



"An Enemy of the People" family portrait: from left are Hannah Lebreche, of Holyoke, as tannery owner Morten Kiil; Louis Burgos, of Holyoke, as Thomas Stockmann; Alma Huremovic, of West Springfield, as Dr. Catherine Stockmann; Carina Savoie, of Agawam, as Petra Stockmann; and Dan Ireland, of Feeding Hills, as Mayor Peter Stockmann.

HOLYOKE

Reps 4/13/18

HCC presents new kind of 'Enemy'

Theater Department presents Ibsen's classic beginning Thursday

Henrik Ibsen wrote "An Enemy of the People" in the late 19th century, a time when women largely lacked both power and standing in male-dominated society.

It's not surprising that the main character in Ibsen's 1882 play is a man, Dr. Thomas Stockmann, "Medical Officer at the Baths" in a town off the southern coast of Norway, according to the script. His significant other, Catherine Stockmann, is described only as "his wife."

For the Holyoke Community College Theater Department's spring 2018 production, however, which opens Thursday for a three-day run, director Tom Geha reversed those roles. The whistle-blower whose discovery of polluted waters threatens the town's fortunes, thus incurring the wrath of its residents, is a woman, Dr. Catherine Stockmann. Thomas is her dutiful husband.

"I don't like to change things unless I feel like it's

IF YOU GO

Event: "An Enemy of the People" production by HCC Theater Department

When: April 19-21, 7:30 p.m., and April 21, 2 p.m. (April 20 performance is ASL-interpreted)

Where: Leslie Phillips Theater, Holyoke Community College, Holyoke

Tickets: \$10 general admission, \$8 for students and seniors and \$5 for HCC community

going to benefit the play," said Geha, an adjunct HCC theater instructor. "When we read it for the first time with all the actors it was like a eureka moment. It's almost like it was written for a woman. The lines are just amazing because the town is gaslighting her and telling her she's crazy, doing a lot of explaining to her, making fun of her discoveries as a doctor, making fun of science. It just goes in so many directions because she's a woman, and it works."

According to Geha, "It's a play about questioning truth, about the nature of truth, about commerce versus the environment and who wins out."

Submitted by Holyoke Community College