

# Tulare County Office of Education

*Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools*

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Tulare County Office of Education Announces: Theatre Company's *The Secret Garden* opens July 22**

**Tickets now available for seven shows offered July 22-30, 2016  
L.J. Williams Theater, 1001 W. Main, Visalia**

*Visalia* – TCOE's Theatre Company is preparing to perform the beloved family musical *The Secret Garden*, a Tony Award-winning production with a cast of over 40 Tulare County students. *The Secret Garden* is based on a classic 1911 children's book by Frances Hodgson Burnett.

The story centers on 10-year-old Mary Lennox, an unhappy and difficult English girl living in India with her selfish, disinterested parents. Chloe Hunt, a freshman at Golden West High School and veteran of Theatre Company productions including *Peter Pan* and *101 Dalmatians*, plays the demanding Mary Lennox.

In India, Mary's only delight comes from gardening. When a cholera epidemic ravages the Indian village where she lives and kills both her parents and the Indian servant who cares for her, Mary is sent to live with an uncle she has never met in a gloomy mansion on the edge of the English moors.

Once Mary arrives at her uncle's manor, she becomes active and interested in the world around her, discovering a local country boy named Dickon Sowerby and her frail, obstinate cousin, Colin Craven.

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Josh Peters, a freshman at Redwood High School plays Colin. Josh is a veteran of Theatre Company productions including *Peter Pan* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

No longer isolated, Mary discovers a neglected, walled garden her uncle locked following the death of his wife, Colin's mother. Once she gains access to the garden and begins to restore it, she transforms not only the garden, but the lives of everyone at the manor.

“When choosing the show to do this summer, *The Secret Garden* rose to the top of the list because it is such remarkable material and we have such a remarkable group of students who are passionate about musical theatre,” said Theatre Company Director Brian Roberts. “This production has presented us with some unique challenges. The material and, in particular, the music in *The Secret Garden* is very demanding and requires sustaining a mood unlike most other musical theatre projects. Our cast has taken on these additional challenges with passion, joy commitment. This performance is a tribute to their creativity, hard work and collaborative spirit.”

The production of *The Secret Garden* is the nineteenth annual summer musical performed by the Theatre Company since its creation by Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “I’m sure the production will delight fans of the book,” said Mr. Vidak. “Our hope is that it will also inspire parents and grandparents to share this wonderful story with the young readers in their lives.”

## **Principal Characters**

Dr. Neville Craven played by **Tristan Beck** (12<sup>th</sup> grade, El Diamante High School, Visalia)

Dickon Sowerby played by **Andrew Cantelmi** (10<sup>th</sup> grade, Redwood High School, Visalia)

Martha Sowerby played by **Carly Caviglia** (Freshman, Syracuse University, New York)

Rose Lennox played by **Carissa Gonzalez** (12<sup>th</sup> grade, Redwood High School, Visalia)

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Mary Lennox played by **Chloe Hunt** (9<sup>th</sup> grade, Golden West High School, Visalia)

Mrs. Medlock played by **Alyssa Lotenero** (Freshmen, Fresno State University)

Lily Craven played by **Kaley McConnaughey** (12<sup>th</sup> grade, Redwood High School, Visalia)

Archibald Craven played by **Jack O'Leary** (Freshmen, College of the Sequoias, Visalia)

Ben Weatherstaff played by **Gilbert Ortiz** (12<sup>th</sup> grade, El Diamante High School, Visalia)

Colin Craven played by **Josh Peters** (9<sup>th</sup> grade, Redwood High School, Visalia)

Albert Lennox played by **Owen Webb** (12<sup>th</sup> grade, Redwood High School, Visalia)

## **Ticket Information**

The Theatre Company will perform *The Secret Garden* seven times in July. Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. on July 22, 23, 28, 29 and 30. Matinee performances begin at 2:00 p.m. on July 23 and 30. Tickets are now available at TCOE Visalia offices: 6200 S. Mooney Blvd. and 7000 Doe Ave., Suite A. General admission tickets are \$15 per person. Reserved VIP seating is \$25 per person. Tickets may be purchased with **CASH OR CHECK ONLY**. Any remaining tickets will be available at the theater's box office 30 minutes before each performance. For more information, call the Theatre Company at (559) 651-1482.