



# ANTHEM VISITOR PRODUCES WOMEN IN HISTORY PRESENTATION

*Canyon Country Newse*  
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Rachelle Bump

Kate Campbell Stevenson has captivated audiences from Los Angeles to Washington with her one-woman musical production, *Women: Back to the Future*. Now Phoenix audiences and Greenway High School will reap the benefits.

This production portrays the struggles and victories of several American women role models through singing and acting. Stevenson says she believes the production's message serves as an inspiration to her audience.

"I use women in history as my inspiration, and I try to give that inspiration to my audience. There are so many powerful women stories we can learn from and use as the stepping stones to become stronger," she says.

The production takes place at the Greenway High School Auditorium September 20, 22, 28 and 29. Stevenson said she performed in Sun City three years ago and looks forward to returning to the Phoenix area.

"I am excited about doing Greenway because it's a win-win situation for everybody," she says. Many of the students from the school are participating in promoting this show, she says.

The Deca Club students at Greenway High School are designing the cover of her program and making flyers to hang around the school. Other students are using ticket sales to learn accounting. Student Council members and National Honor Society members will sell ads for the production and usher during the show. Profits from this event go directly to purchase audio/visual/computer equipment for the newly renovated multi-purpose room. All students and staff at Greenway High School use this room, and soon opens for public rental.

Stevenson says she is trying to make her performance as inclusive as possible.

"This is a wonderful opportunity. A sharing time for the school, the students and the community," she says.

Stevenson's sister, Connie Henry, lives in Anthem and is the event chair for Greenway High School Parent Action Club (PAC). Henry says she has been very busy the past few months organizing PR, contacting newspapers, radio and television to get the word out. She has also been coordinating volunteers from parents, staff and students to do various jobs. She says she has marketed the program to groups such as Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, retirement centers, colleges and other public schools. Henry says people from Sedona, Tucson, Mesa, Chandler, Paradise Valley, Anthem and Sun City have already bought tickets.

Stevenson is charging \$10 per ticket, which Henry says is less than what the tickets normally cost.

"Kate's halo is glowing for doing this event for us at a fraction of the cost," Henry says. She says Target has been very supportive by giving a grant which will ensure that 400 at-risk kids will see the show.

"These two factors mean that every ticket sold will be basically pure profit. It's a great circle. People get a bargain to see a wonderful show plus learn something about fascinating women in American history and in the process help the school improve the facilities and gain another community asset," she says.

Stevenson says she entertains her audience with "innovative costume changes that create transitions between historical time periods." She has researched each character in great detail, enabling her to design and make authentic historic costumes to closely resemble each woman's appearance.

Stevenson says she features about five characters per show. The women she has portrayed include Abigail Adams, Sacagawea, Lucy Stone, Bessie Coleman, Eleanor Roosevelt, Marion Anderson, Rachel Carson and Louis Arner Boyd. She says she will be adding three more this Fall. It is difficult to decide which one she enjoys representing the most, she says.

"I love all of them. It's impossible to pick one. Each story is wonderful. [They] each sing out to me a powerful message. Each lady's story is so inspiring to me."

Stevenson began this production in 1996 after spending 18 months developing the show. Since then, she has presented 350 performances in eight states connected with national and regional conventions and noted lecture series. She has also performed in public and private schools, kindergarten through college. Stevenson now travels all over the country and will begin an international showcase in January. She says she spends about five to six weeks per year traveling.

Stevenson combines over 20 years of professional artistic experience in music, theatre experience in music, theatre and education.

"I began singing about the time I could talk," she says. She came from a very musical family. Her father was a singer and pianist, and was her first voice teacher. Her sister explains, "We were raised in a small town called Ionia, Michigan, by a family who instilled in us the whole concept of personal "service," because individuals can make important contributions to making this world a better place. Kate does just that."

Stevenson says she studied singing privately in high school, and performed in high school drama productions.

Stevenson graduated from Michigan State University with a B.A. in education/fine arts, and attended Indiana University School of Music. She has starred in over 30 Broadway musicals in regional theatres throughout the United States.

Before she created ***Women: Back to the Future***, Stevenson says, her friends urged her for years to put on a one-woman show. She made the decision to create the show when her daughter, Juliana, began to fall into what she called a "cultural phenomenon." She says her daughter began to live by the idea of "blending in" at school rather than "standing out. "No matter the circumstance, you can feel overwhelmed and pull back. This message is for everybody, no matter where you are in life," she says. "I try to present a program where we can see where some of the barriers are and break through them."

Stevenson says men, women, boys and girls all hold themselves back from being who they really are. "We are our own deterrent," she explains. There is no excuse for this, she says, and tries to encourage her audience to break through this concept through the inspirational stories of her characters.

Stevenson performs every aspect of the show, except for some prerecorded voices. She says she either talks to or sings with another recorded character's voice. The whole show is choreographed, and she simply pushes a button inside her costume to activate the voices. She writes all the music for her shows and 90 percent of the lyrics for her songs. Connie Henry sums up the show.

"Anyone who sees this show will have a fun theater experience. The music is beautiful. Kate's voice is gorgeous. The show is entertaining, enlightening and makes one think," she says.

For more information on show times and tickets, call Connie Henry at 623-915-8500 or 623-551-8327.