

# Laura Galt

THE *OUTSIDERS* PRODUCER TAKES AN UNLIKELY ROAD TO BROADWAY AND INSTILLS THE LESSONS OF “STAYING GOLD.”

By David Silverberg



**WHILE MORE THAN** 3 million television viewers were enjoying the June 16 Tony Awards broadcast from their couches, Laura Galt stood in a staging area of New York City’s Lincoln Center, watching with bated breath.

As a producer of *The Outsiders*, which opened on Broadway in April, Galt waited to hear if her show would win the coveted Best Musical award.

“It felt like a very heated race where we didn’t know who was going to win, and that was nerve-wracking,” says the OU 1999 alumna and Oklahoma City native.

Her uncertainty turned into joy once *The Outsiders* was named Best Musical, moments after it had also won Tonys for Best Direction of a Musical, Lighting Design and Sound Design.

*The Outsiders*, adapted from S.E. Hinton’s classic novel and Francis Ford Coppola’s film, is set in 1967 Tulsa. The musical follows Ponyboy Curtis, Johnny Cade and their band of “outsiders” who seek purpose in a world that may never accept them.

The cast includes OU Weitzenhoffer School of Musical Theatre alums Daryl Tofa, who plays Two-Bit, and Dan Berry, who takes on the role of “Soc”

Laura Galt stands outside the Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre a day after the Tony Awards.

Paul Holden.

One particular theme from *The Outsiders* resonates with Galt, who now lives in Austin, Texas. “When I think of the classic line, ‘stay gold,’ it reminds me we all have had trials and tribulations throughout our lives,” she says. “We have some very disappointing moments, but we also have happy and exuberant moments, so it’s important to look for the good—to ‘stay gold’—even in difficult times. As much as *The Outsiders* is an Oklahoma story, it’s a very universal story.”

Broadway audiences agreed, judging by ticket sales. Sold-out shows stretched into the summer, and in early July, *The Outsiders* set a house record at the Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre. It’s now on an open-end run, with tickets for sale through July 2025.

Galt always wanted to immerse herself in showbiz. She began dancing at age 4 and was accepted into the competitive Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute as a teen. Many acting classes and auditions later, Galt landed a recurring role on the TV series, *Saved by the Bell: The New Class*.

But after graduating from Southern Methodist University and moving to Los Angeles with a friend, she found herself leaning more into the business side of Hollywood. Galt handled



MATTHEW MURPHY

OU fine arts alum Daryl Tofa, front row left, portrays Two-Bit in the musical adaptation of *The Outsiders*. Fellow OU alum Dan Berry, not pictured, portrays Paul Holden.

publicity for actors such as Julia Roberts, Nicole Kidman and Robert Downey Jr.

She also had a side job as a case manager on a multi-site research study at the UCLA Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital. “It was an eye-opening experience because I discovered I was really great at working with people,” Galt recalls.

When her mother, Joan Davidoff—OU BS in Education ’65 and Master of Education ’66—was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, Galt moved back to Oklahoma to help and considered applying for grad school. The echo of interests developed while working at UCLA led Galt to specialize in speech pathology.

She chose OU, remaining close to family and following in her mother’s footsteps.

Galt realized something was comforting and familiar about taking classes and strolling around the OU Health Sciences campus, home to the Child Study Center where her mother once worked.

After graduating with a master’s in communications sciences and disorders, Galt’s career as a speech pathologist eventually took her to Austin, where she worked for local school districts. Yet, she found herself yearning again for the creative world.

In Austin, Galt founded ATxRandom Productions/Galt and Company, which develops both film and stage projects. The company teamed with others to bring *The Prom* to Broadway in 2018, where it was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Musical.

That same year, a colleague relayed that *The Outsiders* was being developed for the Broadway stage.

“My ears perked up, as someone from Oklahoma. The movie was impactful to me as a young girl; it was certainly something that I watched over and over,” Galt says. Weeks later, she was introduced to *The Outsiders*’ lead producers and joined the show.

Galt says her main role is raising money for the production, as well as forging partnerships and sponsorships with various organizations like the City of Tulsa and the Cherokee Nation. It’s a responsibility she finds fulfilling, even beyond expectations.

“It’s just so much fun to be surrounded by the creative process and to work with all the

intelligent and talented people involved in making the show come together,” Galt says. “I want to expose new audiences to this internationally beloved narrative and celebrate the impact of Oklahoma author S.E. Hinton.”

Galt is thrilled to share that *The Outsiders* will begin touring nationally in 2025, premiering at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center.

“This is a meaningful show for all generations,” she says. “I’m so proud of the collaboration that has gone into our production. The prowess of the technical and creative teams and the talent—both on and off the stage—is next-level and I can’t wait for more people to experience it.”

*David Silverberg is a freelance journalist who lives in Toronto.*