



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contacts:**

Cindy Moran, PR Consultant, [cmoran@firststage.org](mailto:cmoran@firststage.org), (414) 405-6290

Jennifer Hubbartt, Director of Marketing and Communications, [jhubbartt@firststage.org](mailto:jhubbartt@firststage.org), (414) 267-2932

## **First Stage welcomes Chris Marschka as new President of the Board of Directors**

*-Other new Board Members include Jeremy Tardy and Ashley Wroblewski-*

**Milwaukee, WI – November 1, 2022** – First Stage, one of the nation’s leading theaters for young people and families, announced today the appointment of **Chris Marschka**, senior vice president for PNC Commercial Banking in Wisconsin as the new First Stage Board President effective September 21, 2022.

Marschka has been committed to advancing the mission of First Stage ever since he joined as a board member in 2015. Since then, he has helped deliver on several strategic and fundraising priorities by serving on the Executive Committee and participating in the Board’s Marketing Committee. His commitment complements the long-standing support PNC has extended to the theater, with almost \$250,000 in grants and sponsorships since 2010.

“There is something special about engaging young minds and the transformations that can inspire them for life-long success,” said Chris Marschka, market executive for PNC Commercial Banking in Wisconsin and President of the Board of Directors of First Stage. “I look forward to leading the Board and advancing the theater’s mission as it continues to innovate and grow.”

He has also engaged his family in support for the theater. In 2020, he and his wife Melissa co-chaired the 2020 Make Believe Ball. Melissa also served on the Make Believe Ball Committee for over four years, while his children have participated in training at the First Stage Theater Academy.

Marschka brings more than 20 years of diverse commercial banking experiences to the Board. He holds a B.A. in Economics from Millersville University, an M.B.A. from Villanova University

and is also a graduate of Leadership Lancaster – an executive leadership development program. In addition to his volunteer work with First Stage, he has held several key volunteer positions with The Fulton Opera House, United Way and the YMCA. Marschka lives in Shorewood with his wife and their two daughters.

A photo of new Board President Chris Marschka can be found here along with the First Stage Annual Impact report, season announcement and logo:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/123SGIG0nyg7zQ0wP8LCKAAmLkR5EGss4?usp=sharing>

Joining Chris on the Board as new Board members will be Actor/Director/First Stage alum **Jeremy Tardy** and Branigan Vice President – Strategic Communications **Ashley Wroblewski**.

### **The 2022/23 First Stage Board of Directors includes:**

**Executive Committee:** **Chris Marschka**, President (Senior Vice President/The PNC Financial Services Group); **Caryn Esten**, Immediate Past President (Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer/Froedtert Health); **Darren Goldstein**, Treasurer (Partner/KPMG LLP); **Tami Martin**, Secretary (Leader of Team Member Development/Advocate Aurora Health); **Laura Orr**, Vice President of Governance (Owner/Forward Governance Consulting, LLC); **Alex Kramer**, Vice President at Large (Managing Director/BMO Private Bank); and **Christine Bestor Townsend**, Vice President at Large (Counsel/Ogletree Deakins/First Stage Alum).

### **Directors**

**Sally Cartwright**, (Vice President of Business Development/Lee Hecht Harrison, LLC); **Suzanne Clausing** (Vice President & Division Director, Utilities & Renewables/Patrick); **Ellen Dizard** (Attorney/We Energies); **Bryn Dresselhuys** (Student Representative); **Brian Gilpin** (Intellectual Property Patent Attorney/Godfrey and Kahn); **Dan Kempken** (Senior Vice President/A. O. Smith); **Tim Lantz** (President/Caresyntax Corporation); **Eric Maassen** (Partner/Foley & Lardner LLP); **Sagar Murthy** (Senior Vice President & CIO/REV Group, Inc.); **Melissa Nelsen** (Community Volunteer); **Lauren Pagenkopf** (Owner and Principal/Laurus Consulting, LLC); **Alicia Pilarski, D.O.** (Associate Chief Medical Officer & Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine/Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin); **Corrie Prunuske** (Community Volunteer); **Shantanu Singh** (Assistant General Counsel/Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance); **Jeff Spence** (Director/Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District); **Scott Stiverson** (Senior Vice President & Director of Portfolio Credit Risk & Marketing Analytics /Associated Bank); **Brent Sullivan** (Managing Director Consumer Equity Trading/Baird); **\*Jeremy Tardy** (Actor/Director/First Stage Alum); and **\*Ashley Wroblewski** (Vice President – Strategic Communications/Branigan).

\*New members to the First Stage 2022/23 Board of Directors

To learn more about First Stage, performances scheduled for the 2022/23 season, its Theater Academy or how to donate to support the work of First Stage, please visit [firststage.org](https://www.firststage.org).

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### **About First Stage**

First Stage is one of the nation's leading theaters for young people and families. First Stage touches hearts, engages minds and transforms lives by creating extraordinary theater experiences through professional theater productions that inspire, enlighten and entertain. Its Theater Academy, the nation's largest high-impact theater training program for young people, fosters life skills through stage skills and serves nearly 2,000 students each year. As Wisconsin's leader in arts-integrated education in schools, First Stage's dynamic Theater in Education programs promote literacy, character building and experiential learning throughout the curriculum, serving over 20,000 students each year. First Stage was selected to participate in the Partners in Education program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (2012) and was the recipient of the *Milwaukee Business Journal's* Eureka Award, recognizing creativity and innovation in business, education and the arts for its Next Steps program for students on the autism spectrum (2013, 2015). 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](https://www.firststage.org)