

Melissa Whitis

A native of the Greater Cincinnati area, Missy Whitis taught public and private school music and drama for over 15 years. She holds a BME from Eastern Kentucky University, and has taught in schools that vary in location from the coal mining hills of Eastern Kentucky, to Kissimmee, Florida -- where she served as the music supervisor for the International Baccalaureate program. Missy is a **four-time** honoree into Who's Who Among American High School Teachers, and has been recognized in Who's Who Among American Professional Women.

Aside from teaching and directing, Missy also freelances as a clinician and coach in different venues across the country. She is often called upon to speak on generational workplace issues, and how to use improvisation skills in the corporate setting. She, herself, has been lucky enough to study under Paul Sills, cofounder and original director of Second City, and at the renowned SAK Comedy Lab. Her students and troupe members have been recognized nationally for their improvisational skills and innovative formats. Missy created the improvisation track at the two-time TONY-award winning Playhouse In The Park, is a faculty member of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music's Prep Department, and has served as the go-to improv instructor for the *Discover Now!* programs with Worldstrides. Missy is the founding director of the hip, popular, award-nominated troupes, "The Middle Child", "The Grapes of Laugh", "The Q City Players", and "The House Band". She and members of the QCP and Middle Child have produced commercials, as well as a comedy television pilot. Missy also served as a Board Member, and Social Media Manager for the Applied Improvisation Network -- an international organization for improv facilitators and teachers.

Missy's busy schedule is filled with invitations to speak at schools, churches, civic organizations, conferences, on television, and the radio. She also is asked to give workshops on not only improv and theatre concepts, but team building, leadership, and creative business techniques -- which are finding her international recognition. Missy is becoming a sought after writer, as well. You can find Missy's witty and poignant articles in on-line magazines, Technorati, and national print magazines- in which one housed her own column created by the editors especially for her comedic talents.

Missy has, and continues to work with Procter & Gamble, GE Aviation, Hershey, Luxottica, the Educational Theatre Association, University of Cincinnati, Brown Publishing Company, LPK, Vera Bradley, Northlich, the PRSA, Phototype/Gravity, the Northern Kentucky Baptist Association, Bare Escentuals Make-Up, Destination Imagination, Gyro, Bank of Kentucky, xpedx, Wells Fargo, Leadership Cincinnati, Paul Mitchell, the TONY award-winning Cleveland Playhouse, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, countless schools and churches across the country, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Southeastern Theatre Conference, private corporate special events, and even the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators, just to name a few.

On top of that, Missy is a two time Cancer survivor, and was named the 2009 "Woman Against All Odds" by the Cincinnati Leading Women Foundation. Also in 2009, she was nominated as one of the "40 under Forty" for Cincinnati Business Courier Magazine. And in 2010, Missy was ranked in the top 2% of the "Most Influential People on the Web" by *Fast Company* magazine. She is currently an adjunct faculty member of the Digital Media Collaborative at the University of Cincinnati, where she teaches comedy and screenwriting, as well as television genres and methods.

