

March 5, 2024

Tampa Bay Rays
1 Tropicana Drive
St. Petersburg, FL 33705



AMERICAN STAGE

American Stage Theatre Company
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Dear Tampa Bay Rays,

We here at American Stage know full well how much the identity and growth of a city is made by its art scene and its sports scene. Both are lifeblood to the restaurants, shops, homes and the ethos of a city. We would like to lend our robust support to the Tampa Bay Rays and the continued efforts they are making to build up and develop the City of St. Petersburg, FL.

One of the primary values of American Stage is our celebration of diversity and our community. The new efforts by the Tampa Bay Rays show a beautiful commitment to unifying the divided communities in our city through the development of the Gas Plant District. We watch with great hope as they work to heal past hurts through the hard work of constructing an area that will be in service to its communities, and namely to those communities that have historically been left behind.

Going to a baseball game is diversity in action. From the players on the field to the spectators in the stands, we see people from all walks of life that are showing up to watch something fun and exciting. And as a theatre company, we understand what it takes to put on a good show. We have had the joy of sending our performers to sing the national anthem at a Rays game, and we have watched as the entire Bay area shows up to cheer on our home team. We know it's the Tampa Bay Rays – but we also know they belong to us, that St. Pete is at the center of that bay. They are an indelible part of what makes up the fabric of where we live, work, and play.

St. Pete is a phenomenal place to live, and that is because we have institutions willing to call this beautiful place our home. The Rays, like us, don't just sail through on tour, or for an away game. This is our home. The plans for the betterment of our city by the Rays are an investment in our future. Their commitment to staying and to building up, with care and intention, a large portion of our city is the act of community backing that we should all celebrate. Furthermore, Mayor Welch's and the Rays intention to dedicate a large part of that effort to cultural and artistic endeavors shows that their understanding of the needs of our city are astute and mindful. The Rays recognize that the ecosystem here is larger than just themselves; and they are working to lift us all up with their future plans.

We look forward to many years of baseball and collaboration with the Tampa Bay Rays and again offer resounding support for their continued success and development in St. Pete. Let's play ball!

With Gratitude,

Helen R. Murray
Producing Artistic Director

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