

## REPORT ON EDUCATION PROGRAMS July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022



*YASI Move students work with resident actor and choreographer Taavon Gamble, July 2021*

### Overview

Since the inception of Project Discovery (created with a 1966 grant from the NEA), Trinity Repertory Company has introduced more than 1.4 million students to the experience of live theater. We provide some of the best formal education and training programs in the country to students in grades K-12 from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, creating not only the next generation of theater audiences, but also the next generation of artists and creative thinkers. Our offerings continue with lifelong learning programs for adults.

Trinity Rep's education programs serve thousands of students, teachers and adults from schools in RI, MA and CT each year. We provide access to professional live theater with student matinee performances of most of our mainstage productions and curricular, in-school programming. We also offer year-round, out-of-school programming in theater arts through the Young Actors Studio, a

variety of supplemental school-to-career activities for students of all ages, classes for adults, and professional development for teachers.

Providing a diverse range of programming, Trinity Rep's education activities also include workshops and residencies in schools and community organizations, and school-to-career activities. TRAIN, the Trinity Rep Active Imagination Network, uses drama as a therapeutic and educational tool for people with autism or cognitive and physical disabilities.

During the 2021-2022 season, schools and community organizations navigated a return to in-person operations, amid surges in Covid-19 variants. Trinity Rep served more than 14,000 students, adults and teachers from 65 schools and organizations, with more than 12,000 students (est.) participating in Project Discovery's streaming *A Christmas Carol* and digital study guide.

### **Education Program Participation Summary**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>OCCURENCES</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Project Discovery Student Matinees	482 classrooms streaming <i>A Christmas Carol</i>  3 performances of <i>Gem of the Ocean</i> and <i>Sueno</i>	12,050 students and teachers from 35 schools  934 from 12 schools
Post-show discussions	All invited, following every performance	934 students participated in discussions with cast, crew and staff
Project Discovery Plus Workshops	4 workshops for <i>Gem of the Ocean</i>	52 students from 1 school
Young Actors Summer Institute '21	2-week online Summer Actors Studio; 1-week intensives for grades 1-12: YASI Junior, One Acts, YASI Players; Creative Play; dance and movement, Audition Techniques, Art and Activism	30 students online  134 students in person
Young Actors Studio School Year Programming	Courses for students in grades K-12 ranging from 6 weeks to full 2021-2022 school year	157 students in person

Off-Site Residencies and Workshops	Nearly all in-person; frequency and duration varied by location	323 students from Classical High School, Dighton Rehoboth High School, East Providence High School Potter Burns Elementary School, Providence Afterschool Alliance, Rectory School, St. Mary's Home for Children, St. Philomena's School, School One, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts
TRAIN: Trinity Rep Active Imagination Network	Intensive, long- and short-term drama therapy workshops throughout the school year	Approximately 400 students from Sargent Rehabilitation Center; Seven Hills RI; Bradley Hospital adolescent inpatient unit; Bradley Hospital Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities
ArtsTalk	Series of four arts integration workshops hosted by RI Philharmonic	80 students from Shea High School, Pawtucket
Adult classes	Classes September-June	62 students in person; 34 in online class



*Staff welcomes the first in-person Project Discovery audience since March 2020*

## PROJECT DISCOVERY AND PD PLUS

Project Discovery and Project Discovery Plus encompass our curricular-based programs for grades K-12 that bring students and teachers to the theater, provide in-school workshops with teaching artists, and offer comprehensive study guides and post-show discussions with the actors and artists involved with the production.

### Project Discovery

The 2021-22 season marked the 55th season of Project Discovery, our pioneering educational outreach program, which has served more than 1.4 million children since its inception in 1966.

Project Discovery activities center on the student matinees, which provide students and teachers with significantly reduced cost (and in cases of extreme need, complimentary) tickets to Trinity Rep mainstage productions. Every class attending a student matinee is offered the opportunity to enhance their theater learning experience with standards-based study guides for teachers that highlight themes of the play and suggest activities for integrating the play into the classroom experience. Students and teachers attending a Project Discovery matinee performance are also invited to stay after the production for an in-depth discussion and analysis of the play with actors, the artistic/production team, and staff members. Teachers, students, teaching artists, and parents all testify that Project Discovery and Project Discovery Plus increase students' interest in the subject, their class participation, and their comprehension of the text.

During the pandemic, Project Discovery continued online with 2020 and 2021's streaming productions of *A Christmas Carol* and study guides, broadening access while field trips were impossible. In the winter and spring of 2022, in-person matinees, post-show discussions, and workshops returned, gradually.

One teacher wrote: "Everything produced by Trinity has been so thoughtful and well organized. Each time I attend I am blown away by the performances and the additional resources that are provided to support classroom teachers."



*Staff welcomes the first in-person Project Discovery audience since March 2020*

### Project Discovery Attendance

PLAY	# MATINEES	SCHOOLS	ATTEND ANCE
<i>A Christmas Carol</i> by Charles Dickens	streaming	<b>35 schools:</b> Barnstable High School, Barnstable Intermediate Schools, Beacon Charter School for the Arts, Catholic Memorial School, Central High School, Chariho Middle School, Classical High School, Dartmouth High School, De La Salle Middle School, Dr. E. A. Ricci Middle School, East Greenwich School District, Feinstein Middle School of Coventry, Fogarty Memorial School, Hope Highlands Middle School, John F. Deering Middle School, Johnson Middle School, La Salle Academy, Lincoln Middle School, Millis Middle School, Monsignor Clarke School, Newmarket Junior Senior HS, North Attleboro Middle School, North Scituate Elementary, Park View Middle School, Ponaganset Middle School, Potter Burns Elementary, St. Augustine School, St. Theresa School, Tiogue Elementary School, Washington Oak Elementary, West Glocester Elementary, Wilbur McMahon School, William R. Dutemple Elementary, homeschool groups	12,050 online (est.)
<i>Gem of the Ocean</i> by August Wilson	2	<b>11 schools:</b> Barnstable High School, Central High School, LaSalle Academy, The MET School, Providence Career and Technical Academy School One, St. Peter School, Westborough High School, Wheeler High School (CT), Woodstock Academy (CT), Wilbur McMahon School	819
<i>Sueno</i> by Jose Rivera	1	<b>2 schools:</b> Central High School, St. Andrew's School	115
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>48 schools</b>	<b>12,984</b>



*With the gradual return of field trips, Project Discovery welcomed in-person audiences in March 2022*

### **Project Discovery Plus (PD Plus)**

PD Plus, our most comprehensive in-school program, is based on the principles of our traditional Project Discovery program. Each season, one or two of our mainstage productions are selected to be our “education centerpiece”. These plays, or the novels that inspired them, are often found on school reading lists, allowing us to address themes and ideas present in both classrooms and contemporary society. We offer a larger number of Project Discovery matinees, as well as free PD Plus workshops for all schools attending the show.

During the 2021-2022 school year, our PD Plus play was August Wilson’s *Gem of the Ocean*. As schools began to offer field trips again for vaccinated students, PD Plus engaged 819 students and teachers through two student matinee performances and post-show talkbacks and four in-school supporting workshops at Wheeler School (CT). Before and after students attended the play, workshops invited them to explore the text, characters, August Wilson’s world, and get up on their feet to perform and interpret scenes and offer their responses.

## **YOUNG ACTORS STUDIO (YAS) AND YOUNG ACTORS SUMMER INSTITUTE (YASI)**

The Young Actors Studio and Young Actors Summer Institute (YASI) provide year-round out-of-school arts enrichment classes to students in grades K-12. After-school and Saturday classes during the school year range in length from six weeks to nine months, and focus on a wide range of activities, from basic acting skills to improvisation to the language of Shakespeare. The Summer Institute, taking place in July and August for students in grades 1-12, supplements acting classes with playwriting, musical theater, improvisation, Shakespeare, visual arts, stage combat and more. During the 2021-2022 fiscal year, 321 students took part in in-person Young Actors Studio and YASI classes. An additional 30 enrolled in online Summer Actors Studio classes.



*YASI students in an Art & Activism class, July 2021*

### **Young Actors Summer Institute (YASI)**

The Young Actors Summer Institute (YASI) is the only summer theater program in New England for students to train at a Tony Award-winning theater with the best professional instructors from around the region. Young theater artists learn from Trinity Rep's nationally renowned acting ensemble, resident artists, Brown/Trinity Rep MFA graduate students, and local artists. Students customize their experience by choosing from playwriting, art and activism, musical theater, improvisation, and more. Weeklong intensives bring the fun, friends and energy of summer camp, while students take their

skills to the next level with our exceptional curricula. YASI is a supportive, competition-free zone that culminates on Trinity Rep's stage with final performances for all grade levels and a showcase sharing scenes, monologues, dances, and songs.

In the summer of 2021, YASI offered weeklong sessions for grades 1-12, such as YASI Move, a variety of dance styles for grades 5-7 and 8-12; Creative Play, collaborative work; YASI Junior; Art and Activism; YASI One-Acts; and two sessions of YASI Players.

**YASI Jr.** concentrates on our youngest students, rising 1<sup>st</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> graders. 20 young actors participated last summer.

**YASI One-Acts** is a week-long intensive for 8th-12th grade students. Last summer, 20 young actors created and performed the original one-act *Reika and the Wolves* in the Pell Chafee Performance Center after just five days of staging.

**YASI Players** is a group for 5th-9th grade students who put on a new play in just one week. Two full sessions performed Rodney Witherspoon's new play *Tabletops* in the Chace Theater.

**Summer Actors Studio**, a two-week online program, served students who preferred to participate remotely.



*YASI Players students rehearse Tabletops, July 2021.*

### **Summer 2021 YASI Enrollment**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>	<b># STUDENTS</b>	<b>GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION</b>
YASI Move and Creative Play	Week-long sessions for 5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> grades	33	RI, MA
YASI One-Acts	8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> graders performed <i>Reika and the Wolves</i>	20	RI, MA
YASI Jr.	Range of classes for 1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grade, 1 week	20	RI, MA
YASI Move and Art & Activism	Week-long sessions for 8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grades	39	RI, MA
YASI Players	Two weeklong sessions for 5 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> grade, performing the new play <i>Tabletops</i>	41	RI, MA
Summer Actors Studio ONLINE	Two-week program, classes ranging from songwriting to audition techniques	30	



*YASI Move students, July 2021.*

YASI students commented:

"I felt so connected to everyone in the group, including the staff, within the five days. I know I have some new friends and connections that'll last!"

"It was so fun to meet all of the people, and all of the activities were so much fun! I also learned a lot about different communities and heard many different perspectives over the week."

Emma and Amy Hogarth, parents of a YASI and YAS student, shared this testimonial:

"Our 12-year-old son JJ has been joyfully involved with many programs at Trinity Rep. His first experience was in the Young Actors Summer Institute camp, exploring movement for actors: a week of at least five different movement techniques, culminating in a dynamic performance. Aside from the artistic learning and growth he experienced, he found a community of like-minded kids and adults, who love what he loves, and appreciate what he appreciates. After YASI, JJ auditioned for *A Christmas Carol*. Over the many months of the rehearsal and performance periods, he learned so much about performing, stagecraft, and the discipline and commitment required of being in a professional production. JJ grew enormously in confidence and sense of self as a young person finding his "thing" and finding his way. As a black boy being raised by white moms, he was blessed with this opportunity to work with so many immensely talented artists of color. JJ has been able to continue his connection with Trinity, learning so much from the Junior Ensemble class, and will attend YASI. He's really found a community where he feels seen and appreciated, along with enjoying learning so much about theater."



YASI Jr. Students, July 2021

## **Young Actors Studio**

The Young Actors Studio provides in-depth, out-of-school classes from September-May each year. Classes are based on a continuum of learning, beginning with short-term introductory classes and continuing through year-round intermediate and advanced classes that focus on a wide range of theater-related topics. Introductory classes for 131 students K-12 took place in fall 2021, winter 2022, and spring 2022, focusing on the basics of playwriting, acting, improvisation, and scene study, as well as specialized topics.

Full school-year classes, which served an additional 30 students, included Explosion, for grades 8-9, and the Junior Ensemble, our advanced program for students in grades 5-7, and our new **Youth Company**: a year-long advanced high school group designed to mirror the values of Trinity Rep (company, community, and education.) Meeting weekly, led by acting company member Taavon Gamble and education staff, the group discusses current productions and connects them to their communities. Youth Company members receive mentorship and develop their acting skills through greater access to people and opportunities within the theater. For their final project, The Youth Company created and shared an “honest, original production” about their high school experiences -- “the good, the bad, and the ugly.”

## **2021-2022 Young Actors Studio Enrollment**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>CLASS SCHEDULE</b>	<b># STUDENTS</b>	<b>GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION</b>
K-4th grades	Fall, winter, and spring sessions in person	22 fall, 19 winter, 23 spring	RI and MA
5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> grades	Fall, winter, and spring sessions in person	11 fall, 11 winter, 12 spring	RI and MA8
8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grades	Fall, winter, and spring sessions in person	12 fall, 11 winter, 10 spring	RI and MA
Junior Ensemble	September-May in person, grades 5-7	11	RI and MA
Theater Explosion	September-May in person, grades 8-9	8	RI
Youth Company	September-May in person, grades 10-12	10	RI and MA
Write Here, Write Now	Annual HS playwriting competition	44	RI and MA

## Adult Classes

Trinity Rep is committed to lifelong learning. Classes for adults served 62 in person, and 34 online last year. Taught by members of our resident acting company and artistic staff, courses included Introduction to Performance, Beginning Acting, Advanced Scene Study, Quarantine with Curt, and August Wilson's Century Cycle.



*Intro to Acting class for adults*

## TRINITY REP ACTIVE IMAGINATION NETWORK (TRAIN)

Founded in 2010, Trinity Rep Active Imagination Network (TRAIN) is a series of drama classes specially designed for children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other cognitive, psychiatric and physical disabilities. In 2021-2022, TRAIN served approximately 400 people, in person, with three partner organizations: Bradley Hospital, Seven Hills RI, and Sargent Rehabilitation Center. For TRAIN's annual productions in collaboration with Seven Hills RI, *Running from Mount Olympus* was created, performed and shared on Zoom in October, and a cast of 12 put on the original Rhode Island mystery *The Big Blue Bug's Clues* in the Chace Theater, in December, and created *Days of our Hospital* in June.



*TRAIN's original play Days of our Hospital, on our Dowling Theater stage in June 2022*

Our program's curriculum is designed to instill pragmatic skills such as initiating and maintaining conversations, building long-term friendships, problem solving, and conflict resolution; enhance coping skills, such as goal setting and relaxation techniques; increase non-verbal skills, including reading facial expressions and body language, defining personal space, and learning eye contact; raise students' self-esteem by encouraging and rewarding autonomy, public speaking, and a willingness to take positive risks; and give teachers and therapists the skills necessary to incorporate the arts into their classes and sessions on a permanent basis. Through acting and improvisation, students learn to socialize, build self-confidence, and express themselves in a healthy, productive, and enjoyable way. According to the most recent studies, autism affects more than one in eighty children, and the number of students affected by other behavioral and emotional disabilities that can be helped with drama therapy is almost immeasurable. TRAIN has garnered significant national interest, and we are developing it as a model program.

Tracy Lee Allard, a TRAIN veteran of more than a decade, shared this reflection: "Trinity Rep has helped me personally as an autistic/disabled individual, largely via the arts and culture education they provide. To start, analyzing art, plays, and storytelling helps me understand and respect myself and others. Trinity Rep is also very dedicated to honoring accessibility across the board... Accessibility is a core value to disabled culture. Trinity Rep prioritizes full accessibility. As a student, I am grateful for the

prioritization of discussion around multicultural influences on art, as well as the fostering of culturally competent and safe spaces for all in the conversation. I have benefited greatly from being in these spaces, which have helped me understand disabilities' relationship to art, culture, and community, as well as helped me to advocate and help others understand, as well."

## ARTS TALK

Arts Talk is an arts integration professional development program for Rhode Island high school educators in all subject areas. Teams of teachers attend professional development and planning sessions with Trinity Repertory Company, the RISD Museum, and the Music School of the RI Philharmonic, and then receive funds to carry out an arts-integrated project in their classroom. In addition to the opportunity to attend a performance, we offer in-school workshops tailored to meet the needs of each individual class, ranging from the fundamentals of how to read, analyze and create dramatic texts to the role of theater in culture and environment. In a planning year for the program, 2021-2022's four Arts Talk workshops served 80 students from Shea High School in Pawtucket. Four teaching artists led workshops on poetry writing with the theme of identity, hosted by the RI Philharmonic's Music School.



*Shea High School students collaborate on a poetry exercise, in an Art Talk workshop.*

## "WRITE HERE! WRITE NOW!"

*Write Here! Write Now!* is a one-act playwriting contest for high school students, launched in 2012. Pairing Trinity Rep's commitments to education and to new play development, WHWN seeks submissions from young people throughout the region. Scripts are read and evaluated by our staff, and four winners are selected for full production, including rehearsal with a dramaturg, director and professional actors. In its 11<sup>th</sup> season, WHWN received 44 submissions. Winning playwrights work on play development with Trinity Rep staff before having their play read by professional actors for an audience of friends and family.



*A class of 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders is eager to volunteer.*

## OUTREACH AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

During the 2021-2022 season, Trinity Rep worked with 14 schools and organizations throughout Rhode Island and Massachusetts, to offer special programs to nearly 300 children. These initiatives ranged in length from one-time programs to multi-month residencies. Highlights include:

- 4 workshops, each serving 25 students at Pawtucket's **Potter Burns Elementary School**, focused on *A Christmas Carol*
- In our annual residency at **Classical High School**, teaching artists worked in eight sessions with 30 students. Students worked with several scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*, complete with an original group dance number to Britney Spears' *Toxic* performed by a string quartet. Scene work and stage combat techniques engaged the group.
- A residency at Portsmouth's **St. Philomena's School's** began with movement, looking at how the actor's main tool -- the body -- can tell stories. The second session added exercises around the voice and imagination of the actors, encouraging experimentation. Both sessions finished with showings for families.
- Trinity Rep was the arts partner at four middle schools in Providence with workshops through **TurnAround Arts**, serving 16 teachers.

- We returned to Esek Hopkins Middle School in the fall, winter, and spring for 32 sessions, through the **Providence After School Alliance (PASA)**, serving 20 students.
- At **Dighton-Rehoboth High School**, four master classes with the advanced theater program served 15 students.
- A playwriting residency took place at **School One** (seven students, online).
- At the **George N. Hunt Campus School of St Mary's Home For Children**, our teaching artist worked weekly with groups of elementary and middle/high schoolers. Administrator Diane Long wrote: "Many of our students with a variety of social-emotional needs learned to access the foundational level of speaking and listening with peers for meaningful learning through theater technique. Joi Wright demonstrated the utmost professionalism, patience, flexibility, and deep compassion and empathy for our students. Each week she arrived with a positive, warm, and welcoming tone and our students looked forward to her visits. Oftentimes, students struggled within various moments of the class. She approached each student with kindness and patience, allowing them the opportunity to be involved if they could regulate to re-enter and participate with the group. Joi gave the students the grace to come back in without feeling overwhelmed by shame or guilt. The social-emotional skill-building that our staff has seen in our students in a short time from Joi's dedication to teaching theater is remarkable."



*Intro to Acting for adults*

## CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Education is at the heart of all of the artistic work we do at Trinity Repertory Company, as it has been for more than 50 years. Since receiving the first major grant to support Project Discovery from the National Endowment for the Arts and the US Department of Education in 1966, the theater has served as an invaluable and unique arts education resource to over 1.4 million students and teachers, offering a singular experience that marries in-depth, multi-faceted learning programs with the unique experience of enjoying some of the best live professional theater in the country. Grants and contributions help Trinity Rep ensure that programs remain financially accessible to schools, teachers, and students.

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**On behalf of our students, teachers, and community, thank you for supporting this important work.** For more information about Trinity Rep's arts education programs, and how you can help them thrive and grow, please contact Jen Canole, Director of Development at (401) 453-9234 or [jcanole@trinityrep.com](mailto:jcanole@trinityrep.com), or visit [www.TrinityRep.com](http://www.TrinityRep.com).