

# Teenage Nobodies Bios

**NATE ADLER (Saxophone)**, a sophomore at Stony Brook University, is honored to be a part of the pit for *Teenage Nobodies*, his second At Rise production. He played sax in the pit for *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. He has also played in the orchestra for regional productions of *The Music Man*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Guys and Dolls* as well as Fayetteville-Manlius' High School's production of *Cinderella*. He is incredibly thankful to have been given the opportunity to be a part of the orchestra for this production. He would like to thank his mother, father, and his siblings for putting up with him and giving him their unyielding support.



**SAMANTHA AITKEN (Hailey)** is honored and thrilled to be a part of another incredible O'Connor and Dunn cabaret! Sam has tried her hand at both performing—*All Shook Up* (Lorraine) at Jamesville-Dewitt, *Bye Bye, Birdie* (Ursula) at Manlius Recreation, and others—and assistant directing—*The Addams Family* at JDMS, *Band Geeks* at At Rise Productions. She will be attending Villanova University in just a few short days, and is hoping to keep performing in some way on campus. Sam is grateful for the constant support of her family and friends, as well as to Nancy and Jared for being the best songwriters and leaders she knows. She hopes everyone enjoys this amazing music as much as she does!



**MATT BAUM (The Cupids Male Lead)** is so proud of all the heart and soul his fellow performers have poured into this project and is honored to be among such a talented group of musicians. Former roles include Spitz from At Rise's production of *Band Geeks*, Joseph Pulitzer in *Newsies*, Sebastian from *Cinderella*, and Antonio Salieri in *Amadeus*. Matthew recently recorded *Tin Man*, an original song by Broadway composer Steve Margoshes, after recording *The Emerald* with him last year, which will be added to the album *New Songs in Oz*. Matthew will be attending SUNY Fredonia in the fall as a part of their BFA Acting program. He would like to thank the unparalleled Nancy O'Connor and Jared Dunn for their incredible leadership and dedication to this performance, as well as his family, for all their support and for all they do to accommodate his schedule. Enjoy the show!



**RONAN DEFANTI (Lights)** is a stage technician, actor, and stage manager for the Catherine Cummings Theatre. He was the stage manager for *The Importance of Being Ernest* (Catherine Cummings), *Elf Jr.* (Caz Jr. High Drama), and *Misplaced* (Catherine Cummings). He has acted in *Nice Work if You Can Get It* as Officer Barry (Caz High School Drama), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Wall (Catherine Cummings), and *Footloose* as Principal Harry Clark (Caz High School Drama). He is headed to RIT to study computing security. He is very



grateful for the opportunity to help work on *Teenage Nobodies* and hopes that you all enjoy the cabaret.

**JARED DUNN (Director/Lyricist)**, 19, is a writer, director, actor, and singer who has been active in the Syracuse theater community since he was 12 years old. As a senior in high school, he founded At Rise Productions in the fall of 2017 with the goal of creating a theater company dedicated to providing unique opportunities for youth to participate in all aspects of putting on a theatrical production. *Teenage Nobodies* is At Rise's fourth production. For their first musical production, *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, Jared received a SALT nomination for Best Director. Nancy and Jared co-composed their first cabaret of original music and performed it as a memorial for their friend Blake who suddenly and unexpectedly passed away last August. Jared recently returned from a gap year in Spain and will be starting at Brown University in the fall with plans to study education policy and theater. He has been overwhelmed by the hardwork and dedication of the entire cast and crew over the past couple weeks. It's been amazing to watch them bring *Teenage Nobodies* to life. He would especially like to thank Nancy for being the best partner and friend that he could ever ask for. A special shout out to Zach Taber for collaborating with O'Connor & Dunn on this cabaret. He is grateful for the support of his awesome family and wonderful friends.



**JUSTIN DUNN (A Cupid)** is extremely enthusiastic to be a part of his fourth At Rise production. He was last seen on the stage in *Into the Woods* at Redhouse. Justin's first show was *A Year with Frog and Toad* (Redhouse) when he was eight and he has been performing ever since. Recently, he had a blast acting in At Rise's production of *Band Geeks* (Stewart). Other favorite credits include: *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Woodstock) with At Rise Productions; *On Golden Pond* (Billy Ray, Jr.), *Ragtime* (Little Boy), *Oliver!* (Oliver), *Once Upon A Mattress* (Nightingale of Samarkand), & *Tarzan* (Young Tarzan) at Redhouse; *Pippin* (Theo) with Syracuse Summer Theater at the Oncenter; *Madagascar* (King Julian) at Montessori; *The Nutcracker* (Fritz/Hanz) with Syracuse City Ballet; and *Steadfast* (Young Evers/Elmer) with Appleseed Productions. Justin would like to thank Jared for starting At Rise and Nancy for being the best music director ever! Enjoy the performance!



**RYAN DUNN (Johnny)** is honored to be in his brother's fourth At Rise production. Previous credits include: *Band Geeks* (Alvin) & *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Charlie Brown) with At Rise; *I'm Not Rappaport* (Gilley), *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Shermy), *The Snow Queen*, *Bring It On*, *Ragtime*, and *13 the Musical* (Malcolm) at RedHouse; *Peter Pan* (John u/s) and *A Christmas Carol* (Orson/Ignorance) at Syracuse Stage, *Hoy No Me Puedo Levantar* in Spain; *Cinderella* at FM High School, and *Oliver!* at Catherine Cummings Theatre.



Special thanks to Nancy and Jared for creating another amazing At Rise production! It won't be the same without you here next year.

**CARLIN FECK (A Cupid)**, a rising senior at Fayetteville-Manlius HS, is beyond thrilled to be



joining her peers in this production! Previous credits include: (AtRiseProductions) *Band Geeks* (ensemble), (FMHS) *Newsies* (Elmer), *Cinderella* (Dance Troupe), *The Phantom of the Opera* (Dance Troupe). She is truly honored to be a member of the At Rise Productions family and to work alongside these talented young people. She can't wait to see O'Connor & Dunn onstage at the Tony's in 10 years and be able to flex and say she was in the original *Teenage Nobodies*.

**IRELAND FERNANDEZ-COSGROVE (Narrator)** is thrilled to be part of her third At Rise



production. She was last seen on stage in At Rise's production of *Band Geeks!* as Molly. Other past productions include *Newsies* (Crutchie), *Cinderella* (Charlotte), *The Phantom of the Opera* (Opera Chorus), *Hamlet* (Francisco) at FMHS; *The Little Mermaid* (Ensemble) at Redhouse and many others. While at FMHS, Ireland was a member of Chorale, Swing 16, and was the Vice President of Improv Club. Outside of school, she participated in All-County,

Area All-State and Conference All-State choirs. In the fall, Ireland will pursue a BFA in Musical Theatre at Nazareth College. She would like to thank her family and all of the people who have supported her.

**ECHO FRIDLEY (Viola)**, a sophomore at Syracuse University, is thrilled to be part of



O'Connor & Dunn's cabaret, her second At Rise production. She played viola and violin in the pit of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Her other past pit orchestra experiences have both been with FM Highschool's productions of *Phantom of the Opera* and *Cinderella*. She would like to thank her friends and family for always supporting her, and Jared and Nancy for being such amazing directors.

**SADIE FRIDLEY (Alex)**, a rising junior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School, is so excited to be



a part of her fourth At Rise production! Sadie was in last year's cabaret, played Snoopy in *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and Laura in *Band Geeks*. She also recently played Katherine in FM High School's Production of *Newsies*. Other favorite roles include Gerda in *The Snow Queen* and Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* (Redhouse Arts Center). Sadie was also recently named the 2019 Songbook Youth Ambassador by Michael Feinstein and the

Songbook Academy. Sadie would like to thank her family and friends, especially Nancy, and Jared for letting her sing this incredibly meaningful music and the entire cast and crew for showing her what true friends are.

**MARCO GIACONA (Evan/A Cupid)** is very excited to be a part of *Teenage Nobodies* as



Evan/A Cupid! Some of his recent credits include Jack Kelly (*Newsies*), Elliot (*Band Geeks*), Prince Topher (*Cinderella*), Raoul (*Phantom of the Opera*), 1st Class Passenger (*Titanic*) and Player/Ensemble (*Pippin*). While at FM High School, he was a part of Chorale and involved with the school's jazz group, Swing. He was also a member of both the NAFME All-National & All-Eastern Mixed Choirs. Marco will be attending Emerson College in the fall for a B.F.A.

in Musical Theatre. He wants to thank Nancy and Jared for creating incredible music to bring this group together for one last hurrah!

**MASSIMO GIACONA (Owen/A Cupid)** is very excited to be taking part in his second At Rise



production as Owen/A Cupid in *Teenage Nobodies*! Previous shows include: *Band Geeks* (Jake Fowler), *Newsies* (Jack Kelly), *Cinderella* (Lord Pinkleton), *Legally Blonde: The Musical* (Grandmaster Chad), and *The Phantom of the Opera* (Passarino/Opera Chorus). Massimo graduated from Fayetteville-Manlius High School this past June, and will be attending Ithaca College this Fall as a Television-Radio major. The Catherine Cummings Theatre has been

like a second home to Massimo throughout the few weeks he spent in it prior during *Band Geeks*, and he couldn't be happier to be back in it one more time! If he's not performing, Massimo enjoys many types of cuisine, such as: Mac and cheese, various types of sandwiches, and really buttery popcorn. Massimo wants to give a special shout-out to Jordan Berger for being super awesome and so supportive of everyone. Lastly, Massimo wants to thank Nancy and Jared for being musical prodigies and giving him the chance to perform some of this incredible music that they've written.

**MAGGIE GREENE (A Cupid)**, is so excited to be back with At Rise Productions for another



wonderful show. She is a student at Fayetteville-Manlius High School and has been performing for her entire life. She has been dancing for 14 years at Guzman's Dance Studio. She also plays the bassoon and is in the FM Wind Ensemble. She studies voice with Laura Enslin and sings in the Choral, acapella, and Swing 16 at FM, as well as the musicals. Maggie loves to work hard every day and enjoys being able to perform for the world.

**ERIN HOUGHTALING (Narrator)** is thrilled to be back with At Rise Productions for her



second show! This fall she will be attending SUNY Fredonia for a BFA in Musical Theater. Some favorite credits include: *Band Geeks* (Nicole), *Guys and Dolls* (Hot Box), *Legally Blonde: The Musical* (Delta Nu) and *Chess* (Florence). Erin has also been a member of the 2017/18 NYSSMA All State choirs and most recently, the 2019 NAFME All-Eastern Mixed Choir. She would like to thank everyone involved with At Rise Productions, especially Nancy and Jared,

for this amazing opportunity!

**HANNAH KOMAR (Narrator)** is honored to be playing one of the Narrators in At Rise



Production's *Teenage Nobodies*! After having the amazing experience of being the Choreographer for At Rise's production of *Band Geeks*, Hannah is excited to be able to be performing the amazing and moving music written by Nancy and Jared, alongside what has become the At Rise Family. A recent graduate of Fayetteville-Manlius High School, Hannah will be entering her freshman year at Nazareth College this fall, where she will be studying Music

Therapy. Hannah would like to thank her family for all their love and for supporting her in her passion for music. Hannah would also like to thank her closest friends for always being there to pick her up when she is down and put a smile on her face. She would like to thank the At Rise family for giving her memories and moments she will never forget and for filling her life with joy, beautiful music and some pretty interesting interpretations of dance moves. Finally, Hannah would like to thank Nancy O'Connor for being the "friend with red hair" she has always wanted, and an absolute light in her life. She can't wait to see what the future has in store for Nancy.

**NIA LLOYD (The Cupids Female Lead)** has been involved in theater since she was 7 years old (Syracuse Civic Theater, Syracuse Stage, Manlius Summer Musicals and more).



Nia loved being in four Fayetteville-Manlius HS musicals, and performed this year in *Retold*, an original musical, at Oberlin College, where she will be a sophomore this fall. Music is central to her life—building upon a wealth of high school and NYSSMA vocal experiences, she is a member of Pitch Please, an a cappella group at Oberlin, and she continues to take voice lessons. Nia

thanks Jared and Nancy for their inspired creative work and she's thrilled to be part of *Teenage Nobodies*.

**BIANCA LUCAS (A Cupid)** is thrilled to be a part of an amazingly talented cast in her second



show with At Rise Productions. An incoming sophomore, Bianca has been performing in musicals and various cabarets since 5th grade. Some of her previous credits include Cinderella in *Into the Woods*, Storyteller in *Shrek*, and Mary Poppins in *Mary Poppins*. Bianca also enjoys playing flute as a part of the Symphoria Youth Orchestra, and biking in her free time. She would like to thank Nancy O'Connor and Jared Dunn, as well as everyone involved, for

making this production possible. Lastly, Bianca would like to acknowledge Blake as her constant source of inspiration.

**NANCY O'CONNOR (Music Director/Keyboard/Composer)** 17, is a music director, pianist, composer, arranger, and singer. She is the Resident Music Director of At Rise Productions, and has music directed *Band Geeks* (At Rise), *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (At Rise), *tick, tick...BOOM!* (Redhouse), last year's cabaret of original music (At Rise), as well as several school drama productions. Nancy will be studying piano and music directing at Berklee College of Music this fall. She would like to thank everyone in the cast, crew, pit, and production team for working so hard to make this cabaret happen, and especially Jared Dunn for being a wonderful collaborator and friend!



**MEGAN SCHWARTZ (Kelly)** is thrilled to be playing Kelly in this year's cabaret. Her previous credits include *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (Billie Bendix, 2018 Syracuse High School Theatre Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Lead Role), *Tick, Tick... Boom!* (Susan), *42nd Street* (Peggy Sawyer), *SLUT: The Play* (Sylvie), *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Sally), *The Little Mermaid* (Aquata), *Footloose* (Rusty), *Legally Blonde* (Margot), *Carousel*, *Seussical the Musical*, and *Big Fish*. Megan is currently a sophomore at NYU studying International Relations and Musical Theatre. She would like to send a special thank you to Jared, Nancy, the cast and pit, and everyone else who made this production possible as well as to her friends and family for their continuous support.



**LUCAS TABER (A Cupid)** is extremely proud of all the hard work everyone has put into this cabaret. He has participated in multiple shows starting in fifth grade. Currently he is a junior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School where he sings in chorale and participates in multiple theater related activities. Outside of school he loves to mountain bike and loves the outdoors. He is so happy that he got to work with such an amazing and talented group of people and would like to thank everyone involved in writing and performing this show.



**ZACH TABER (Ben/Guitar)**, a sophomore musical theater major at Long Island University, is absolutely thrilled to be a part of his third At Rise production, working alongside this multi-talented cast, pit, and crew. Previous credits include *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Schroeder), At Rise's 2018 cabaret, *Beauty and the Beast* (Villager), *Titanic* (Mr. Etches - 2016 SHSTA Award nominee), *The Little Mermaid* (Dance Ensemble), *Tick, Tick...Boom!* (Jonathan), *Our Town* (Stage Manager), *Phantom of the Opera* (Phantom), *Amadeus* (Vinticelli), and *Cinderella* (Jean-Michel - 2018 SHSTA award nominee), *Legally Blonde* (Nikos), *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* (James Madison), *Moose Murders* (Nelson), and *The Sound of Music* (Uncle Max). Special thanks to Jared Dunn & Nancy O'Connor for being the creative motivators behind this show, as well as his incredibly supportive family and amazing amazing AMAZING friends!



**GREG TILLMAN (Bass Guitar)**, is very excited to participate as At Rise's bassist for the third time. Previous pit band experience includes At Rise's previous musicals, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and *Band Geeks*, and the JDHS musicals *All Shook Up* and *Freaky Friday*. Although he is kind of blue about this being his last performance before taking the giant steps into college at Skidmore, he is sure great experiences are ready for him in the future. In addition to playing bass, he also enjoys playing drums and cello in and outside of school. Genesis is his favorite band and Jaco Pastorius is his favorite bass player.



**ALLISON VIRGO (Drums)**, an incoming freshman at University at Buffalo, has been playing percussion for eight years, and playing drum set for about seven. She enjoys playing set for jazz the most, but playing in pit bands has always been fun. Although she is playing set for this show, she still enjoys playing marimba. She is excited to be able to participate in *Teenage Nobodies*, and would like to thank Ben Virgo for very little.



**BEN VIRGO (Sound)** is excited to be a part of *Teenage Nobodies*. He has worked tech for previous At Rise shows, like *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and *Band Geeks*. He used to play bass casually, notably in middle school jazz band, but that is now a thing of the past, as he is now more involved with working tech for shows. In a few days, he will be a freshman at University at Buffalo. He would like to thank his mother for her support, and Allison Virgo for very little.



**ALLY WILDE (A Cupid)** is extremely excited to be doing a second show with and directed by her best friends. She has been in theatre for 9 years. Previous credits include: *Beauty and the Beast* (Belle), *Peter Pan* (Wendy), *Pirates of Penzance* (Mabel). She is excited to continue her involvement in community theatre for the foreseeable future and hopes to work with At Rise Productions again.

