



MCC Theater Education and Outreach Programs

MCC Theater’s arts education initiatives are among the most robust in New York City and serve as a model for the theater industry. The company’s education and outreach programs serve more than 1,200 high school students each year throughout the five boroughs, with a combination of programs for students and teachers inside and outside the classroom that empower young people from diverse backgrounds. Through classroom partnerships, internship opportunities, and a distinguished Youth Company, MCC uses dynamic theater training alongside academic and career readiness opportunities to teach students how to express themselves and become engaged scholars, artists, and citizens.

MCC’s education initiatives will expand with the opening of its new facility—accommodating a greater number of program participants, expanding offerings for students throughout the summer season and for a growing network of alumni, allowing original student work to be performed on MCC’s stages, and integrating students into the company’s daily operations to deepen the intergenerational exchange between students, professional artists, and audiences.

MCC’s **Classroom Partnership** helps address the pressing need for arts education throughout the city’s public school system. Through an artist residency structure, experienced theater professionals from MCC work closely with teachers and administrators to create a tailored arts curriculum to meet each school’s distinct needs. Teaching artists bring theater to the classroom as a subject with hands-on training in acting, directing, and playwriting; but also use it as a means of enhancing English, history, social studies, and math curricula. These partnerships help bring imagination and creativity to educators and students alike, encouraging a kind of exploration that can be enormously revelatory and rare in traditional classroom settings. More than 10,000 students have been served by this program to date, including a significant population who lack consistent access to arts education.

The **MCC Theater Youth Company** is the core of the Theater’s education programming. The first free program of its kind associated with a professional theater, the Youth Company provides students with unparalleled learning and performing opportunities in a supportive, artistically rigorous setting. Since its founding in 2001 as an eight-member ensemble, the Youth Company has grown to serve more than 100 students each year and now includes satellite groups developed in partnership with schools in Washington Heights and Brooklyn, as well as an active community of more than 225 alumni.

The MCC Theater Youth Company has had a powerful and measurable impact on the lives of its participants, who collectively exceed high school graduation rate of New York City students by a significant margin—despite the fact that the program does not screen for academic success. The program’s objective is to enrich the lives of the young people served, helping them find and amplify their voices, and empower them throughout their high school careers and beyond. Youth Company alumni have gone on to work in fields as disparate as health care, education, elder care, policy analysis, and journalism, as well as theater, TV, and film.

The Youth Company consists of three groups. The Acting Lab provides students with a full year of professional training in theatrical performance, culminating in an annual production of “UnCensored”: a student-produced presentation of original works by Youth Company members. The Playwriting Lab provides the guidance of professional writers to students creating original plays, a selection of which are produced by professional actors and

directors in MCC's annual "FreshPlay" Festival. Company members perform "On the Fly" approximately halfway through each term, in which students come together and in three hours write, rehearse, and stage performances drawing upon work they've been developing in their Labs. The Youth Company's Ambassador program gives students the opportunity to learn about the operations of a professional theater through weekly meetings with artists and administrators at MCC and other professional companies, as they prepare to become producers for Youth Company culminating productions.

MCC also provides numerous opportunities for Youth Company members to attend shows across the city and participate in master classes with professional artists working on MCC mainstage productions. Youth Company students and alumni have participated in workshops with playwrights Rob Askins, Noah Haidle, Neil LaBute, Matthew Lopez, John Pollono, and Simons Stephens, and actors Kristen Johnston, Barrett Foa, Hunter Bell, James Badge Dale, and Tracee Chimo, among others.