

April 13, 2026



Dear Saltwater Community and Friends,

It is both an honor and a privilege to announce the beginning of a transformative new chapter for Saltwater Performing Arts—one that signals meaningful growth not only for our organization, but for the broader communities of Southeast Georgia and Northeast Florida. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve as Interim Executive Director during this pivotal time. I am fully committed to strengthening Saltwater’s financial foundation, elevating its artistic excellence, and cultivating strategic partnerships across corporate, civic, and governmental sectors.

Over the past two months, I have conducted a comprehensive review of the organization’s operational and artistic health. What I have found is extraordinary. From a single production of Peter Pan, Saltwater has grown into a vibrant institution producing fourteen shows annually, offering the region’s most impactful theatre education, and fostering an emerging Encore troupe that is steadily advancing toward the professional stage.

Our trajectory has been further affirmed through support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Georgia Council for the Arts, and a range of respected foundations, corporate sponsors, and donors. This level of distinction has attracted strong creative partners, including Pigmental Film Studios, with whom Saltwater is collaborating to envision and develop a comprehensive visual and performing arts complex. This future home will serve not only Saltwater, but a diverse network of artists, performers, and organizations. Designed as a bold and forward-thinking investment in the economic and cultural landscape of Camden County, the complex will host touring productions, dance competitions, film festivals, and more. Saltwater is proud to be engaged at the foundational level of this Initiative, working alongside visionary partners, accomplished architects, respected artists, and community leaders to shape a sustainable model that will expand access to the arts while upholding the highest standards of creativity and integrity.

Although the full realization of this project will unfold over time, Phase I delivers an exciting and immediate advancement: Saltwater is moving into a new space—one that reflects the scale, ambition, and impact of our programming. In response to the extraordinary support of our patrons, particularly through the past year, LightWorks, Inc. has stepped forward to acquire the facility that will serve as Saltwater’s next home. Founded initially as a youth publishing venture, LightWorks is evolving into a multidisciplinary arts organization supporting literary development, new works for the stage, and curated festivals. In partnership with Josh Proctor at St. Marys Realty, LightWorks is securing a space that will significantly expand Saltwater’s technical and staging capabilities, increase visibility, and create new capacity for organizational growth.

This is not simply a move—it is a defining milestone. It marks a moment of institutional maturity and signals a broader cultural renaissance for our region. The vision before us will draw artists and audiences from across the country, creating new opportunities for connection, education, and artistic expression.

On behalf of our outstanding Artistic Director, Megan Kaufman, and our passionate Board of Directors, I invite you to join us in celebrating this exciting advancement and to continue supporting the work that makes Saltwater such a vital and inspiring force in our community.

With gratitude and anticipation,

Mary Claire Branton

Interim Executive Director