

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The King's Academy Names Theater in Honor of Cabot Family

SUNNYVALE, CA, February 16, 2018

TKA's School Board approved naming The King's Academy Theater, **CABOT THEATER**. This is a fitting tribute to husband and wife team, **Matt and Chris Cabot**, who along with daughter, **Katie (Cabot) Steipp**, dedicated themselves to giving students a wonderful Christ-centered drama experience and, consequently, helped build the reputation of excellence in the community that TKA's theatre program continues today. The new signage, made possible by an anonymous donor, was installed on both sides of the theater tower. **A formal presentation, dedicating the theater and recognizing the Cabot family, will be held on Saturday, March 17, at the 1:30 p.m. show of the high school musical, *The Pajama Game*. Tickets can be purchased at www.tka.org/tickets.**

In the fall of 1992, during The King's Academy's second year, former Principal Jack McBirney asked TKA parent, Chris Cabot, if she would be interested in teaching a weekly drama class for all 100 students and directing a Christmas show. Chris Cabot had just served as founding Board President for Peninsula Youth Theater the year before and now was eager to bring more theatrical opportunities to her 8th grade daughter's school. Thus, The King's Academy drama department began.

In the first year of the program, nearly 100 students took the drama class, even though it was an elective, and participated in the first two shows: *Christmas Carol* and *Charity Merriweather and the Music Man* (a production written by Chris that catered to the specific talents in the student body.) The community instantly fell in love with the drama program that Mrs. Cabot created. She insisted on finding a place for everyone who wanted to participate, either on stage or off, and often referred to the community as "the drama family." She encouraged students to seek to glorify God with their performances. From the start, TKA productions had a special heart behind them, and they were executed with excellence. Mrs. Cabot did not settle for mediocre, and it helped that she had her husband, Matt Cabot, working alongside her, designing the sets.

Over the next 12 years, Chris and Matt Cabot devoted their hearts and countless hours to establishing The King's Academy drama department as one of the best programs on the Peninsula. Chris was known for writing a fall play each year, to highlight the students in her drama class, and for directing a spring musical that often continued to include 100 students, even after participation was no longer required. Chris mentored hundreds of students in her time at TKA and always ensured her students had plenty of performance opportunities and plenty of classroom couches to encourage conversation, community, and to create a safe place to hang out.

Matt Cabot fostered a fellowship of parents who spent their Saturdays building sets for the shows. Many found him to be an inspirational leader with a servant's heart, and they continued to come back to work in the set shop alongside Matt week after week, some even after their children had graduated. During their time together at TKA, Chris and Matt collaborated on more than 25 productions.

In the spring of 2004, Chris was ready to retire but was worried the program would not maintain the same spirit of love and family if she were to leave. Fortunately for TKA, Chris' daughter Katie (Cabot) Steipp felt called to apply and, consequently, elevated the drama program to even greater heights. Katie increased the number of drama classes offered and the number of productions produced each year. Katie continued to strive for excellence in the drama program, and her final musical was one of only six schools in the Bay Area to receive a nomination for "Outstanding Musical" by the Bay Area Top Honors Musical Theater Awards. During her 6 years at TKA, Katie

also enjoyed collaborating with her dad, Matt, who remained a constant during the changing of the guard.

When Katie decided to stay home with her family in the fall of 2011, Matt Cabot continued to volunteer his time and talent to design and build the sets for all of TKA drama productions (which included two junior high shows and two high school shows by this time) through the spring of 2015. He loved a creative challenge and was notorious for making sets 'bigger and better' each year. During his time with TKA, Matt designed sets for over 50 productions.

The Cabots had an annual tradition of visiting the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) in August, just a few weeks prior to the start of the school year. Matt, Chris, and Katie would use this time to see as many shows as possible which would always, in turn, spark their creativity and planning for the upcoming TKA drama season. By the time they returned, Matt would usually have some rough sketches of the scenery completed.

All of the theaters at OSF are named after people who made a great impact in the theater community, except for one that was simply called "The New Theater." Naming rights for this theater cost \$5 million. Every year on their visit, Matt would say, "Boy, wouldn't it be great to have a theater named after you? Too bad, we don't have an extra 5 million dollars sitting around. Doesn't Cabot Theater have a nice ring to it?"

Matt Cabot would be thrilled, humbled, and extremely grateful to the anonymous donor who is making this naming possible.



The Cabot Family gathers for closing night of *Hello Dolly*, Mrs. Chris Cabot's last show at TKA. (Front and center holding hands: Chris and Matt Cabot)

The King's Academy Theatre program is dedicated to presenting diverse performance opportunities, building an artistic community, preparing students for post-secondary endeavors, and developing the next generation of theatre artists and audiences. At TKA, we create in community, develop critical thinking skills, share the human experience, take initiative in leadership, train for excellence in artistry, and glorify God.

The King's Academy, an independent, college preparatory school for grades 6-12, is a Christ-centered school that inspires academic excellence, servant leadership, and enduring relationships. The King's Academy is accredited by both the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). For more information, please visit the website at www.tka.org.

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