

**Centennial Honors College
Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day 2024**

ABSTRACT

Major: Theatre Performance

Podium

Faculty Mentor(s): Tammy Killian

Stage Managing Ride The Cyclone at WIU

Emma Wahlmann

Most people have little to no idea what a stage manager is, or the extent of what they are responsible for. The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines a stage manager as “one who supervises the physical aspects of a stage production, assists the director during rehearsals, and is in charge of the stage during a performance.” The stage manager is also the hub of communication between the director, actors, and production team. During the rehearsal process, the stage manager calls breaks, takes notes, and makes sure that rehearsals continue to be productive and that everyone stays on track. While at Western Illinois University, I have stage managed several plays, but Ride the Cyclone is the first musical that I have had the pleasure of stage managing here. The process involved a lot of collaboration with faculty and students, as well as being able to command an authoritative presence in a room. Stage managing requires meticulous attention to detail as well as flexibility and the ability to problem solve on the spot in high pressure situations. This experience was invaluable in preparing me for professional work as a stage manager once I leave WIU. I can confidently say that I have learned a lot from this opportunity and that I am a better stage manager because of it.