

# Theater Lover Gives JC Kids Chance to Shine

LOCAL PERFORMING ARTS STUDIO OFFERS PRO AND KIDS CLASSES.

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Lynn Stallings has had a life long love affair with the performing arts. As a child Stallings spent much of her time dancing, singing and acting. Now, as an adult Stallings has made it her life's work to help children and young adults cultivate a love for performing.

Stallings is the Artistic Director for the Atlanta Workshop Players, Inc., a non-profit professional children's theater company. She founded the company in 1981 with the hope that she would encourage students to fulfill their artistic needs. Recently Stallings opened a studio at Rivermont Square, near her home in the Rivermont Community.

"It is a very colorful and joyous place to be creative," she said.

Stallings was born in Chicago, her mother was heavily involved in the performing arts and her father was a psychologist.

"I was inspired by my mother, she never pushed me, but she gave me opportunities," she Stallings.

Stallings found herself drawn to both of her parent's professions.

"Both theater and psychology are the study of human behavior," she said.

Stallings began acting at a very young age, and when she was nine she played the lead roll in a touring production of "Alice in Wonderland".

Throughout her acting career Stallings starred in over 30 musicals and performed in hundreds of commercials and voiceovers.

When it came time for Stallings to attend college she studied psychology. For many years she worked as a probation officer and used theater and acting to help kids deal with their anger.



In the 1970s she began teaching acting classes, she also began producing and writing plays for her young students. In her more than 30 years of teaching experience Stallings has worked with many young "professional children" that have starred in various television shows, commercials and movies.

"Teaching has kept me young and silly and in awe of everything around me," Stallings said.

She said that while she has taught many lessons, she has also learned from her students.

"Kids teach grown-ups how to continue to have fun," she said. "It is healthy to be playful."

The Atlanta Workshop Players, Inc. offers students classes on everything from Improv to musical theater to audition techniques. Her classes even offer a "Pro" track for students who are working actors.

Stallings says that in a time when the public is seeing young celebrities run wild, she is teaching

students how to stay focused.

"One of the most important things is to stay grounded," she said. "We teach the students to pursue it if it is fun for them. This is such a hard business and childhood is much more important."

While Stallings teaches many young professionals, she also focuses on kids that are just having fun.

"Some kids thrive in the spotlight, but for others it is a social outlet," she said.

Stallings points out that theatrical training builds confidence and important skills that children can use in the future when interviewing for jobs or meeting new people.

"There are skills the theater teaches that come in very handy; training builds character. Students learn to love their differences and support each other," she said.

Atlanta Workshop Players, Inc. offers a performing arts camp in the summer as well as classes throughout the year. During the summer camps students will learn mime, Improv and 10 different dance forms.

The company also offers "Kid's Cabaret", a chance for students to show off musical talents. Students audition and then perform just two weeks later.

Stallings says she has been blessed with the opportunity of teaching performing arts to students.

"I fell them to find something you want to do and find a way to make a living doing it," she said. "I think I have done that."

Summer camps begin in June, information for young performers interested in the Atlanta Workshop Players, Inc. can be found at [www.atlantaworkshopplayers.com](http://www.atlantaworkshopplayers.com) or by calling 770-998-8111.

## Easter Egg Hunt

The season's first spectacular day provided the backdrop for children, family and friends to "moon walk," get their faces painted, and meet the Easter Bunny. An Egg Hunt that stretched across the playing fields of Newtown Park provided tons of fun for Johns Creek children.

Gabrielle Abreu (right) shows off her easter egg prize ticket after the John's Creek hunt. (below) Johns Creek families turned out for the city's first Easter egg hunt.

