

For immediate release: September 19, 2010

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The students of Friends Meeting School (FMS) in Ijamsville are preparing for a world premiere.

This month, FMS welcomes renowned playwright and director Allison Williams for a reading of her musical, *Hunchback of Notre Dame*. In the spring, Williams will work with the performing arts students of FMS, revising *Hunchback* with an eye toward publication. In April 2011 *Hunchback* will premiere as part of the “Students Acting for the Community” outreach program, an annual tradition of service and creativity held each year by FMS.

Allison Williams studied at Eckerd College and Western Michigan U., earning a BA in Theatre and an MFA in Playwriting. In 2003, Williams co-founded the Aerial Angels, who present aerial theatre worldwide. As Artistic Director, she leads Angels tours through Europe, Canada, the UK, and Central America.

Williams’ directing and coaching credits include work Off-Broadway (*Orson*) and for National Public Radio. Williams has authored *Hamlette*, *Mmmbeth*, *Drop Dead*, *Juliet!* and *The Scarlet Heart*, all published through Theatrefolk.

Brenda Yankaskas, Performing Arts teacher at FMS, hopes to make *Hunchback* a significant community event. Yankaskas chose Williams’ text because it tells a timeless story in a dynamic and thought-provoking way. “*Hunchback of Notre Dame* brings up issues of discrimination and learning to see the true worth of an individual,” says Yankaskas. “It reminds us that through difficult times we can find solace through kindness, friendship and acceptance.”

“At FMS we help students to realize their many talents and put them into action,” continues Yankaskas. “We also encourage students to give back to the community through stewardship. Our ‘Students Acting for the Community’ outreach program takes our young actors an additional step by bringing them on stage to benefit the community.”

Williams visits FMS for a reading of the script September 28th. Mark your calendars for the finished product: 2pm on Sunday, April 3 and 10am on Monday, April 4, 2011 at the Weinberg Center for The Arts in Frederick. Proceeds benefit the Frederick Food Bank.

*Photo by Richard Gilmore. For more hi-res PR photos, please email info@angelsintheair.com.

