

## HOLYOKE

## 24-hour theater festival returns to Leslie Phillips stage

The annual Phillips Festival, an evening of short plays written, directed and staged in 24 hours by Holyoke Community College alumni, students, staff and friends, returns to HCC on Saturday for its sixth year.

The festival, which debuted in 2016, raises money for the Leslie Phillips Theater Fund for Arts and Education, honoring the legacy of Leslie Phillips, founder of the HCC theater program.

“This year, we are doubly

excited as the festival will be the first theater production in HCC’s newly renovated Leslie Phillips Theater,” said HCC alumna and festival coordinator Lisa Poehler, ’84.

To produce the Leslie Phillips Festival, HCC alumni, students and staff register in advance to participate as writers, directors, actors, or members of the stage crew. The writers meet with the actors on Friday, the night before the show, to receive

play elements such as props, prompts, and characterizations. They have until 6 a.m. the next morning to write their plays. Two hours later, actors and directors meet for a full day of rehearsals leading up to a 7:30 p.m. performance on Saturday evening.

“This is an evening of creativity and collaboration for the HCC theater community and the community at large,” said Poehler. “It’s also a

chance to invest in the future generation of HCC’s theater program and students – all in the name of Leslie Phillips.”

Funds raised from the festival enable the HCC Theater Department to hold master classes, make capital improvements, and hire guest artists — “Anything to enrich, enable, and expand the educational experience of HCC students,” Poehler said.

The festival was first organized in 2016 by HCC alumni

working with HCC theater professor Pat Sandoval, ’84, as a tribute to Phillips, who died in 1988 after inspiring legions of HCC students.

General admission tickets are \$15 in advance (\$20 at the door) and \$10 for students and seniors (\$15 at the door). All proceeds benefit the Leslie Phillips Theater Fund for Arts and Education.

Festival tickets can be purchased at [hcc.edu/phillips-tickets23](http://hcc.edu/phillips-tickets23)