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August 2023-  
July 2024

# ANNUAL REPORT



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2 — A Note From the Artistic Director
- 3 — About Us and Our Values
- 4 — A Year In Review
- 5 — Stories of Impact
- 7 — Strategic Partnerships
- 8 — Financial Statement
- 9 — 2024-2025 Goals
- 10 — Our Team
- 11 — Connect with Us



# A Note From Our Artistic Director

“When looking over our annual report, one cannot help but be struck by the growth Bright Lights has undergone over the past year. When Lauren and I founded Bright Lights in 2019, we hoped that at least one family would have a positive experience with the performing arts and grow closer to knowing Christ as a result of our teaching. Our prayer remains the same today- that families can positively experience the performing arts and, most importantly, that the Gospel is shared in every aspect of our programming. As we strive to train the next generation of masterful storytellers who share the light of Christ, we give thanks for the opportunity to walk alongside families as they disciple their students.

It has been a joy to see our students searching deeper within themselves and the stories they are telling to convey the Gospel to our audiences. During the rehearsal process of *Mary Poppins*, we talked at length about what each key item in the story represents (the kite represented love, the locket: understanding, and feeding the birds was caring for others). There were many tangible symbols in that story. As we all know, not all stories lend themselves to such concrete messaging. That understanding took root in the hearts of our students. During rehearsal for *Fish and Friends* this summer, a student from *Mary Poppins* asked a simple question. “Miss Megan, what does the fish keychain actually represent?” This sweet middle school girl was asking the hard questions so that she could masterfully tell the story. This question allowed the cast to talk about the deeper meaning of the story. This made space for them to come up with their own ideas and creatively make connections between the story they were telling and God’s big story in Scripture. This was easily one of my favorite moments from our summer camps.



I left camp that day proud of the work they were doing. I thought of that girl and who she was on her first day of camp, two years before, and was struck by how much she had grown. God was kind to give me a little glimpse into what is happening in the lives of each and every one of our students as they are being trained to be masterful storytellers for Christ in this world. What a sweet blessing it is to get to be a part of their development to that end.”

*Megan Karr*



# ABOUT US

Bright Lights Theatre exists to train the next generation as masterful storytellers who share the light of Christ. We strive to make the gospel of Jesus Christ central in every program, production, and interaction. We believe that the art of theatre can be used to tell stories to point audiences and cast members to the truth of the one true God and His great love for them, evidenced in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We have had the privilege of serving families in the Dallas area for five years.



# OUR VALUES

- We value Jesus Christ and work to reflect Him in our thoughts, words, and actions.
- We value a passion for the art of storytelling.
- We value a standard of excellence that cultivates mastery of the theatre arts.
- We value our shared responsibility to care for one another.
- We value the ongoing development of character traits that empower personal growth.
- We value community fueled by acceptance, encouragement, and support.





# A YEAR IN REVIEW

God did so much good in and through our students this year.

The number of families we had the opportunity to serve grew substantially in the second half of the year. What a blessing to know and train these students.



## **Swingin' Through the Trees Masterclass**

**Students:** 42 (1st-5th grade)

**Sessions:** 2



## **Cinderella: Youth Edition**

**Students:** 34 students (4th-10th grade)

**Tickets Sold:** 946



## **Out to Sea Masterclass**

**Students:** 17 (1st-4th grade)

**Sessions:** 1



## **Mary Poppins Jr.**

**Students:** 76 (2nd-10th grade)

**Tickets Sold:** 1,365



## **Fish and Friends Summer Camp**

**Students:** 281 (PreK-8th grade)

**Sessions:** 5

# STORIES OF IMPACT

## The Effect of Scholarships

“We are missionaries who have lived overseas for the past seven years in very spiritually dark places. As a result of this, our access to theatre arts and Christian fellowship has been limited. We believe firmly in the arts and that believers should be at the creative forefront. We want to embrace our third-culture kids, expand their view of the kingdom, and provide them with creative outlets to express themselves.

Bright Lights has provided all of this and more.

We love that our kiddos memorized scripture, grew in creativity, made new friends, participated in the arts, and learned to worship God through all of it. We love that they learned storytelling, choreography, and set design. One child gleaned empathy skills both from the content and via specific interactions at Bright Lights (the teachers and volunteers are amazing), another who struggles some with coordination was able to pull off all the choreography and even help others with theirs, and our shy child did things they didn't think possible. It created such sweet memories that our children have flown with pieces of the production set, proud of their work. All of our children grew in confidence and competence. Being a part of Bright Lights has developed leadership qualities and boldness in sharing what they know; it has helped them in telling their own story. We have seen the everlasting impact it has made in their lives. Thank you! To God be the glory!”

- Shanks Family





# STORIES OF IMPACT

## A Place to Belong



“Being the middle child is always a hard place to shine, as does being a boy in a world where athletic ability defines your friend group and social status. When I first signed Ben up for Bright Lights in 2021, our family had just moved back to Dallas from out of state and I was desperate for my son to find an activity and make friends. Instead, I found a place for my son to belong.

His first show was in the Fall of 2021 when Bright Lights put on “Junie B Jones.” From the first email to the first audition to the first rehearsal, I knew Bright Lights was different. They did not just want to put on a good show, they wanted to disciple these tiny souls and draw their hearts towards the Creator of all good things. After playing Mr. Woo in “Junie B,” Ben was hooked. He played Daddy Frog in “Frog and Toad,” attended summer camp, played the dog catcher and servant in “Annie Jr.,” and most recently played Michael Banks in “Mary Poppins Jr.” Ben has not only learned to memorize lines, show up at rehearsal on time and take instruction from the directors. He has more importantly learned to look for Jesus in every story, to encourage his peers when they face challenging situations, and to diligently stick to a task. The directors are always pointing the students back to the gospel and are unafraid to speak hard truth into their lives.

Instead of finding an activity for Ben, our family found a place for him to be loved, challenged, disciplined and belong. Our family will forever be grateful for the lifelong truths that Bright Lights has instilled in our son and their unwavering dedication to share the good news of Christ through the arts.”

- **Laura Murray**

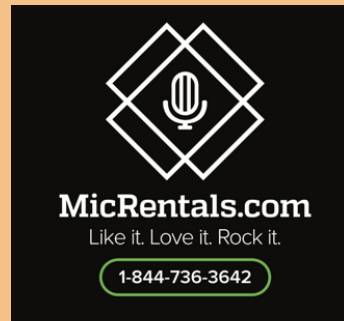


# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The following organizations were instrumental in achieving Bright Lights' goals:

- **Grace Bible Church** - provided rehearsal and camp space at a discounted rental rate.
- **North Highlands Bible Church** - provided rehearsal space at a discounted rental rate.
- **Redeemer Bible Church** - provided rehearsal and performance space at a discounted rental rate and made significant upgrades to their facility to better serve Bright Lights' needs.
- **Springcreek Church** - provided performance space at a discounted rental rate.

## 2024 CORPORATE SPONSORS:

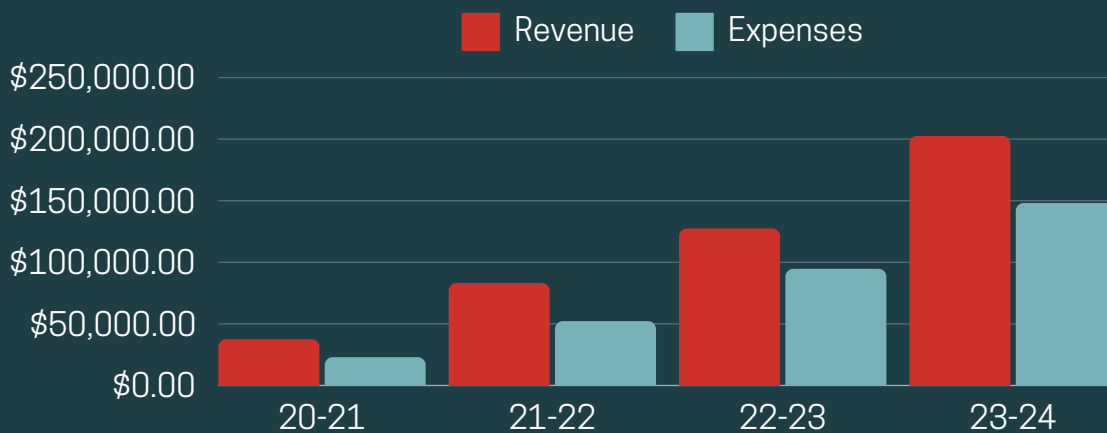
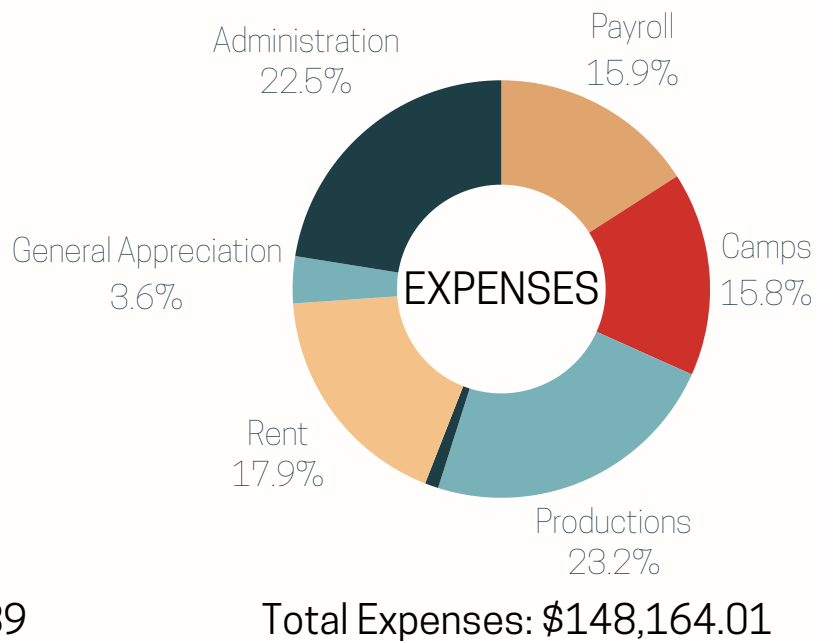
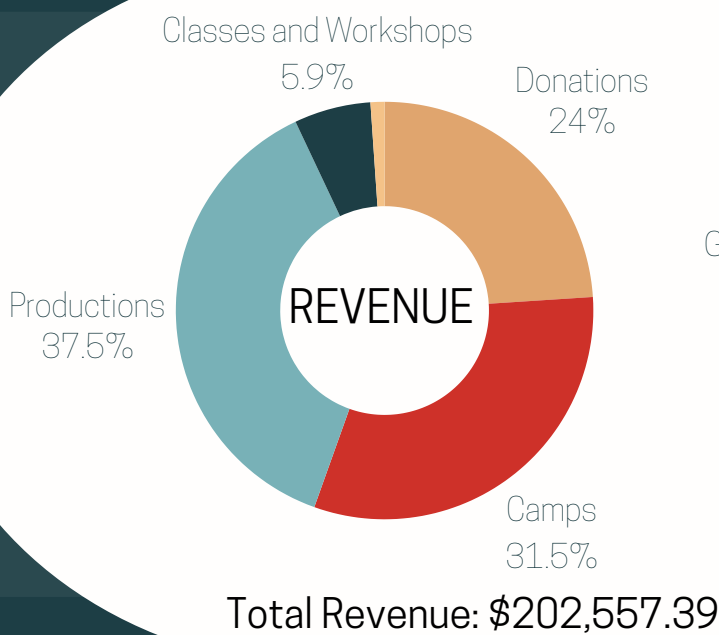




# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

NET REVENUE: \$54,393.38

We were encouraged to see an increase in our donations this fiscal year. We are beyond grateful for the peace of mind this gives us as we plan for fair compensation for all staff in the coming year. The Lord has been so kind and encouraging as we continue to see our earned revenue cover the current expenses of this growing ministry.





# 2024- 2025 GOALS

As the number of families we serve continues to rise, we believe these goals will accommodate for that growth in the coming year.

## 01. **Solidify Church Partnerships**

We hope that a partnership in the coming year with Redeemer Bible Church in Dallas will solidify a location standard for our families and also provide a sweet way to connect with our community.

## 02. **Expand Program Schedule**

We plan to add two productions, one semester class, and a week of summer classes to the schedule. This expanded schedule will provide more opportunities for interested students to participate, learn new skills, and hear the gospel.

## 03. **Add New Staff Members**

We plan to add more staff to our production and instructional teams who have a passion for the arts and a love for Jesus. This will help increase the opportunities for intentional training of students in the theatrical arts and theology that they need to become masterful storytellers for Christ.



# OUR TEAM

The Lord blessed Bright Lights with an excellent team of leaders who shared their passion for storytelling and cared well for our students. What a joy it has been to minister together!



**Lauren Hensarling**  
Founder / Executive Director



**Megan Karr**  
Founder / Artistic Director



**McKenna Carr**  
Masterclass Instructor /  
FOH Manager



**Caroline Walker**  
Stage Manager / Camp  
Technical Director



**Courtney Harper**  
Choreographer / Camp AD



**Holly Archer**  
Masterclass Instructor



**Christy Troia**  
Musical Director



**AmieGrace Bledsoe**  
Choreographer / Camp AD



**Rebeka Nagy**  
High School Intern / TA

## Board of Directors:



**Mary Kate Feaster**  
Treasurer



**Allison Floczak**  
Member / Camp AD



**Becca Godkin**  
Secretary / Camp  
Coordinator



**Rachel Hamilton**  
Member /  
Camp Musical Director



**Jacob Hensarling**  
Member



**Kent Kirkman**  
Core Values Advocate

## Additional Summer Camp Staff:



**Parker Knight**  
Junior Camp Director



**Maddy Moore**  
Junior Camp AD



**Sarah Hargis**  
Musical Director



**Valene Hanson**  
Musical Director



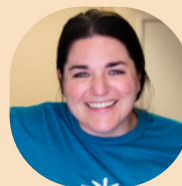
**Vickie Smolek**  
Musical Director



**Michael Saeger**  
Junior Camp AD



**Michael Saeger**  
Junior Camp AD



**Abbie Kilgore**  
Technical Director



**Hannah Fisher**  
Technical Director



**Amy Rico**  
Technical Director

# CONNECT WITH US

We teach our students that every single story points back to the gospel. We train them to pinpoint how their characters, and the plot as a whole, aid in that effort so they feel empowered to share the light of Christ now and in the future. We are so grateful to everyone who made this work possible this year, from donors and volunteers to prayer warriors and advocates. We hope you will continue to partner with us in training the next generation in the year to come. We can't wait to tell more stories with and for you.



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