

A-F Area School District Academic Hall of Fame 2019

Robert Warren

Robert Warren graduated from Adams-Friendship High School in 1981. Robert's passion for the arts started early. A founding member of the Sand County Players as a seventh/eighth grader, he took advantage of every opportunity to perform in both school and community productions. After graduation from AFHS, Robert announced that he was going to New York to pursue a career in theater. He holds an Associate of Arts/Performing Arts degree from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York and was a Bachelor of Fine Arts Scholarship Recipient at Marymount Manhattan College also in New York City. He later earned a Bachelor of Science in Radio, Television, Film from the University of Maryland/College Park. Early in his career, Mr. Warren worked as a performer and had success in New York singing with the Peter Duchin Orchestra at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and the Broadway productions of *Pirates of Penzance* and *Kismet* at Lincoln Center.

Mr. Warren started his Arts administration career in Cedar Falls, Iowa as the first General Manager for the newly restored Oster Regent Theatre where he was instrumental in bringing the Cedar Falls Main Street back to life. He was hired as the new Executive Director at Hoyt Sherman Place in October of 2015. His decorated career has included positions as Executive Director of Hartford Performs in Hartford, Connecticut, Associate Producer at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., Executive Producer for Creative Vision Entertainment in Washington, D.C., and Director of Education and Community Engagement at the Van Wayzel Performing Arts Hall in Sarasota, Florida. A very proud father of two adult sons, Mr. Warren also served the United States Army as a communications specialist for White House Communications.

In response to the question, "How did Adams-Friendship Schools prepare you to perform for life?" Mr. Warren offered the following:

"From Kindergarten to College, the teachers, counselors and administrators in the A-F school district saw something in me that I didn't realize I had. Thankfully, for me, they did and I was encouraged by so many wonderful educators to excel in the classroom and in all of the extra-curricular activities that a small town kid could be a part of."

To go from a community of a few thousand direct to New York City and thrive for seven years, I had to rely on every ounce of grit, tenacity and courage that was instilled in me by some of the most kind and amazing mentors that I could ever have had asked for. For me the primary engagement in school and the community was through the arts. However, the physical demands and friendships acquired during 4 years of Cross Country, Swimming, and Track surely played a big part in keeping me out of trouble. Even though I did not consider a career in the Arts until my senior year in high school, everything I learned in 13 years as an A-F student would have allowed me to perform for a lifetime in any career.

I left A-F in 1981 with a dream and a special message from my amazing school time mentors, Linda Webster Machan and Joan Jones, as well as the entire Sand County Players Community that had taken me under their wing. The message on a wall hanging read, "I don't know where I am going but I am on my way."

I was fearless in my pursuit because collectively, the entire A-F community created a complete individual full of critical thoughts, and a curious mind. I left knowing that I was prepared to take on a lifetime of adventures."