

StarTribune

'Mormon' cast members leave tender impression

Blog Post by: Rohan Preston

February 19, 2013 - 11:40 AM



Phyre Hawkins, left, in "The Book of Mormon."

Offstage and out of costume, **Phyre Hawkins** looked nothing like the "Lion King"-style character she plays in a musical theater send-up near the top of "**The Book of Mormon**," which closed Sunday.

Between weekend shows, the studio singer delivered a huge bag of toiletries to [Simpson Housing Services](#) in Minneapolis. The 30-year-old shelter houses 66 adults in their facilities year-round.

"It's incredibly exciting to get this donation, especially from busy folks who're from out of town," said **Aja McCullough Beers**, communications and grants manager for Simpson Housing Services. "We serve mostly families with children who've experienced homelessness. People come for beds but also for other services, like dinners and supplies such as socks and underwear and toothbrushes. Their donation is a big help."



Phyre Hawkins at Simpson Housing Services.

Road shows come and go at the Orpheum and Ordway Center, often leaving impressions onstage. “Mormon,” the profane musical by the creative team behind “South Park,” did that for the lucky musical theater fans that were able to snag pricey tickets to its otherwise sold-out two-week run at the Orpheum Theatre.

But the toiletries drive that was spearheaded by cast members made another kind of impact. And cast members, under the aegis of Broadway Serves, are doing similar work in an organized fashion all across the country.

“In L.A., we did AIDS Walks and other things to give back to the community,” said **Kimberly Marable** (below), who plays the Ugandan lady with the baby in “Mormon” and co-founded Broadway Serves. “It’s nice to be able to provide something for families that need it.”



The effort is still new, even as it builds momentum. Marable, a Dartmouth grad, was performing in “Sister Act” on Broadway a year ago when she met up with fellow theater professionals at a memorial rally for Trayvon Martin, the unarmed Florida teen who was shot and killed by a self-appointed neighborhood watchman.

“We wanted to do something for the greater community that was outside the theater bubble,” she said. “We also wanted to provide opportunities for community service that would be fun and doable.”

Marable joined **Dionne Figgins**, who was in “Memphis” at the time, and Dana Marie Ingraham (“Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark”) to co-found Broadway Serves, which provides service opportunities for theater professionals.

Their first event, an AIDS walk in New York, 30 performers from 10 shows on and off Broadway raised \$10,000 for charity. “We knew we were onto something,” said Marable.

Since then, the group has worked with **Habitat for Humanity** to build houses, has sent volunteers to schools and shelters to read to children, and held drives for toiletries and other necessities. Currently, actors from seven Broadway tours are participating in the drive, including cast members of “Anything Goes,” “Memphis” and “Flashdance.”

“We’re gung-ho about it, especially on tour, because when you get to a city, what else are you going to do beside rehearsals,” said Marable, who on Monday left Minneapolis for St. Louis, where “Mormon” plays next. Meanwhile, back in

Minneapolis,

Beers, of Simpson Housing series, was able to see one of the final performances of "Mormon."
"I stood in line and won tickets through their lottery," she said. "It was awesome."

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