



**LIED**  
**CENTER**  
**OF KANSAS**

4TH - 5TH GRADE PERFORMANCE

TUE & WED | OCTOBER 25 & 26, 2022

Ashli St. Armant's



*NORTH* is a musical about a young man, Lawrence, and his mother, Minnie, as they escape the Deep South and travel North through the Underground Railroad to seek freedom. Their route north takes them on a dangerous and powerful journey as they make their way through the Louisiana's bayous, the bustling city of New Orleans, and the young town of Lawrence, Kansas. They meet many amazing folks on their journey and finally DO find their way to freedom in Canada! AND, the performance you will see will be the first time this musical has been performed in front of an audience!

## Ashli St. Armant, Creator and Director

Ashli St. Armant is a jazz vocalist, composer, musician and musical-theater playwright. She is known for her award-winning work with her band, Jazzy Ash and the Leaping Lizards, who performed for USD 497 3rd-5th graders in 2017. Ashli also has an Audible mystery series, *Viva Durant*, which includes award winning *Viva Durant and the Secret of the Silver Buttons*.

Ashli wrote the story of *NORTH*, inspired by true accounts of folks on the Underground Railroad and her own family's experiences. She also wrote all the music and lyrics for this musical-with the help of some of her musician friends.



# What Was the Underground Railroad?

A cruel system of slavery existed in America long before the United States became a country. By 1850, over three million Black people living in the U.S. were enslaved, meaning they were not treated like people at all. They were considered property that belonged to someone else. Many enslaved people resisted slavery by running away. People called them “fugitives” or “runaways” then, but now we call them Freedom Seekers. The Underground Railroad refers to enslaved African Americans’ efforts to gain their freedom by escaping. The risks were big. Some went alone, others found help along the way. Over time, networks of brave people called “conductors” and safe spaces called “stations” grew to help freedom seekers reach liberty.



Grover Barn



## Underground Railroad Sites in Kansas

Lawrence, Kansas was active in the Underground Railroad. There are still places here that served as “stations,” where freedom seekers were hidden while waiting to be moved on to other “stations” on their way to freedom in Canada. Grover Barn, built in 1858 by the Grovers, still exists and is at 2819 Stonebarn Terrace in Lawrence. The barn was one of the “stations” and played an important role in the Underground Railroad in Kansas. Scan the QR Code to read more about Grover Barn.

## Underground Railroad - Vocabulary

**Stations** – the places on the Underground Railroad that sheltered runaway slaves, often these were homes, barns, churches and businesses of anti-slavery sympathizers.

**Underground Railroad** – a network of routes, places and people that helped enslaved people in the American South escape to the North.

**Conductor** – a person who guided runaway slaves from place to place along the routes of the Underground Railroad. Perhaps the most famous conductor was Harriet Tubman, an escaped slave who helped hundreds to freedom over the course of eight years.

**Freedom Seekers** – an enslaved person who takes action to obtain freedom from slavery, either by attempting escape on their own or through the Underground Railroad. Another common term is a “runaway slave.”



Discovering the Underground Railroad Activity Guide - Created by the National Parks Service.

QR code to learn more about *NORTH* at the Lied Center of Kansas



Sponsors:

