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## Six-year-old Teaneck resident makes Broadway debut in 'Once'

OCTOBER 16, 2014 LAST UPDATED: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2014, 12:32 AM

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TEANECK - Teaneck resident Sophie Knapp has made her Broadway debut at just six years old. The talented first grader began her role as Ivanka, daughter of Girl in the Broadway musical, "Once," on Sept. 8.

Sophie, who has lived in the township her whole life, began taking voice lessons when she was four years old. Her speech therapist recommended the lessons and she loved singing from the moment she began.

Sophie was soon performing in various recitals and cabarets, quickly becoming what her parents, Chavie and Stephen Knapp, consider a triple threat. She has trained in singing, acting and dancing for the past year and a half.

She made her off-Broadway debut at the age of 5 in "A Little Princess". She also has performed in "Annie," "The Little Mermaid" and "Bye Bye Birdie" at the Helen Hayes Youth Theater in New City, N.Y.; in a movie medley at Nunnbetter Dance Theatre in Bergenfield, "The Nutcracker" through the Nunnbetter ballet program, an off-Broadway show called "Exquisite Potential" and Kaplen JCC on the Palisades' productions of "South Pacific" and "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown."

After signing with a manager and agent in January of this year, Sophie began auditioning for major roles. She was immediately called back after her audition for Once, and she then got the part of Ivanka a couple of days later.

Lindsay Burton, webmaster /blogger for Young Broadway Actor News, confirms that as of Oct. 13, Sophie is the youngest on Broadway.

Chavie said that although life is a "little crazy" with Sophie's schedule and her four other children's activities, she will encourage Sophie to keep performing for as long as she wants.

"I would love for her to continue to have so much fun and keep growing and learning," Chavie said. "It has been a wonderful experience and she is doing what she loves and having a blast."

Sophie currently performs in four shows a week as part of a six-month contract with Once. She said she was "so excited" when she was chosen for the show and truly loves her cast members.

"I love all of the actors and the other kids in the show," she said. "My mom in the show is so nice and after each performance I wait for her to take a picture together."

Sophie said she wants to be a stage and television actor when she grows up. But for now, one of her favorite parts of being a Broadway star is interacting with her fans.

"I love singing because I love being on stage," she explained. "But then at the end of the show, my favorite part is signing autographs!"



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHAVIE KNAPP  
Teaneck resident Sophie Knapp, 6, has made her Broadway debut in the role of Ivanka, daughter of Girl in the Broadway musical, "Once".



One of Sophie Knapp's favorite parts of being a Broadway star is interacting with her fans, especially at the end of the show when she signs autographs.