

WUT Audition Notice: Mainstage Production of *Speech & Debate*

Director: Sean Patrick Gibbons (he/him/his)

Performance Dates: October 8th-11th

Rehearsal Dates: 9/4 - 10/7 → Work Weekend (9/26, 9/27)

Tentative Production Rehearsal Schedule Found [HERE](#)

[Audition Timeslot Signup](#) - Remember to sign up for BOTH shows, please!

About the Show:

Set in a small town in Oregon, Speech & Debate follows three misfit teenagers who discover they share a troubling connection to a local scandal that no one seems willing to discuss. Diwata, an ambitious and outspoken aspiring amateur podcaster and musical theatre performer; Solomon, a socially isolated student grappling with his identity; and Howie, a quick-witted newcomer, find themselves unexpectedly united through their school's speech and debate team.

As the trio navigates friendship, self-discovery, and the challenges of adolescence, they confront questions of truth, courage, and belonging. Filled with sharp humor, heartfelt moments, and authentic portrayals of teenage life, Speech & Debate explores what happens when young people decide to speak up in a world that would rather they stay silent.

Winner of the GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding New York Theater, Stephen Karam's play is both hilarious and deeply moving, offering a timely examination of identity, community, and the power of finding your voice.

****Content Advisory:** *Speech & Debate contains mature themes including sexual situations, online relationships, teacher-student misconduct, and discussions of sexuality and identity. The play also includes strong language and references to homophobia and political scandal. All of this content will be treated with the utmost care and attention.*

Audition Dates:

- **Auditions:** Tuesday, September 1st @ 6:30pm on the mainstage. It is possible there may be callbacks Thursday night if I haven't seen everything I need to see. If we *don't* need them, the first rehearsal will be **THURSDAY 9/3**. If we *do* need them, the first rehearsal will be **FRIDAY 9/4**. Please arrive at least 10-15 minutes before your scheduled audition time in case we are running ahead.

How to Audition:

- Please bring a headshot and resume to the audition.
 - Please be prepared to read from **ALL** [the sides attached here](#). You may be asked to stay and read with other actors. Please, do not take this as a sign you are cast. The same is true if you are not asked to stay and read. You will choose one side to come in and read with a reader. You may be asked to go pick up a different side and or come back and read side "TRIO" with various actors. Please do not leave the holding space until you are given the release.
-

Character Breakdown:

Solomon

Age: High School Student (Late Teens)

Solomon is intelligent, ambitious, and deeply committed to uncovering the truth. As a student journalist, he prides himself on his intellect and investigative instincts, often approaching the world through logic, facts, and evidence. While he can come across as socially awkward, judgmental, or overly serious, much of his behavior stems from a desire to be understood and respected. Beneath his confidence lies a young man struggling with loneliness, identity, and a need for genuine connection. **Actors auditioning for Solomon should be comfortable with fast-paced dialogue, sharp comedic timing, and moments of emotional vulnerability. The role requires someone who can balance intelligence and humor while revealing the character's underlying humanity.**

Diwata

Age: High School Student (Late Teens)

Diwata is passionate, theatrical, and unapologetically expressive. An aspiring performer with dreams far bigger than her small town, she constantly seeks recognition and validation from those around her. Quick-witted and often hilarious, Diwata uses humor, confidence, and performance as tools to navigate a world where she frequently feels overlooked. Underneath her bold exterior, however, is a young woman longing to be seen, valued, and accepted for who she truly is. This role calls for an actor with strong comedic instincts, fearlessness, and emotional depth. **Diwata's journey moves between broad humor and genuine heartbreak, requiring an actor who can handle both with equal authenticity.**

Howie

Age: High School Student (Late Teens)

Howie is charming, perceptive, and socially savvy. As a newcomer to town, he possesses an ease and confidence that initially sets him apart from Solomon and Diwata, though he is navigating many of the same questions about belonging and identity. Openly gay and comfortable in his own skin in ways that seem enviable to others, Howie often serves as the emotional bridge between the group. His humor and charisma help him connect with people, but they can also mask deeper vulnerabilities. **Actors auditioning for Howie should possess warmth, natural charisma, and strong listening skills. The role requires someone who can balance confidence with sensitivity and reveal the loneliness that exists beneath his polished exterior.**

Teacher

Age: Adult (30s–50s) **Any Gender*

The Teacher represents the educational institution and the adult authority figures within the students' lives. Well-intentioned but often overwhelmed and tired from working in a high school, the Teacher is tasked with maintaining order while navigating the complex realities unfolding around the students. While not a villain, the character embodies many of the ways adults can unintentionally dismiss, misunderstand, or underestimate young people. **They are tired, overworked, and underpaid. This role requires an actor with strong comedic instincts who can ground the character in authenticity rather than caricature. The Teacher should feel recognizable, human, and occasionally frustrating in their attempts to do the right thing. They want to allow students to explore what they are interested in, while at the same time, not losing their job.**

Reporter

Age: Adult (30s–50s)

The Reporter serves as an outside observer who becomes increasingly interested in the story surrounding the students and their investigation. Curious, persistent, and eager to uncover information, the Reporter represents the media's ability both to amplify important stories and to shape public perception. **Think older NPR artsy radio show personality.** They want to support students' thought and expression, but in the end, they do what's best for them. While professional and often sympathetic, the Reporter also reflects the tension between seeking truth and seeking a compelling story. **The role calls for an actor who can portray intelligence, confidence, and journalistic curiosity while remaining grounded in realism. The Reporter should feel like a fully realized person rather than simply a plot device.**

WILKES UNIVERSITY THEATRE (WUT)
AUDITION NOTICE

SEE ROCK CITY AND OTHER DESTINATIONS

A Musical

Directed by Jon Liebetrau

About the Show

See Rock City and Other Destinations is a contemporary musical about connections missed and made at tourist destinations across America.

A wanderer believes his destiny is written on rooftops along the North Carolina Interstate. A young man yearns to connect with intelligent life in Roswell, New Mexico. A woman at the Alamo steps out of the shadow of her grandparents' idealized romance to take a chance on love. Three estranged sisters cruise to Glacier Bay to scatter their father's ashes. Two high school boys face unexpected fears in the Coney Island Spook House. A terrified bride-to-be ponders taking the leap... over Niagara Falls.

With a book full of humor and humanity, and a score that incorporates pop, rock, folk and more, each story builds on the last to create a vivid travelogue of Americans learning to overcome their fears and expectations in order to connect.

Character / Company Breakdown

See Rock City and Other Destinations is often cast as a small company of actor-singers who move between multiple characters across the show's different songs and stories, rather than a fixed cast of named leads. WUT is casting a fixed cast (roughly 8M/7W); specific role assignments will be determined from auditions in the room. We are looking for strong, contemporary musical-theatre singers across a range of voice types — legit, mixed belt, and pop/rock — who are also compelling, detailed actors and storytellers.

- Open to all voice types and vocal ranges — soprano through bass.
- Strong acting and storytelling skills are as important as vocal technique.
- Ensemble members should be comfortable originating distinct characters.

CHARACTERS

JESS - A twenty-something traveler. He's been on the road as long as he can remember.

DODI - A small-town Carolina waitress. She's never left the state.

EVAN - A twenty-something loner. No money, no girlfriend, no job...but he hasn't given up hope.

LAUREN - A thirty-year-old teacher from Fredericksburg. She's single.

GRAMPY - Lauren's beloved grandfather. He suffered a stroke a few years ago that left him unable to walk or speak.

DEMPSEY - A thirty-something professional. He's a divorce lawyer, but he hates it, if that makes it any better.

LILY - Judy and Claire's younger sister. She just wants her sisters to get along.

JUDY - Lily and Claire's sister. She's emotional.

CLAIRE - Lily and Judy's sister. She just wants to get this over with.

CUTTER - A prep-school teen. He's the "bad kid."

RICK - A prep-school teen. He's Cutter's best friend.

KATE - A bride. She's not ready...or is she?

TOUR GUIDE - A tour guide. He's determined to give Kate a little push.

WAITER

SUBWAY CONDUCTOR

FREAK SHOW BARKER

CARNEY

Audition Information

Initial Auditions	Wednesday, September 2, 2026— Lower Dance Studio 6:30pm
Possible Callbacks	Thursday, September 3, 2026 (by invitation only) — <i>Black Box 6:30pm</i>
Sign-Up / Contact	Use this link to sign up for an appointment time, please note there are two pages-one for each production! Plan to arrive <u>at least</u> 10 minutes before your assigned time. Please sign up for the <u>earliest</u> open slot on the sheet (leave no spaces between auditionees)

What to Prepare

September 2 — Initial Audition: Please bring sheet music. Prepare a musical theatre cut in the style of the show, approximately 90 seconds long — contemporary, Broadway/musical-theatre style, in the vein of Songs for a New World, Fugitive Songs, and Edges. Sides for scene readings can be found here.

September 3 — Callbacks (if invited):

Audition Notes

- All sheet music must be brought in a three-ring binder, clearly marked/tabbed for the pianist. No loose pages, and no phones or tablets in place of sheet music.
- An accompanist will be provided — please do not sing a cappella or play a backing track.
- Please provide a headshot/resume. An audition sheet will be provided and should be filled out. Conflicts should be clearly notated on the sheet.

Key Dates

Auditions	September 2, 2026 (callbacks September 3, 2026, by invitation)
-----------	--

Rehearsals	October 13 – November 18, 2026
Work Weekend	November 7–8, 2026
Performances	November 19–22

All are welcome to audition. Questions? *Jon.liebetau@wilkes.edu*