

making a difference

# Lisa Starczewski

## SUPPORTING THE ARTS WITH FACETIME THEATRE

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**What organization are you with?** Facetime Theatre

**What is the mission of the organization?** To offer high-quality performing arts and music education for students of all ages and to provide unique and affordable opportunities for involvement in the performing arts for both adults and children.

**Why was Facetime Theatre started?** Several years ago, when I was directing the high school musical at PAHS, many families asked me about whether I knew of additional opportunities for students who loved musical theatre and wanted to grow their skills. I saw a need for musical theatre classes and other programs designed to teach students valuable skills that would help them succeed in all aspects of their life. Performing arts skills – confidence, public speaking, reading and comprehension, teamwork and collaboration – are skills that benefit everyone, regardless of whether they are looking to be an actor or actress.

I began Facetime Performing Arts Studio in 2007 and created Facetime Theatre, a nonprofit organization, in 2009. I have been serving as Facetime's Executive Director and President of the Board since the organization started.

**What responsibilities do you have?** In addition to serving as the Executive Director, I have also helped to develop new programs, taught musical theatre classes, and directed productions.

**How much time do you spend volunteering?** I spend an average of 10-12 hours a week volunteering for Facetime.



Celebrating their new space

**How can others get involved with Facetime?** There are so many ways to get involved. Sign up your student for classes (we have several new classes we will be offering in the fall), music lessons,

or one of our incredible summer camps; audition for a show (this goes for ALL ages!); volunteer to be on our production staff or to help with one of our events; come to our fundraisers; or bring your family to see one of our shows!

**Why did you choose this project?**

I am so passionate about the significance of the performing arts from both an educational and a societal standpoint. The arts are an invaluable part of our culture and furthering the arts in our communities is a critical and worthwhile endeavor.

**What benefits do you get from working with Facetime?**

I have had the privilege over the last several years to get to know some of the most wonderful families in this community through my work with Facetime. I have worked with hundreds of students over the years, and I am consistently amazed at their work ethic, their talent, and their commitment. Anytime you can witness, firsthand, growth in a student and see how happy it makes him/her to achieve, it is a blessing. I have also been very lucky to have a staff and Board of Directors filled with dedicated, talented people who are selfless in their pursuit of excellence for Facetime. It is this relationship-building aspect of my work at Facetime that keeps me going.

**What neighborhood do you live in?** I have lived in Phoenixville, in Valley Forge Woods, for 16 years.

**Who are the members of your family?** I have five children (ages 14 to 28), and they have all been involved in Facetime. It is truly a family affair! My oldest, Jessica Potts, serves as the Educational Director for Facetime.

**Any other information you would like to include?** I am so proud and happy to be able to say that after two years of diligent work, Facetime Theatre just purchased a beautiful new performance space in the Franklin Commons. We have a "Fridays with Facetime" series where we invite the community into events such as karaoke, movie night, etc. We now also offer vocal and instrumental lessons with some of the best instructors in our community. We are continuing to grow, and we would love for more members of the community to come alongside us and become part of the Facetime family.



Lisa with Facetime Showcase student