists. Strong connections in the theatre field would be a plus.
- People-centered leadership style, commitment to EDIA values, and the ability to create a humane, inclusive, productive work environment.
- The ability to think strategically, develop vision and long-term plans with the Stage team and board and see those plans through to fruition.
- The ability to share leadership and develop a collaborative and thriving partnership with the Stage Managing Director.
- Proven track record in maintaining and growing earned and contributed revenue streams.
- Enjoys the public-facing roles of leading the organization. Compelling skills as a communicator, both written and spoken, and the ability to develop relationships and inspire both new and existing Stage stakeholders.
- The ability to develop and steward major Stage partnerships with focus, flexibility, and patience.
- Interest in becoming a community leader in Syracuse and within the national arts field.
- Prior experience within nonprofit arts organizations is not required but is certainly a benefit.
- Likewise, experience in major institutions such as university settings is not required but could be helpful.

## COMPENSATION AND START DATE

The annual salary range for the Artistic Director role at Syracuse Stage starts at \$180,000 and includes a full benefits package commensurate with other organizations of its size, including:

- Medical/dental/vision insurance plans;
- Life Insurance, AD&D Coverage and long-term disability coverage;
- 403(b) plan;
- Paid vacation, holidays, sick leave, and personal days.

## HOW TO APPLY

Emily Knapp and Thomas Pearson from Management Consultants for the Arts are facilitating this search. Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following items for consideration:

- A current resumé
- Cover letter (no more than 1½ pages)
- Names of four professional references, including email and phone contact information (recommendation letters are not required)
- Salary expectation

All documents should have the candidate's name as part of the file name. Submissions should be made

through Management Consultants for the Arts' website at:  
<https://www.mcaonline.com/searches/artistic-director-syracuse-stage>

**Management Consultants for the Arts, Inc**

[www.MCAonline.com](http://www.MCAonline.com)

Phone: 203-353-0722

Questions about this search may be submitted to [info@MCAonline.com](mailto:info@MCAonline.com)  
with "Artistic Director Syracuse Stage" in the subject line.