

STAGEBRIDGE

UNITING THE GENERATIONS SINCE 1978

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Stagebridge's 40th Anniversary Gala to Celebrate Guest of Honor—and Local Treasure—Barbara Johnson

Get ready to celebrate as **Stagebridge** marks a milestone: the nation's oldest and most renowned theatre company of older adults celebrates with a **40th Anniversary Gala** on **Saturday, November 3** from **3:00-6:00pm** at the **First Congregational Church of Oakland**, located at 2501 Harrison Street. The celebration will feature entertainment, music, food, a silent auction, raffle prizes and more. The Oakland, California-based non-profit organization has provided entertainment, community, and the opportunity for adults over 50 to reinvent themselves through creative aging classes since 1978.

The gala's guest of honor will be **Barbara Johnson**, the award-winning Program Coordinator of the senior theatre's *Storybridge* school program and annual *Grandparent Tales Writing Contest*. Barbara is retiring at the end of the year after more than two decades at Stagebridge. She has been named as the 2018 recipient of the *Fran Pratt Award* from Bridges Together, a national organization dedicated to promoting intergenerational engagement. The prestigious award, named after the visionary who wrote one of the first manuals on aging education for children and formed one of the first US networking communities for intergenerational work, celebrates individuals "who are creating and maintaining opportunities for our older adults and young people to engage with each other in meaningful ways and foster a culture of age-integration." Barbara leaves Stagebridge knowing that she has made an impact on countless people's lives, but it has also enriched her life. "The most rewarding thing," she says, "is seeing the joy in the kids— and in the seniors, too."

For more information, visit www.stagebridge.org/40th-gala/

*Founded in 1978, the company's mission is to transform the lives of older adults and their communities through the performing arts. Stagebridge offers professionally-taught classes for seniors in its **Performing Arts Institute**, as well as storytelling programs in Bay Area public schools in its **Storybridge** program, sharing the rich and varied experiences of older adults to help at-risk local students increase literacy—and confidence. The annual **Grandparent Tales** writing contest truly bridges generations as kids gain the opportunity to hear and transcribe stories told to them by a grandparent or other older adult in their lives. And through **Seniors Reaching Out** events, the company brings high-quality entertainment and hands-on creativity to community venues serving active and frail elders and multigenerational audiences.*

Stagebridge is the winner of the 2013 MetLife Creative Aging Award and the 2009 American Society on Aging MetLife MindAlert Award. The company's work has been featured on ABC-TV, CNN, National Public Radio, in The Huffington Post, the Washington Post, Modern Maturity, Oakland Magazine, Storytelling Magazine, California Health Report, Kiplinger's, The Orlando Sentinel, The Mercury News, Nikkei BP Online, The Wall Street Journal, Vision Hispana, and at national and regional conferences.

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