



DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Introduction

“Through this film, we see firsthand the strengths every child brings to school. Anyone who watches these young women will be inspired. Their story speaks to the power of education and community, and it gives us the most powerful of gifts: hope.”

– Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County

The team behind the film developed this guide in conjunction with experts and educators to enhance your screening of STEP and to help illuminate your students’ pathways toward success. In the following pages, you will find:

1. Additional information about the film, including the director’s bio and history of step
2. Questions to help spark creative and informative conversations about themes in the film, including college readiness, confidence, and coping with personal struggles
3. Activities that will help your students think about college readiness and tools to arm them with the skills they need to be successful students

Synopsis

STEP is the true-life story of an all-girls’ high-school step team set against the background of the heart of Baltimore. These young women learn to laugh, love, and thrive—on and off the stage—even when the world seems to work against them. Empowered by their teachers, teammates, counselors, coaches, and families, they chase their ultimate dreams: to win a step championship and to be accepted into college.

This all-female school is reshaping the futures of its students’ lives by making it their goal to have every member of their senior class accepted to and graduate from college, many of whom will be the first in their family to do so. Deeply insightful and emotionally inspiring, STEP embodies the true meaning of sisterhood through a story of courageous young women worth cheering for.

Director's Statement

“When they started stepping it’s exactly what happens in any great musical on Broadway—when the feelings are so overwhelming that instead of speaking, the characters show you all their fears, their hopes, and their dreams through music and movement.”

– Amanda Lipitz, Director

Dear Teacher, Counselor, College Advisor, Coach, Principal, or simply everyday hero (which is what you are),

I made this film not to win awards, go to Sundance, or be in movie theaters around the country. I made this film for the 19 young women in it. The fact that this film, which we made in a very small way, has found such a big audience is a testament to the power of their stories and stories like them.

It is a testament to you as an educator. It is a testament to all the parents, to all the mothers and fathers. Please know how very grateful I am not only for the work that you do tirelessly every day, but also that, today, you are choosing to take time out of your classroom to show STEP to your students.

Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech a few months before he died to a group of junior-high students in Philadelphia. He asked them, “What is the blueprint of your life? Right now, in this moment, you need to decide which way your life is going to go... No matter the circumstances of your life, though they may be intolerable, stay in school.” When I heard that speech for the first time, I knew that was really the nucleus of what STEP is all about. No matter what happens, you get back up again, you put one foot in front of the other, and you step your way to a better life.

Thank you again for taking the time to share this film and please encourage your students to reach out to me online. I love to hear from them. @AMANDALIPITZ on Twitter!

With tremendous gratitude,
Amanda Lipitz
Director/Producer STEP

Themes from the Film

STUDENTS

TEACHERS

Understanding Parents

Throughout STEP you see the girls reacting to, dealing with, and learning from the decisions their mothers have made throughout their lives—both good and bad.

The mothers featured in STEP have vastly different parenting styles. As a result, Coach G and Counselor Dofat interact with them each in unique ways. While difficult, it is often essential and helps resolve issues more effectively.

Building Confidence

Throughout the film, you see the girls reflecting on the empowerment of step. Activities like step offer students the opportunity to embrace new skills, make new friends, and contribute to a team, all of which help build confidence.

The educators in STEP are integral to the success of the students. Both Coach G and Counselor Dofat show the importance of valuing every student and showing all students, not just valedictorians, that college is in their future.

College Readiness

The members of the step team all have their own dreams for the future, but they each see the role that college plays in that dream. With those dreams in mind, they work incredibly hard to be “college ready.”

What is so impressive about Counselor Dofat is her ability to meet kids where they are in their academic careers. She understands that every student is different and therefore requires unique college-readiness strategies.

Benefits of Extracurricular Activities

Students need to find something that inspires them. Whether it is step, painting, debate, etc., extracurricular activities will give them something that will motivate them to come to school and participate.

Coach G encourages the students to participate in step. By encouraging their students to find extracurricular activities that they love, educators will positively impact their academics and increase their attendance.

Personal Relationships

The friendship and support of the step members is revisited often. Whether in addressing home struggles, academics, or personal issues, the girls have each other—even if they need reminders at times.

The educators in STEP have strong relationships with their students. This fosters increased trust, better communication, and thus more effective conversations about students' academic careers.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you characterize/describe the dreams of Cori, Tayla, and Blessin?
2. When talking about her troubles with family and school, Blessin describes feeling split/conflicted. She says that sometimes she feels there are “two people inside” of her: one is “unstoppable” and the other “feels stuck.” Can you relate to this? How?
3. Paula Dofat, the college counselor, encourages Cori to apply to Barnard College, even though she may have to take out a \$20,000 (\$5,000/year) loan to attend. In contrast, she tells Blessin that she doesn’t want her to apply to a two-year college where she would have to take out loans at all. Why do you think she gives the two girls different advice about taking out loans? Ultimately, they each choose different options (Cori goes to Johns Hopkins and Blessin attends the Bridge to College program). Why are these the right-fit schools for each of them?
4. Much of the film is spent focusing on college readiness and admissions. What is your biggest takeaway about college preparation? Has the film inspired you to think differently about your own post-high-school plans? If “yes,” how? If “no,” why not?
5. At the end of STEP, Blessin says, “Step taught me that when a group of powerful women come together, the impact is huge.” Name an example from your own life that proves her right.
6. What do you think makes somebody a hero? Which of these qualities do you see in the characters in the film, Cori, Tayla, Blessin, Coach G, Paula Dofat, etc., if any?
7. STEP is a film that largely centers on the relationship between mothers and their children:
 - A. Cori describes her mom as “a magic wand in human form.” What do you think she means by that? How has Cori’s mom influenced her positively and helped her to succeed?
 - B. Tayla’s mom, Maisha, is also an influential figure in the film—not only for Tayla, but also for many of the other girls on the team. Describe a time when Maisha teaches her daughter compassion or empathy, either by what she does or what she says.
 - C. Blessin’s mom has struggled with violence, depression, and, at times, being present for her daughter. Despite these struggles, she shows love for her daughter throughout the film. Describe one action she takes that demonstrates her love for her daughter.
 - D. Which mother/child relationship do you relate to most? Why?

8. The step team comes up with a chant, “You need to stop, look, and listen, ’cause you’re about to witness something that is stupendous.” What would your personal chant be? What would the chant be for your school/team/class? Explain the motivation behind your chants.
9. Early in the film, Cori says, “I’m kind of an introvert. I’m not very dramatic. But all those parts come out of me when I step. I’m just everything that step is not.” Can you give an example of an instance where you were able to embrace another side of yourself like Cori?



10. What’s an activity that makes you feel empowered and confident?

11. Coach G calls Blessin, “Blessin the Visionary.” If Coach G were to give you a nickname, what would it be and why?

12. Blessin’s mother speaks about her difficulty with math when she was in college. Blessin echoes this sentiment when she explains, “I would not understand what was going on so I stopped going to class.”
 - A. What pattern do we see between Blessin and her mother?
 - B. What is a subject with which you have struggled and how have you worked to improve?

13. Throughout the film there are connections made between the police shooting of Freddie Gray in Baltimore, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the step team at the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women. Name three times this connection is made and describe why you think the filmmaker (and the step coach) chose to connect the two.



14. When the step team visits the memorial of Freddie Gray, the women confront issues of prejudice and hate. Can you give any examples of similar events that have taken place in your community? How did this make you feel and react?

15. At the beginning of the film you see a mother pull her son away from the riot that has broken out in response to Freddie Gray's shooting. Why do you think she did this? Do you agree with her decision? Why or why not?



Activities for 6th, 7th, and 8th Graders

The following activities are inspired by the themes of the film. They are outlines of conversations and activities you can do in the classroom. Some of them will take 10 minutes and others can take an hour. We encourage you to amend and adjust these ideas based on your students and classroom needs.

1. Handwritten Notes: Have students choose a person from their life who has helped with their journey toward college/career/self-improvement (examples: a parent or family member, a teacher, a counselor, etc.) and write that person a handwritten note. Have them describe:
 - A. Why they are grateful for that person—what they have done for them?
 - B. Where they are heading in life?
 - C. How that person has helped them with that goal so far and how they can continue to help them?

By expressing gratitude toward a person and outlining a goal for that person, students will feel more motivated to work toward their goal and more accountable for their actions.



2. Student Strengths: Have students identify what they would like to do professionally, along with what they see as their strengths.

Working with the students, you can help them identify extracurricular activities that they should participate in to help them achieve these goals. Help to draw the connection between these activities and their dreams for the future.

3. Who Is Your Hero: Have all students identify 3–5 people that they admire in DIVERSE industries. Then have them identify the extracurricular activities these professionals might have participated in to help them achieve their success.

By connecting extracurricular activities to the talents seen in professionals that students look up to it will motivate them to get more involved. This activity will help illuminate paths toward certain careers.

4. College Costs: Ask students how much they think it costs to go to college. Tell them it can be as high as \$60,000 every year. That's a scary number. But tell them that if they do well in school, they can earn scholarships to help cover these costs. Ask the students to close their eyes and imagine themselves getting into the college of their dreams. Ask, "Who is the first person you call?"

This will help students visualize how they will feel when they get into college and get them excited and committed to preparing for their applications.

5. Foundation for Freshmen: Work with all students to make a list of questions they should be prepared to ask their college counselor when they get to high school.

Students should know that it's never too early to start preparing for college and advocating for their goals!

6. Interview Prep: Have your students shake the hands of teachers, look them in the eye, say their name, sit up straight, and practice active listening.

Students will have to interview with college admission teams and this will help them prepare to be both professional and confident in these situations.



Activities for 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Graders

The following activities are inspired by the themes of the film. They are outlines of conversations and activities you can do in the classroom. Some of them will take 10 minutes and others can take an hour. We encourage you to amend and adjust these ideas based on your students' and classroom needs.

1. Handwritten Notes: Have students choose a person from their life who has helped with their journey toward college/career/self-improvement (examples: a parent or family member, a teacher, a counselor, etc.) and write that person a handwritten note. Have them describe:
 - A. Why they are grateful for that person—what they have done for them?
 - B. Where they are heading in life?
 - C. How that person has helped them with that goal so far and how they can continue to help them?

By expressing gratitude toward a person and outlining a goal for that person, students will feel more motivated to work toward their goal and more accountable for their actions.



2. College Application Parties: Host a number of “college application parties” for juniors and seniors to come in and work on their applications. If possible, provide snacks, music, and extra staff to help answer questions. Students can get help from one another as well!

Setting time aside to provide students a fun environment in which to fill out their applications will help make them more comfortable with the process in general.

3. Classroom Colleges: Have teachers name their classrooms after schools that they went to or love and describe them to the students at the beginning of the year. They can continue to talk about the school throughout the year or ask students which schools they like and if there are other schools they would like to see in the classrooms, etc.

Give students the opportunity to learn about different colleges and the diverse choices that they have after high school.

4. Questions for Counselors: In small groups, have students draft a list of questions about college, applications, scholarships, etc. After groups have drafted their questions, give them the opportunity to ask counselors or college representatives who come to the school for answers.

Having students work collaboratively will allow them to see where their peers are in the process and will help them gain a more comprehensive view of the college application process.

5. Interview Prep: Have your students shake the hands of teachers, look them in the eye, say their name, sit up straight, and practice active listening.

Students will have to interview with college admission teams and this will help them prepare to be both professional and confident in these situations.

6. Who Is Your Hero: Have all students identify 3–5 people that they admire in DIVERSE industries. Then have them identify the extracurricular activities these professionals might have participated in to help them achieve their success.

Connecting extracurricular activities to the talents seen in professionals that students look up to will motivate them to get more involved. This activity will help illuminate paths toward certain careers.

7. Create Identity Charts: Work with your students to create Identity Charts to help them understand the many factors that shape who they are as a person.

Give students the opportunity to explore who they are as individuals and then to also see the characteristics that they share with their classmates. This can help build relationships and break down stereotypes.

8. College Scavenger Hunt: Have students list 10 things that they would love their college to have (categories might include: size, location, majors, support services, etc.). When those qualities are identified, have them find 1–2 schools that exhibit all of these qualities.

This will help students understand what colleges are out there and what they have to offer.

9. Pack Your Suitcase: Put a big suitcase in the middle of the classroom and give each student an index card. Have the students imagine that it is the night before they leave for college and that they are looking around their room planning what to pack: photos, books, a sports jersey, journal, posters, etc. This leads to a discussion about focusing the college search and selection process on what students value. Ask your students why they included these items. Prompt them to choose an item that a classmate opted to bring and discuss why they would or would not also bring that item.

This helps students prepare mentally for the process of going off to school. It is also a reminder that the college process is one of self-discovery and self-analysis, rather than perceived prestige, college rankings, and amenities.

History of Step

Stepping is a dynamic performance tradition that uses the body itself as both a percussive and expressive instrument. Footsteps, handclaps, call-and-response, songs, chants, and propulsive musical rhythms all combine to become a distinctively corporeal form of storytelling.

Shaped by African American history, the roots of stepping go back to African tribal dance, but in the U.S. its beginnings can be traced to the slave trade, when call-and-response folk songs allowed slaves to communicate with another and to spread vital news, including information about the Underground Railroad. By the early 20th century, as African American veterans of World War I began enrolling in colleges, students started combining regimented, drill-like marching with call-and-response chants and African foot dances into fraternity and sorority performances. By the 1960s, stepping was flourishing in African American fraternities and sororities, going through another metamorphosis to become an intense, competitive sport. As stepping grew, further elements of acrobatics, tap dance, hip-hop and bold stunts were braided into the form, continuing a process of constant evolution.

For decades, stepping was largely known only to African American fraternal groups. It was Spike Lee's 1988 film *SCHOOL DAZE*, based on Lee's experiences at Morehouse College, that brought it into the popular culture. Within just a few years, stepping was seen at President Bill Clinton's inauguration and in the Atlanta Summer Olympics opening ceremonies. Now practiced worldwide, it has become a staple of music videos and youth-oriented movies.

"I wanted the film's step scenes to function as they would in a musical—to reveal character and hone in on emotions that go beyond words," Amanda Lipitz, director of *STEP* explains. "I wanted every step practice and step routine to be part of pushing the story forward. I also wanted the step sequences to emphasize that this IS a team."

Lipitz has always adored the ineffable enchantment of crafting a new show from the ground up, and she saw the Lethal Ladies of Baltimore team's preparations as a microcosm of what happens on Broadway.

"When you make a musical, you get to witness the process of how the music, lyrics, dancing, singing, costumes, and performances all mesh together to create something greater than the parts. I really wanted to bring audiences inside that kind of process with these students, where you see what they're aiming to do in the beginning and then you get to experience how it transforms into that one moment where it is fully realized on stage."

Frequently Asked Questions

What were the circumstances surrounding Freddie Gray's death?

On April 12, 2015, Freddie Gray, Jr. was arrested by the Baltimore Police Department for allegedly possessing an illegal switchblade (1). While being transported by the police, Gray fell into a coma (2). On April 19, Gray died from injuries to his spinal cord. Following the events, six Baltimore police officers were suspended with pay (3).

While the circumstances around his death were initially unclear, eye-witness accounts indicate that officers used unnecessary force during the arrest (4). Ultimately, the medical examiner's office came to the conclusion that the death would be ruled as a homicide and the State Attorney announced charges had been filed against the officers (5).

In September 2015, it was decided that there would be separate trials for the accused. The trial against Officer William Porter ended in mistrial. Officers Nero, Goodson, and Rice were found not guilty at trial. The remaining charges against the officers were dropped on July 27, 2016 (6).

What was the community's response to Freddie Gray's death?



In the wake of Gray's death, protests broke out in downtown Baltimore. On April 25th, large crowds gathered downtown and the protest eventually turned violent, leading Governor Larry Hogan to declare a state of emergency (7).

While national reports portrayed the unrest as violent, many of local residents were only hoping for a voice and equality. As Coach G says in the film, "40, 50, 60 years later we still have to protest for our rights as African Americans."

How can you get a college admissions counselor to come speak to your students?

If you want counselors from specific colleges to come to your school, call the admission office and ask if a visit can be scheduled. Colleges are typically excited to meet prospective applicants!

How can we make the most of a visit from a college admissions counselor?

Make sure a counselor from your school connects with them in person upon their arrival. These are relationships that can be upheld and fostered for years to come! Make sure you also arm them with information to make presentations that are relevant to your students, including your school's profile and college statistics list (colleges that students from your school have attended in recent years) (8).

Can I have a FAFSA representative come to my school to meet with my students? If so, how?

While FAFSA representatives will attend select events to help educate students about financial aid, it does take a lot of organizing on the part of the educator. Read more on FAFSA's Toolkit [here](#).



What advice can educators give to high-school students when a college admissions counselor attends their high school?

- Make sure you introduce yourself to all college representatives (remember the skills you learned in your “Interview Prep” activity).
- Ask for a business card so you have a direct contact if you have any other questions.
- Ask about acceptance statistics, scholarships, etc.

What are some example questions high-school students should be prepared to ask college admissions counselors (9)(10)?

- What are the biggest strengths at your school and can you tell me any weaknesses?
- What kind of students seem to really like your school?
- What are your academic standards?
- Is [HAVE THE STUDENT FILL IN] major offered?
- Are there opportunities for internships and employment?
- What is the average debt of recent graduates?

- What is the average financial-aid award given to students in my position?
- What are the most popular clubs and activities?
- What's the faculty like? How accessible are they outside of class?
- Is there job-placement help for graduates?

Resources

This page contains links to helpful resources for educators who are interested in learning more about the issues raised in the film. Included below are also resources for teachers to use in classrooms and to share with their students and families.

About STEP

[The National Step League](#) has over 400 step teams nationwide, ranging from ages 9–21.

[The National Stepping Association](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and celebration of the stepping art form, at the youth, collegiate, and alumni levels.

[Step Afrika!](#) is the first professional company in the world dedicated to the tradition of stepping! It now ranks as one of the top ten African American dance companies in the United States.

[Youth Step USA](#) has been the leader in the promotion of high-school and middle-school step competitions for more than seventeen years and showcases the best step teams from around the country in the Annual National Championship Tournament.

[Teens Step Up](#) is an after-school enrichment program that provides step instruction to youth.

FOR STUDENTS

About College and Academic Success

[I'm First](#) is an online community celebrating first-generation college students and supporting those who will be the first in their family to attend college.

[iMentor](#) matches every student in a high school with a committed college-educated mentor, equipped to guide that young person on their journey to college graduation.

[Essential Strategies to Help You Become an Outstanding Student](#) outlines habits and strategies to help academic performance.

[How to Be a Better Student](#) provides suggestions to help boost your productivity and achievement.

[Focus on 7 Strategies to Get Into College](#) offers advice on how to tackle college applications.

About Extracurricular Activities

[How to Start a Club in High School: 8-Step Guide](#) offers helpful strategies to start your own club at your school.

About Racism

[4 Self-Care Resources for Days When the World Is Terrible](#) discusses ways to take care of yourself amidst the constant news about violence against people of color.

[Self-Care for People of Color After Psychological Trauma](#) provides people of color with coping mechanisms for dealing with trauma.

[11 Ways Black People Can Practice Self-Care in the Wake of Trump's Win](#) outlines tips, links, and resources for practicing self-care in the current political environment.

FOR FAMILIES

About College and Academic Success

[Helping Your Child with the College-Planning Process](#) offers parents outlines for steps they can take to help their child prepare for college as early as 9th grade.

[The Incredible Years](#) is a compilation of evidence-based programs and materials that develop positive parent/teacher/child relationships.

About Extracurricular Activities

[What Your Students Should Know About Out-of-School Activities](#) discusses how to leverage your after-school activities to help on college applications.

About Racism

[4 Self-Care Resources for Days When the World Is Terrible](#) discusses ways to take care of yourself amidst the constant news about violence against people of color.

[11 Ways Black People Can Practice Self-Care In The Wake Of Trump's Win](#) outlines tips, links, and resources for practicing self-care in the current political environment.

[How to Talk to Your Kids about the Violence in Charlottesville](#) gives advice on how parents can talk about racist violence.

FOR EDUCATORS AND COUNSELORS

About College and Academic Success

[Educating Students Who Live in Poverty](#) provides educators with a foundation and strategies for assisting their students who live in poverty.

[Step by Step: College Awareness and Planning for Families, Counselors and Communities](#) is a curriculum that offers training for counselors and others who work with underrepresented and underserved students.

[Foundations for Young Adult Success](#) discusses key non-academic elements that children need for adult success.

[The Incredible Years](#) is a compilation of evidence-based programs and materials that develop positive parent/teacher/child relationships.

About Extracurricular Activities

[Benefits for Youth, Families, & Communities](#) highlights the benefits of after-school activities.

[Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's Tools and Resources About Teaching Students in Poverty](#) compiles a list of resources for educators teaching impoverished students.

[Competent Kids](#) is part of NYC's renowned family-therapy training organization the Ackerman Institute, and focuses on social/emotional skill building and program implementation.

About Racism

[The First Thing Teachers Should Do When School Starts Is Talk About Hatred in America. Here's Help.](#) This Washington Post article discusses the [#CharlottesvilleCurriculum](#) and how to address these acts of racial violence with students.

[Teachers Share Resources for Addressing Charlottesville Hate Rally in the Classroom](#) is a resource share for educators including a social-justice reading list.

[Resources for Educators to Use in the Wake Of Charlottesville](#) pulls together helpful resources for educators to discuss Charlottesville and other acts of racist violence.

Benefits of Extracurricular Activities*

Time Management and Prioritizing

Extracurricular activities teach children how to manage their time and prioritize various tasks and commitments.

Exploring Diverse Interests

Exploring passions helps students gain confidence and an understanding of their strengths.

Making a Contribution

Making a contribution to their school or community helps prepare students for life outside of academics and aids their transition into contributing members of society.

Building Self-Esteem

Mastering new skills can help individuals build confidence. By participating in after-school activities, students can build their self-esteem in a relaxed setting as their activities provide the opportunity to be successful in something that they are passionate about.

Setting Goals

After-school activities present opportunities for your children to develop their goal-setting skills. Most extracurricular activities involve reaching or achieving a goal, whether it be the lead actor in the school play, winning the state championship or coming in first place in the science fair. As a result, these activities help encourage students to work toward achieving those goals, while having fun at the same time.

Academics

Studies show a correlation between improved grades, behavior, and work habits as a result of students' involvement in after-school activities. What's more, these programs give students more incentive to come to school, helping keep attendance rates high.

College Applications

Another benefit of after-school activities is that they look great on college applications. In addition to academic performance, many colleges look at what activities students are involved in outside of school as a way to fully understand each student.

Teamwork

Sports teams, clubs, and activities, like dancing and music, all require children to work together toward a common goal. By participating in these activities, your children develop the skills they need in order to successfully work with others. Extracurricular activities allow children to build relationships and socialize with peers who share their interests.

Director's Bio

AMANDA LIPITZ is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and Tony Award-winning Broadway producer.

Her directorial debut and first feature-length documentary, "STEP," premiered in competition at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival and won the Special Jury Award for Inspirational Filmmaking. It also won the Lena Sharpe Award for Persistence of Vision at the Seattle International Film Festival, and the Audience Award at the AFI Docs Festival. STEP is on the DOC NYC Shortlist for Best Documentaries of the year also. The film was released in theatres in August by Fox Searchlight and is available on DVD & digital this fall.

Known nationally for her short films highlighting philanthropic organizations and their impact, Lipitz has made more than 30 documentaries for organizations such as Young Women's Leadership Network, Citymeals on Wheels, College Bound Initiative, The Tory Burch Foundation, Barnard College, Turnaround for Children, The Gateway School and many more. In 2008 Lipitz was named by Jewish Women International as one of their "10 Women to Watch."

Amanda served as executive producer and creator of MTV's groundbreaking series "Legally Blonde the Musical: The Search for Elle Woods." Lipitz also associate produced "A Broadway Celebration" for PBS as part of the White House music series. She is currently working on several projects including the original musical "Brooklynite" (The Vineyard, Off Broadway), with music and lyrics by Peter Lerman.

Lipitz's first foray into Broadway producing was at the age of 24 with "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels," starring John Lithgow. Her other producing credits include "Legally Blonde the Musical," also on Broadway; "Modern Orthodox," starring Jason Biggs and Molly Ringwald; "The Performers;2322" and "A View From the Bridge" (Tony Award, Best Revival). Most recently, she was represented on Broadway by the critically acclaimed Tony Award-winning hit (Best Play) "The Humans."

Lipitz graduated with a BFA in theater from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and now serves on the board of the school. She also recently became a trustee of NYU and serves on PONY (Playwrights of New York).

In addition to producing, Lipitz is responsible for some of the most innovative sponsorships on Broadway, including partnerships with Tiffany & Co., PBTeen, Maybelline and Uber. She currently lives in New York City with her husband and two daughters.

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