

The Pony Express

Pioneer High School's Student-Run Newspaper

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Photo by Amy Lowe

Senior Ilse Ruiz mentors several younger students in the Angels on Stage program

Shining Stars

Angels on Stage performers are given a voice through their musical shows

by Amy Lowe and Nick Vincent

Staff Writers, Seniors

Ilse Ruiz, a senior at Pioneer, found a love out of something that started off as community service. Angels on Stage is a program that assists disabled children in performing and showcasing their talents as young actors. She first started as a sophomore and has been involved ever since as an eager participant.

She describes the experience as a growth experience that has helped her mature in many ways, like learning to become more patient with others and how to manage time more efficiently. She says that the most important thing she has learned, however, is that "everybody deserves the chance to have a voice." Ruiz commented that every community "needs an organization like Angels on Stage." Instead of focusing on limitations and what people can't do, it makes participants and audience members realize all of the amazing things people CAN do.

Pioneer students have been performing with the program for many years as well. Kayla Belick and Haley Lebhertz, both sophomores, are veterans of the stage. They rehearse once a week, and both agree that the best part is singing, though they have differing opinions on what song is the best to sing. Kayla explained that being on stage can make her nervous at times, but the actors learn to conquer their stage fright along the way.

Angels on Stage has put on many shows over the years, including the Wizard of Oz, Jungle Book, Aladdin and (the current production) Alice in Wonderland. They also have "Showcase" nights that allow performers to sing and to dance to anything they choose just for the sake of performing and having a good time.

The performances are held at the Evergreen Valley College Performing Arts Center. Alice in Wonderland will begin playing in March; opening night is on the 2nd, and further performances will be held until the 11th. Tickets can be purchase online at the organization's website, angelsonstage.org

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