



## SPOTLIGHT STORY

### Mary Messmore



*"Fine Arts has always been my home away from home.  
I love that my children will grow up there just like I did."*

Mary Messmore is a parent, student, and also an actress. Nearly 30 years ago at FAA, she played an Oompa Loompa in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, which was her first show. Mary says "I've made life long friends and performed in several other productions there." When Mary was little, she attended every theatre arts camp at FAA. When Mary aged out, she then became a camp counselor.

Mary now has the pleasure of watching her daughter perform in FAA dance programs and Theatre Arts Camp (TAC). If you didn't think Mary and her family were ingrained in FAA already, her and her husband were even lucky enough to be married at FAA! Mary says:

"I've had the pleasure of sharing all three of my kids with my friends I've known for nearly 30 years: Ann Hedger, David Malinowski, Sandy Kosovich Peck, Nancy Shimonek Brooks, Vonnie Pilarczyk, and Don Knepper. Not to mention, all the new ones I make when I am in a new production. I am still active as an actor in the theater. Without the arts I would have no outlet for my creativity. I wouldn't have friends I've come to know as family."

When asked the question "Why are the arts important?" Mary replied, "Being an artist in any realm helps the mind stay sharp. It helps me stay grounded and compassionate. Every time I do a show I learn something new about myself or someone else. Being able to dig deep into the personality of who you're playing on stage is a great way to realize creative energy."