

# Community Players' "Steel Magnolias" Concludes with Two Shows This Weekend

"Steel Magnolias" will continue at the Springfield Community Players' Studio on Friday and Saturday, July 27 and July 28, at 7:30 p.m. The humorous and touching play by Robert Harling tells a story laced with humor, but grounded in tragedy for a family and its community. You will laugh at zingers and have your heart strings pulled by the universal themes of family, friendship and love.

Directed by Stephanie Rowe, the cast of "Steel Magnolias" includes five veterans of the Players' stage and one actress new to the group. Veterans are Irene Ramen of Rockingham as recently widowed Clairee; Aprille Lawrence of Springfield as loud and brash Ouiser; Anna Kendall of Chester as Annelle, whose shyness blossoms into confidence; Kathryn King of Perkinsville as M'Lynn Eatenton, who fights an inner battle between her concern for the safety of her daughter Shelby and her desire to see Shelby happy; and Aiyana Fortin of Mount Holly as Shelby, fiercely determined to fight for what she wants. Ann Fahlbush of Proctorsville, in her first role with the Players, appears as Truvy, a sassy beauty salon owner.

The story of M'Lynn and Shelby is the core of the play. Fortin, as Shelby, has found her role rewarding and exciting.

"I've had the opportunity to make and strengthen friendships and interact with the community, which is something I'd been missing while studying at UVM," she said. "I just completed my first year studying Biomedical Engineering, which didn't leave a lot of time for extra-curricular pursuits. Portraying Shelby has helped me realize more of my potential as a budding actress and as a person. Shelby gave everything she had to the people she loved, and I aspire to be more like her."

"It's been a pleasure to work with both familiar faces and new in the production of 'Steel Magnolias,'" King said. "The bond among the six women echoes what many of us experience in our lives, past and present. Aiyana, my on-stage daughter, is a lovely young actress only recently involved with Springfield Community Players who brings energy and grace to a challenging role. We all hope to see more of her on our stage!"

Please come to the Players' Studio on South Street to enjoy this beautiful story and these actresses' portrayals of multi-faceted characters. Tickets are \$12 for students and seniors and \$15 for adults. Make reservations online at [www.springfieldcommunityplayers.org/tickets](http://www.springfieldcommunityplayers.org/tickets) or by calling 1-866-967-8167. Doors open at 7:00pm.

*Right: Aiyana Fortin of Mount Holly (seated) appears as Shelby Eatenton in the Springfield Community Players' production of "Steel Magnolias" July 27 & 28. Kathryn King of Perkinsville plays M'Lynn, Shelby's mother. A cast of six portrays the silliness, love, sadness, and strength of their characters in a play of both laughter and tears.*

