

Shakespeare **STEAM**: 2021-22 Summary, Solutions and Summer (+*Future*)

What is Shakespeare STEAM?

Shakespeare STEAM is Shakespeare in Detroit's educational program which supplements and complements the curriculum of students in grades 3 thru 12 via artistic and vocational training.

What are the pillars of Shakespeare STEAM?

- **Science** of lighting a production
- **Technology** of sound design
- **Engineering** of a form (*i.e. an Elizabethan costume*)
- **Art** of classical performance (*i.e. heightened language, verse vs. prose, metaphor, antithesis, iambic pentameter*)
- **Mathematics** of building a set

What is the purpose of the program/what need is Shakespeare STEAM meeting?

The purpose of the program is to supplement the arts programming in Detroit schools, both charter and public, with professional, qualified artists who are actively working in the industry and serve as teaching artists and cultural insiders. In addition, the program will introduce the technical aspects of theater with the aim of inspiring more young people of color to explore careers as technicians and designers in lighting, sound, costume design, carpentry and other behind-the-scenes aspects of theater. Students will earn a skill set that is applicable to the American Theater and several industries that incorporate engineering, technology and science into their workforce.

The program also aligns with Shakespeare in Detroit's mission for an equitable world by offering an artistic/theatrical curriculum that is competitive with [the country's top ranking states for education](#) as the [city's public school system continues to rank low in comparison to other national districts](#).

Why does our programming begin in 3rd grade?

According to the [National Endowment for the Arts](#): "Children experience rapid and important transformations from birth to eight years old in three broadly defined domains: social emotional, physiological, and cognitive."

We have chosen the latter part of this age range as the students have, probably, developed certain skills at this point in their educational trajectory which give them the capacity to understand classical text or comprehend its basic tenets. However, we also note and work with the awareness that all students are individuals and each may develop and learn at a pace uniquely their own.

Important Note: During the 2021-22 academic year, Shakespeare STEAM's teaching artists engaged students from grades 3-4 at the James and Grace Lee Boggs School. In addition, the program worked with middle school students and teachers at Clippert Multicultural Magnet Honors Academy and high school students at Cass Technical High School.

There are other studies and articles from [sources such as PBS](#) that support the importance of Art in child development in areas that include motor skills, language development, decision making, visual learning, inventiveness, cultural awareness, improved academic performance,

What were the short-term goals of the program?

The 2021-22 academic year was our third year stewarding an official educational program. We returned to in person learning with teaching artists in three schools within Detroit Public Schools Community District after teaching via Zoom during the 2020-2021 school year. We had some adhoc youth and educational programming in 2016 and 2018 but Shakespeare STEAM is more of a strategic, curriculum-based partnership between our partners, sponsors and additional stakeholders, serving students in grades 3-12.

Teaching artists worked with Boggs students 2x per week, Clippert students 2x per week and with Cass students 2x per week.

During the pandemic, SiD created educational content for our [Youtube](#) channel to give students accessibility to our curriculum at any time. This content proved invaluable during the 2021-2022 school year as teaching artists were able to use the content to aid in person teaching goals and give students the opportunity to access to the curriculum during absences from class.

Shakespeare STEAM engaged with a total of approximately 120 students during the regular academic year. In addition, students/parents used our online content for educational purposes.

Our goal was to engage students in elementary, middle and high school grade levels, both in person and digitally with our teaching artists in classrooms and via our digital educational content, about the pillars of Shakespeare STEAM.

The Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation funding supported 400 hours of in-person instruction and training for ten (12) Detroit-based teens in Summer 2022. The youth received \$1,000 each for a total of \$12K in scholarships provided to the 14-to-17 year olds.

Funding Details:

1. Funding from **Deloitte** paid for supplies for the program.
2. **DTE Foundation** funding supported the brick & mortar needs of SiD to host our students at our new home at Marygrove Conservancy, where the company is based as of June 2021. They also paid for snacks and supplies along with rent for the summer conservatory needs.
3. **Greektown Casino** paid for supplies and teaching artists fees.
4. **Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation** supported both in-classroom activities and the summer 2022 conservatory for A Midsummer Night's Dream, which was filmed and available on Shakespeare in Detroit's YouTube page.

What are the long-term goals of the program?

The long-term plans for the program include the following outcomes:

- Establish Shakespeare STEAM as the premiere performing arts youth program in the city
- Evolve Shakespeare in Detroit's traditional Shakespeare in the park performances as an opportunity to showcase extraordinary Detroit students as the actors/talent for this service to the community
- Impact five-to-ten thousand students in the City of Detroit via accessible programming including content at no cost to them, free live performances, vocational training and artistic opportunities by 2025
- Develop summer employment opportunities in the arts where students gain industry experience and an income
- Build a conservatory with qualified artists and technicians leading the work for high school students to learn directly from experts currently working in the American Theater
- Establish two full scholarships for two extraordinary students to receive "full rides" to the university of their choice (with an accredited theater program)
- Hire a full-time + contracted staff to facilitate and grow Shakespeare STEAM
- Monitor and improve literacy and life skills for students in Detroit
- Establish curriculum that is competitive with youth drama programs around the country to meet Detroit's incredible students at their potential
- Create half day and full day workshops that can be presented by our staff of teaching artists to schools that we do not normally in our program within Detroit Public Schools Community District and with districts around Metro Detroit.

- Sustain hope and humanity by connecting Detroit to live theater for, by and of this valuable and most vulnerable population to build a brighter educational and economic future

What were the successes of the program during the 2021-22 academic year?

SiD was able to continue its partnerships with the James and Grace Lee Boggs School and Clippert Multicultural Magnet Honors Academy as well as Cass Technical High School as we returned to in person teaching.

We were able to continue a consistent schedule and continue the Shakespeare STEAM program despite the ever changing challenges of COVID-19.

SiD also recruited five students from past and present partnership schools, for our theater conservatory in Summer 2022.

The summer youth conservatory will welcome twelve youth actors from Cass Tech, Detroit School of Arts and The School at Marygrove to its summer programming. These students will spend approximately 160 hours with Shakespeare in Detroit, in-person, over the course of 6 weeks at the home of Shakespeare in Detroit, The Marygrove Conservancy (formerly Marygrove College).

The students will be introduced to costume design, learn verse vs. prose, iambic pentameter, dance choreography, an intro to stage combat/fight choreography, text analysis, dramaturgy and puppetry.

Conservatory students performed a full production of A Midsummer Night's Dream on Saturday, August 11th, which will be filmed by OnSight75 Productions and made available on YouTube in September 2022 for free. This is important as SiD wants the students to be able to see and evaluate their own work, give access to our partner schools to watch with their students and make the work available to our audiences who are not able to attend the live performance.

Twelve thousand dollars in scholarships will be distributed to participating youth actors because of SiD's impactful partnership with the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation.

What were some of the opportunities for growth and progress discovered for the next academic year?

SiD has the opportunity to find ways to attract more youth actors to audition for our summer conservatory.

After sharing the paid opportunity with stakeholders at DPSCD, speaking with principals at our partner schools and throughout the district, sharing audition information with the Partnerships Office at DPSCD, doing promotion for the opportunity on our social media platforms and e-blasts, we still had a small turnout for the auditions. We take this as an opportunity to continue to find ways to improve engagement with our partner schools at DPSCD and throughout the community.

There is an opportunity to find a more engaged high school partner for the next academic year. We need a high school principal and drama teacher who have great ambitions and excitement for the arts, specifically, theater.

The goal was to give out \$15K in scholarships and we only gave out \$12K as we couldn't find families that would commit as we need to spread the word about this opportunity more widely.

SiD also realized, during the Summer 2021 Youth Conservatory, that there is a need for mental health support for students participating in the summer program and for the summer 2022 Youth Conservatory has been able to enlist a Ph.D candidate from Wayne State University to be available for the mental health needs of students twice a week from July - August 2022. Thanks to the sponsorship of the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation who gave additional support for this need.

What solutions can be put in place to create radical change that can improve processes and positively impact the program and its most important beneficiaries, youth?

1. Continue to engage with our current partner schools with SiD teaching artists embedded in classrooms
2. More frequent communication with school faculty to discuss common goals, objectives, collaboration opportunities and specific partnership expectations
3. Continued partnership with middle schools to inspire an interest in the arts upon entry into high school
4. Explore relationships with more schools to create more impact and identify more robust and meaningful partnership opportunities
5. Identify and partner with a high school that is engaged in creating a thriving theater environment for students in which drama or ELA teachers and principals can collaborate to excite students about the arts
6. Create half day and full day workshops where our teaching artists can engage with students in our non partner schools throughout DPSCD and around Metro Detroit

How was the program funded?

The program was funded at no cost to the school district, students or faculty. Sponsorships paid for the cost of the program for the 2021-22 academic year, along with some grant funding as follows:

- DTE Foundation (\$5,000)
- Deloitte (\$5,000)
- Greektown Casino (\$5,000)
- Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation (*\$50,000 with additional \$7,500.00 for mental health expert*)

TOTAL RAISED: \$72,500.00

Additional information:

SiD hired nine (4) teaching artists for the program: Steven Davenport (Boggs, Clippert and Conservatory), Lisa Michaels (Boggs and Clippert), David Culliton (Cass Tech and Conservatory), Lynch Travis (Cass Tech and Conservatory), Christine Pellecchia (Conservatory and Administration), Ryan Bernier (Conservatory), Nick Alexander (Conservatory), Toni Davison (Conservatory), Iyla O'Connor (Conservatory), Alana Keller (Conservatory Counselor) and Sam White (Conservatory, and Administration)

2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR/SUMMER 2023 PROSPECTS FOR EXTENDED LEARNING:

- SiD's 2022-23 school partners are The James and Grace Lee Boggs School, Clippert Multicultural Magnet Honors Academy and possibly Western International High School in Southwest Detroit. They will all have in-person, embedded teaching artists throughout the school year
- Host in-person auditions for the 2023 Summer Youth Conservatory
- Invite students/parents who participate in our partnership schools and throughout the district to see SiD's professional performances in the summer of 2023
- Continue to nurture and grow our team of talented teaching artists who cultivate and nurture excitement, positivity and interest for our programming

