

The RoPo Playhouse



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THTR 327: Theatre Management

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Mission & Vision Statements

Mission Statement: The RoPo Playhouse is a Chicago-based community theatre dedicated to cultivating the next generation of theatre makers through education and leadership development. We collaborate with students of all ages to create engaging, innovative, and collaborative theatrical work that enriches Rogers Park and its surrounding communities. We are committed to fostering learning through the creation of original work and meaningful connections with multigenerational theatre professionals.

Vision Statement: We envision a community strengthened through the power of theatre, where students are inspired to create, connect, and grow. Our theatre is a welcoming space in which everyone belongs and has the opportunity to participate in building a more vibrant and connected Rogers Park.

Organizational Chart & Job Descriptions

Artistic Director

The Artistic Director of The RoPo Playhouse serves as the visionary leader responsible for bringing our mission of education and community engagement to life. This role shapes the artistic direction of the organization by curating RoPo's seasons, fostering meaningful collaborations with artistic staff and the board of directors, and ensuring programming reflects the diverse voices of the Rodgers Park community.

Key Responsibilities

Artistic Vision & Leadership

- Translate RoPo's mission into clear artistic plans and seasonal goals.
- Shape long-term artistic strategies that prioritize youth education and community engagement.
- Communicate artistic direction to staff, board members, donors, and the community.

Season Planning & Programming

- Select productions and educational offerings that align with mission, budget, and community relevance.
- Oversee script approval, licensing, and development of devised or original youth work.
- Coordinate production calendars, rehearsal schedules, and creative workflows.

Staff Collaboration & Oversight

- Hire, supervise, and mentor directors, designers, and teaching artists.
- Lead artistic team meetings to ensure cohesion across productions.
- Partner with the Managing Director and the Board on season proposals and artistic decision-making.

Budget & Resource Management

- Create and manage artistic budgets for each production and educational program.
- Allocate resources such as rehearsal space, materials, and technical equipment efficiently.
- Provide artistic content and data for grants, fundraising, and impact reporting.

Community Engagement & Partnerships

- Serve as a public representative of RoPo at community events and donor meetings.
- Build partnerships with local schools, youth organizations, and artists.
- Develop collaborative initiatives that reflect Rogers Park's diversity and support young artists.

DEI & Accessibility

- Ensure inclusive casting, hiring, and culturally responsive programming.
- Integrate accessible performance practices and maintain safe, supportive environments for youth.
- Evaluate programming through participant feedback and make improvements accordingly.

Qualifications

Candidates should have a strong background in the arts, leadership skills, a strong creative vision, fundraising and audience development experience, commitment to fostering an inclusive and diverse artistic environment, and a passion to expand our theatre's educational offerings and productions. A Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, Performing Arts, Arts Administration, or a related field.

Compensation

Salary: \$30,000, benefits include health, dental, and vision insurance, and paid time off

Job Type: Full-time

Reports: Board of Directors

Managing Director

The RoPo Playhouse is seeking a visionary, collaborative, and problem-solving leader who endeavors to become an outstanding producer, thriving on resourcefulness, creativity, and proactivity, to support the RoPo Playhouse's contributions to developing the next generation of leaders through theater education. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Artistic Director and the Managing Director share an equal and significant amount of responsibility, working collaboratively to ensure a healthy work environment and to lead the RoPo Playhouse organization.

Key Responsibilities

Financial Management

- Develop and oversee the annual operating budget; track cash flow and financial reporting.
- Manage accounting, payroll, invoices, and accurate financial records.
- Work with the Board on audits and financial compliance.

Operations & Administration

- Lead daily operations, production logistics, vendor contracts, and facility needs.
- Implement organizational systems, policies, and workflows that support long-term stability.
- Ensure all operations align with strategic and mission-driven goals.

Fundraising, Marketing, & Donor Relations

- Execute fundraising campaigns, donor cultivation, and sponsorship outreach.
- Maintain donor relationships and prepare impact updates.
- Oversee marketing strategies that drive ticket sales, program enrollment, and brand visibility.

Human Resources

- Manage hiring, onboarding, job descriptions, and performance evaluations.
- Ensure compliance with employment laws and maintain accurate personnel records.
- Support a positive, equitable, and inclusive workplace culture.

Audience Development

- Grow and retain audiences through engagement initiatives and data-driven strategies.
- Optimize ticketing systems, box office operations, and front-of-house experience.
- Use audience insights to strengthen marketing and user experience.

Board & Artistic Collaboration

- Work with the Artistic Director to align business and artistic priorities.
- Provide operational and financial updates to the Board of Directors.
- Support board and long-term planning.

Qualifications

Candidates for the Managing Director must prove their skills and experience in leadership, communication, and financial management. They shall aspire to produce artistically excellent, transformational theatre to develop the lives of the students. A Bachelor's degree in Business with strong communication skills and an interest in the arts is required.

Compensation

Salary: \$30,000, benefits include health, dental, and vision insurance, and paid time off

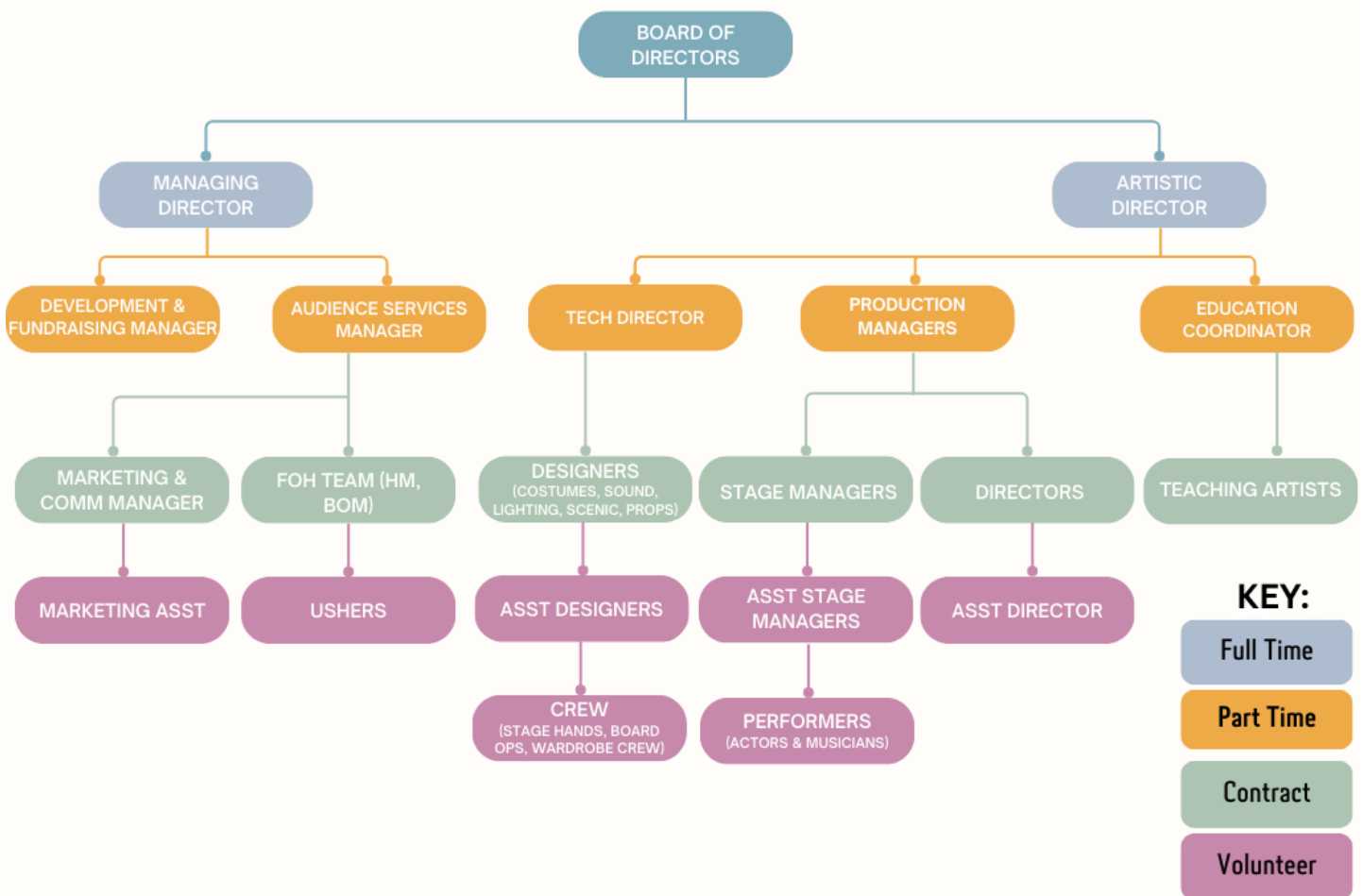
FLSA Status: Full-time

Reports: Board of Directors

Organizational Chart

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
Riley Bulson, Courtney Rodd, & Quinton Mysliwicz

THE ROPO PLAYHOUSE



Season Planning Document

We find that there is a crucial emphasis on educational and creative development. As members of the RoPo Playhouse, our main priority is teaching students of all ages to learn and grow in becoming confident theatre makers. In creating a learning environment that studies the creation of new theater work, students will learn innovation, experimentation, and how to connect and collaborate their ideas, tied to the learning material. With our connection to Rogers Park and the Chicagoland areas, our values are made to share the values of the local communities, which in turn will allow for undertaking artistic expression and cultural connection within the region. In addition, that element is elevated by welcoming students of all ages to participate in learning. That allows a shared goal of combined artistic collaboration that will strengthen the new works. For this reason, teaching the latest works requires developing leadership skills in our students. This will allow new opportunities for students to take initiative in theater-making roles, gaining practical experience along the way. Inclusivity lies at the heart of our organization; therefore, management shall look forward to prioritizing programs accessible and welcoming to all backgrounds, to help cultivate a heartwarming culture inside our theater. To maintain the longevity of RoPo's Playhouse, partnering with local communities and organizations is ideal. For example, schools and businesses strengthen community engagement and financial stability.

Artistic Identity and Core Values:

RoPo's Playhouse strives to encourage students of all ages and backgrounds to explore learning theatre's new works they can apply to their communities' values.

- **Creativity Through Learning:** Values the process of learning. Students will find opportunities to explore, learn, take risks, and discover their own artistic voices.

- **Community Connection:** A theatre that speaks to and serves its community. New works will let students connect the piece of art's values to the community's values. Being involved in the community makes the theater experience all the more relevant and impactful.
- **Inclusivity and Belonging:** Theater is accessible to everyone. The organization inspires collaborations amongst all students to create a safe, diverse environment, ensuring every voice is heard.

Curate Your Season:

Show #1: Recognizable

Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare

Mainstage Venue

Producing *Much Ado About Nothing* aligns with our mission by fostering education, collaboration, and community engagement. This classic Shakespeare comedy provides an excellent learning opportunity for students to develop both their artistic and leadership skills. The text encourages creative interpretation and ensemble work. We plan to collaborate with the theatre community, bringing in professional actors to help mentor students through the process of understanding Shakespeare's text. The show's humor, romance, and themes of misunderstanding make it have a strong community appeal, which many in the Rogers Park and surrounding Chicago neighborhoods can relate to. Shakespeare's work allows students to experiment with language, character, and setting. By exploring themes of love and deception through a modern lens, this production gives participants challenges to think critically about human relationships and communication.

Show #2: Holiday

A Charlie Brown Christmas by Charles M. Schulz, Stage Adaptation by Eric Schaeffer

Touring School Show/ Mainstage Venue

A Charlie Brown Christmas perfectly exemplifies The RoPo Playhouse's mission to educate and inspire the next generation of theatre makers while engaging the Rogers Park community. This production provides a hands-on learning experience for our student actors, who will not only develop their performance and collaboration skills but also serve as leaders and ambassadors for theatre in local schools. By presenting the show as a touring school production, we extend our educational mission beyond our walls, offering students in nearby schools a chance to experience live theatre and learn about the creative process through interactive talk-backs. Also, producing this show on our mainstage will welcome families from Rogers Park and surrounding neighborhoods to experience together a beloved holiday story. With its universal themes of friendship, community, and the true spirit of the season, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* will attract audiences of all ages. We selected *A Charlie Brown Christmas* because it embodies the values at the heart of The RoPo Playhouse: collaboration, creativity, and community connection. Its message of togetherness and understanding resonates deeply with our goal of uniting generations through theatre.

Show #3: New Works

The New Works Festival by Student Playwrights

Black Box Studio Theatre

The New Works Festival is a cornerstone annual project that fully embodies The RoPo Playhouse's mission to provide education and leadership skills to the next generation of theatre artists and professionals. Over the course of the Fall and Winter, students have been developing,

writing, and refining their own original one-act plays, which will culminate in a festival performance in the Black Box Studio Theatre to celebrate and showcase their work. The RoPo Playhouse engages with the community of professional playwrights in the Chicagoland area to provide workshops and revision sessions to guide them through the creation and production of their own work. In addition to professional playwrights, professionals in directing, performing, and stage managing for the theatre are brought in to mentor, and the RoPo Playhouse Part-Time Lighting, Scenic, and Costume designers will be engaged to allow for more facets of opportunity for students to engage with to foster a more holistic understanding of how theatre is made possible. Through students' collaboration with mentors, teaching artists, and local theatre professionals throughout the process, the gap between generations of theatre makers is bridged, and a more inclusive, vibrant, creative, and artistic community is fostered. Each play reflects the students' own perspectives, experiences, and questions about the world around them, therefore creating a cross-generational dialogue between young artists and their community. Audiences that may be attracted to the New Works Festival are families and friends of the participating students, local educators and schools, and local Rogers Park community members.

Show #4: Musical

Shrek The Musical JR. by David Lindsay-Abaire

Mainstage Venue

Shrek The Musical JR. teaches the audience to be proud and accept who you truly are, as you're as capable as anyone else to achieve your wildest dreams. Shrek exemplifies the RoPo's Playhouses' mission by providing a rich, immersive experience that creates a learning environment to explore leadership and artistic growth amongst students of all ages. The large and diverse cast and ensemble provide students with opportunities to explore the purpose of variety

in roles, collaboration, responsibility, and leadership development. Members and staff of the RoPo's Playhouse will take action in invoking personal thoughts to the students, about how the story of Shrek carries life lessons that can be applied to the real world. With the vibrant, imaginative visuals, students are given the chance to develop their artistic skills, like acting, singing, dancing, and design. The universal themes of acceptance cultivate and welcome audiences from different backgrounds, which can help spread community involvement and awareness. Students also benefit from the organization's mentorships that will guide them through theatrical experiences, gaining exposure to the art and literature. The dynamic platform of *Shrek The Musical JR.* provides students with education, artistic expiration, and community involvement that invite the community of Rogers Park to learn and share the deep meaning of acceptance.

Production Requirements:

Note: Designers (lighting, costumes, sound, scenic) are hired part-time seasonally

***Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare**

- Venue/ Space Needs = Mainstage Venue
- Cast Size =
 - 12-15 actors, no understudies
 - All actors must be between the ages of 13-18 years old
- Technical Requirements =
 - Lighting, sound, costumes, set, and props
 - Access to Qlab, a Sound Board, and a Light Board
 - No mics, sound used for music and sound effects
 - Costumes to reflect contemporary styles

- Flexible set to accommodate multiple locations in play
- Estimated Budget Considerations =
 - \$2,250 costumes (\$150 per actor), \$750 for set, \$750 (\$250 each) for props, lighting, sound (total \$3,750)
 - No royalties or rights needed
 - All theatrical professionals who serve as mentors will be volunteers
 - All students will pay \$100 tuition fee to participate if cast
 - Director and stage manager contract of \$1,000 (total \$2,000)
 - Assistant directors, ASMs, and tech will be volunteers
 - \$1,400 staffing budget for Front of House and Box Office
 - \$500 marketing budget
 - Total Budget = \$7,650

***A Charlie Brown Christmas* by Charles M. Schulz, Stage Adaptation by Eric Schaeffer**

- Venue/ Space Needs = Mainstage Venue/ School Gym
- Cast Size =
 - 11 actors, 2 external understudies
 - All actors must be between the ages of 13-18 years old
- Technical Requirements =
 - Lighting, sound, costumes, set, and props
 - Access to Qlab, a Sound Board, and a Light Board
 - No mics, sound used for music and sound effects
 - Costumes to reflect characters from the movie
 - Understudies will reuse principal costumes

- Flexible set to accommodate multiple locations in play, simplistic, and lightweight to transfer between the mainstage venue and schools
- Estimated Budget Considerations =
 - \$1,650 costumes (\$150 per actor), \$650 for set, \$750 (\$250 each) for props, lighting, sound (total \$3,150)
 - Royalties for 8 shows, estimated total \$2,825
 - All theatrical professionals who serve as mentors will be volunteers
 - All students will pay \$100 tuition fee to participate if cast
 - Director and stage manager contract of \$1,000 (total \$2,000)
 - Choreographer and vocal director contract of \$800 (total \$1,600)
 - Assistant directors, ASMs, and tech will be volunteers
 - \$1,400 staffing budget for Front of House and Box Office
 - \$500 marketing budget
 - \$250 budget for transportation
 - Total Budget = \$11,725

The New Works Festival by Student Playwrights

- Venue/Space Needs = Black Box Studio Theatre
- Cast Size =
 - Maximum of 5 plays
 - Maximum of 8 actors per play
 - All actors must be between the ages of 7-18 years old
 - No understudies needed
- Technical Requirements =

- Minimal lights, sound, projection, costumes, set, and prop needs
 - Access to RoPo Playhouses costume, furniture, and prop storage will be granted to students with assistance from Part Time RoPo Playhouse Costumes and Scenic designers
 - Access to QLab, a Sound Board, and a Light Board
 - Simple projector and projection surface

- Estimated Budget Considerations =
 - \$250 production budget per play for props, costumes, lighting, and sound (\$1,250 total production budget)
 - No royalties or rights needed
 - All theatrical professionals who serve as mentors will be volunteers
 - All student performers, directors, stage managers, and designers will pay a \$150 tuition fee to participate in the activities of the festival
 - \$1,400 staffing budget for Front of House and Box Office
 - \$500 marketing budget
 - Total Budget = \$3,150

Shrek The Musical JR. by David Lindsay-Adaire

- Venue/Space Needs = Mainstage Venue
- Cast Size =
 - Between 35-45 performers
 - All actors must be between the ages of 11-19 years old

- No understudies needed
- Technical Requirements =
 - Lighting, sound, costumes, set, and props
 - Access to Qlab, a Sound Board, and a Light Board
 - Mics, sound used for music and sound effects
 - Creative costumes to deepen the fairytale characters
 - Flexible set to accommodate multiple locations in play
- Estimated Budget Considerations =
 - \$6,750 costumes (\$150 per actor), \$750 for set, \$750 (\$250 each) for props, lighting, sound (total \$8,250)
 - Royalties and License: \$2,082
 - All theatrical professionals who serve as mentors will be volunteers
 - Director and stage manager contract of \$1,000 (total \$2,000)
 - Choreographer and vocal director contract of \$800 (total \$1,600)
 - Assistant directors, ASMs, and tech will be volunteers
 - All students will pay \$100 tuition fee to participate if cast
 - \$1,400 staffing budget for Front of House and Box Office
 - \$500 marketing budget
 - Total Budget \$15,832

Total Season Budget estimate: \$38,357

Season-Wide Overview:

Balance & Flow: The RoPo Playhouse season is designed with a balance of educational purpose, creative exploration, and community engagement, creating a season that starts in

classical foundations and ends in more modern expression. *Much Ado About Nothing* introduces students to a classic Shakespeare play, developing their skills in text and literary analysis. Then, *A Charlie Brown Christmas* focuses on connection and outreach with the community, bringing theatre to local schools and families around the holidays. Next, the New Works Festival represents student innovation, autonomy, creativity, student voice, and intergenerational mentorship. Finally, *Shrek The Musical JR.* closes the season with a celebration of inclusivity and ensemble collaboration in a larger-scale musical production. Logistically, the season is balanced regarding scale, resources, and audience accessibility. The season's production budgets are proportionate to the scope of each production, allowing for a balance of financial responsibility and artistic ambition. Casting ages are overlapping strategically to ensure opportunities for all students, with smaller casts and simple technical requirements in the New Works Festival to offset the complexity in *Shrek The Musical JR.* Finally, the calendar is set up to allow smooth transitions between projects and ongoing student engagement throughout the season.

Audience Engagement: The RoPo Playhouse's season is designed with audience engagement and community outreach in mind, with the goal of building lasting connections with the Rogers Park and greater Chicagoland community. Marketing will center around the organization's efforts to develop partnerships with schools, young theatre makers, and local theatre professionals, and celebrate those young artists' achievements. The educational outreach of RoPo Playhouse is emphasized with *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and the New Works Festival, due to their connection to local schools and youth audiences, and the opportunity to engage in the process of creating theatre as a young artist. The ticket pricing at RoPo Playhouse intends to be accessible to as many people in the community as possible, offering affordable tickets for the

family-friendly and student engagement-centered productions. The organization's active use of digital platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and community or local newsletters will be a crucial strategy in the promotion of new productions, showcasing rehearsal videos and pictures, student stories, and other behind-the-scenes content that engages audiences to attend performances.

Staffing & Scheduling: For each of our productions, RoPo plans to assign its own directing and stage management team to ensure each show maintains its unique artistic vision and organizational structure. However, to maintain consistency and cost efficiency across the season, we will hire a seasonal part-time core design team. This includes costumes, sound, lighting, and scenic designers who will work on all productions throughout the year. This approach allows for cohesive design planning, streamlined scheduling, and shared creative resources. Additionally, RoPo aims to reduce waste and minimize expenses by reusing and adapting design elements from previous shows whenever possible, fostering both environmental sustainability and financial responsibility.

Budget Sustainability: With a total operating budget of \$250,000, RoPo has currently allocated \$78,000 toward the salaries of the Artistic and Executive Directors, leaving \$172,000 in available funds. Our projected costs for the full season total \$38,357, which leaves an estimated \$133,643 remaining. This financial standing places RoPo in a sustainable position to fund our current season while maintaining fair and competitive pay for all creative and production designers. Beyond meeting immediate production needs, RoPo is committed to using our remaining funds strategically to strengthen our overall infrastructure. This includes improving compensation for directors, stage managers, and designers, investing in higher-quality scenic and costume materials, and ensuring our facilities and technical equipment are well-maintained for future productions. Other than our technical requirement, increasing our

marketing budget will be beneficial, as a higher budget will allow more effective resources and audience development towards RoPo Productions. Our current financial plan demonstrates that we can not only sustain our upcoming season but also lay a strong foundation for continued growth and creative development in future years.

Growth Opportunities: This season offers valuable growth opportunities for both our students and our organization. Expanding our programming into schools offers the opportunity to deepen our community partnerships and opens doors for future collaboration and potential funding opportunities. By connecting directly with schools and families, we are building a pipeline for younger audiences and future theatre participants, ensuring the sustainability of RoPo for years to come. This season positions our company as a meaningful artistic institution by balancing educational initiative with community-centered productions. Artistically, we are creating opportunities for innovation and mentorship, where students and experienced theatre professionals work together to develop strong, collaborative productions that reflect the diversity and creativity of Rogers Park. Institutionally, our increased community engagement strengthens our reputation as an accessible, education-focused theatre. By introducing touring productions and fostering partnerships with local schools, we expand our audience reach and establish RoPo as a leader in youth and community theatre education.

Marketing & Branding Materials

Part I: Company Profile

Company Name: RoPo Playhouse

Tagline: “Developing Artists. Shaping Leaders”

Mission Statement: The RoPo Playhouse is a Chicago-based community theatre dedicated to providing education and leadership skills to the next generation of theatre makers. We work closely with students of all ages to help them create fascinating, collaborative, artistic theatre that engages with Rogers Park and the surrounding communities. We strive to foster students' learning through the development of original work while engaging in opportunities with generations of theatrical professionals in the community.

Vision Statement: We aspire to build strong connections through theatre and inspire students to engage in creativity. Our theatre is one where all are welcome, belong, and all have the opportunity to participate in building a better Rogers Park community.

RoPo Playhouse creates community-centered educational theatre that blends classical, contemporary, and devised work by students to encourage the next generation of theatre artists. Our artistic identity is centered around learning through creativity, collaboration, and inclusivity, offering students hands-on experiences in performance, writing, and developing productions. We produce a wide range of plays, from classic Shakespeare, contemporary musicals to devised student work in our annual “New Works Festival”. Thematically, the work we produce explores ideas of identity, belonging, empathy, and freedom of imagination, celebrating the power of storytelling to unite people across generations. Our commitment to education and mentorship sets us apart from many other theatre companies. We provide preprofessional training each show, allowing students to collaborate with theatre professionals to help them create original, inclusive,

and community-based theatre that reflects the voices and values of the Rogers Park/Edgewater neighborhood, as well as the greater Chicago area.

At RoPo Playhouse, our core values of creativity, education, and inclusivity guide everything we do. We believe in the power of imagination to inspire ideas, challenge perspectives, and bring stories to life that engage our community. Education is central to our mission as we nurture the next generation of theatre makers through learning, mentorship, and artistic growth. Inclusivity shapes how we create and collaborate—we're committed to a welcoming environment where all voices are heard, respected, and celebrated. These values drive our commitment to making theatre that reflects, empowers, and unites the diverse communities of Rogers Park. We treat our artists, audiences, and collaborators with respect, trust, and authenticity—fostering open communication, creative risk-taking, and shared purpose. Our programming and outreach are rooted in equity, accessibility, and community engagement, offering educational opportunities, affordable performances, and partnerships with local schools and organizations. Above all, we strive to operate with integrity, empathy, and joy, using theatre to promote understanding and positive change in our community.

To start, RoPo Playhouse will target local Chicago communities —Rogers Park and Edgewater —until we expand to broader communities. As this is an educational organization, the targeted demographic is children and their parents. Rogers Park is seen as a diverse region; it carries a lot of diversity and is family-friendly, with many young families inhabiting it. The area is also cheaper to live in compared to other Chicago neighborhoods, so it contributes to the growing, diverse population. We plan to engage with our local community and neighbors through creating a variety of marketing strategies. We'll focus more on promoting our social media page by taking pictures and videos about the progress of the students' journey through our education,

as well as the development of the productions and new works. Across Rogers Park, you'll be able to find printed posters placed in public spaces and local businesses, possibly sponsored too. A final way to interact with the audience to promote the organization is by personally asking for donations. This creates a personal bond with the sponsor that can influence their position on their donation to the organization. With our mission to welcome young artists to the theatre and its impact on the community can drive in kids who want to explore their artistic abilities and find enjoyment in finding a place at the RoPo Playhouse. Welcoming kids of all ages, with different backgrounds as well as interests, gives the students opportunities to create relationships with their peers and share a common interest in art. Henceforth, it will create problem-solving skills that can contribute to the well-being of their communities. In addition, as our organization hosts main events (rehearsals/workshops) after school hours, parents can look towards RoPo Playhouse as a reliable and responsible, convenient place to take care of their children until they're able to pick them up. And due to their children's effort into the arts, they can teach the parents the valuable skills they've learned and their contribution to the community. In garnering community engagement, this influence can range from economic contributions to fostering social cohesion and improving the quality of life for community members.

Part II: Market Snapshot

The Chicago Theatre landscape is one of the most vibrant and diverse in the United States, known for its mix of professional, storefront, and community theatres that focus on experimentation, creativity, inclusivity, and community-centered work. There is a continuously growing emphasis on educational outreach and youth engagement to promote community-based storytelling, especially in neighborhoods such as Rogers Park and Edgewater. Nationally, the theatre landscape is in an era of rebuilding and innovation in order to promote engagement and

increase funding in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world. On a national level, the United States continues to face challenges with audience attendance and engagement, limited funding for the arts, and the need for more accessibility and sustainability. RoPo Playhouse aims to be part of the solution by bridging education, mentorship, and community engagement, paired with affordable ticket pricing, sensory-friendly programming, and multilingual productions, and aims to stay environmentally conscious with our production practices by reusing sets, costumes, and materials. Through combining professional theatre artistry with student learning and accessible student and community-centered programming, RoPo Playhouse can contribute to both the local Chicago theatre scene and the broader national landscape.

Companies similar to RoPo are Skyline Children's Theatre, Chicago Children's Theatre (CCT), and CYT Chicago, with each sharing elements of our mission, but differing in their emphasis. Skyline specializes in multi-location musical theatre classes and summer camps for ages 3 to 14. CCT is a professional company devoted exclusively to working for young audiences, pairing high-quality productions with broad education and access programs. CYT Chicago runs trimester classes, camps, and Broadway-style chapter productions focused on performance training and ensemble for kids and teens. What sets RoPo Playhouse apart from these organizations is our deep community integration, original student-driven programming, and inclusive local focus. While these companies emphasize professional children's productions or structured performance training, we center our mission on education, leadership development, and collaborative creation, rooted in Rogers Park. Not only do we produce prewritten works and larger-scale shows, but we also empower students to participate in our New Works festival, encouraging them to create original theatre that reflects their voices. Our programming connects students directly with local theatre professionals, fostering mentorship and learning opportunities

that extend beyond the stage. Most importantly, our vision emphasizes belonging and accessibility; we create a space where all are welcome to participate, grow, and contribute to building a strong, more creative community in Rogers Park.

RoPo Playhouse is based in Rogers Park, a neighborhood that holds a highly diverse and artistically active community. Creating its local identity gives the organization credibility and a possible loyal base of families, companies, and the youth who trust our mission. Therefore, it allows a stronger bond in community relationships and participation from residents. Inside, there will be a variety of backgrounds and opinions that create a vast amount of creation, storytelling, and outreach. The company's mission of children's education about theater links to the impact on community health in social and creative ways. It provides entertainment that is based on development and artistic collaboration. The staff of RoPo Playhouse may be small, however, they are committed to the company's mission statement due to a safe and happy work environment. In addition, the company is also eligible for grants, donations, and tax-deductible contributions. Consequently, the sources of funding are limited, unpredictable, and competitive with other non-profit theatres. It will possibly disrupt programs and their legitimacy in their mission by failing to allocate enough funds to educating the youth. Also, among all staff members, there is a call for multiple responsibilities among individuals. It will possibly decrease the safety of their mental health from burnout, reducing efficiency. Another contributing factor is the amount of allotted space between rehearsal and classroom spaces. It may face scheduling conflicts and determine how many programs we can offer. To reiterate those possible threats, they include: Funding competition, Economic pressures, Health disruptions, and Shifting funding priorities. However, there are a couple of opportunities for RoPo's Playhouse to expand and combat these issues. Partnering with local schools and youth programs it will strengthen the

connection between the youth and the organization and grow the public awareness of the mission. Expanding onto social media can help raise visibility and connect with families beyond Rogers Park.

Part III: Campaign Materials

Poster Design:



Social Media Post:



Caption: Christmas time is here! Tickets for the holiday classic, A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS, are on sale NOW! Learn more and buy tickets today at ropoplayhouse.org/charlie-brown-christmas

Phase	Timeline (Months)	Goals
Phase 1: F	1–3	Build visibility and partnerships in Rogers Park
Phase 1: F	1–3	Generate early buzz and collect local supporter base
Phase 2: P	4–8	Launch first major production and establish regular programming
Phase 2: P	4–8	Drive initial ticket revenue and repeat attendance
Phase 3: G	9–12	Expand into educational and wellness initiatives
Phase 3: G	9–12	Develop donor and sponsorship base; solidify identity as community hu

Actions	Success Measures							
Finalize branding, launch website, create social media accounts, hold open house event	500+ followers, 3+ partnerships, 100+ open house attendance							
Partner with schools and centers, local PR outreach, establish 3+ partnerships	Positive community feedback and local press mentions							
Debut community-themed play, implement tiered ticket pricing	Expand average seat capacity, 1,000+ audience reach							
Digital marketing campaign, host community preview nights	200+ repeat attendees, 2+ media features							
Launch Theatre for Health workshops, partner with health orgs	Healthy amount of youth participants, measurable community improvement							
u Launch volunteer program, hold fundraising gala or showcase	A portion of recurring donor funding, Amass group of followers, known as staple in Rogers Park							

Part IV: Campaign Materials Cont'd

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ON NOVEMBER 12th, 2026

Contact: John Doe, Marketing Director, 555-1234-6789, johnropoplayhouse@gmail.com,
ropoplayhouse.org

“Celebrate the Season with A Charlie Brown Christmas!”

RoPo Playhouse, a new theatre organization in Rogers Park, launched its first annual production season in August 2026 to strengthen the arts in the Chicago community and give young artists meaningful opportunities to explore, create, and collaborate.

For the holiday season, RoPo Playhouse presents a heartfelt production of *A Charlie Brown Christmas* by Charles M. Schulz, adapted by Eric Schaeffer. We will stage the production in our Mainstage venue and take it on tour throughout December to share the joy of Christmas with local schools and families. A talented cast of young performers ages 13–18 will bring the story to life with humor, live music, and the timeless moments audiences love from the classic television special.

We will partner with local theatre professionals to host interactive talk-backs that give student actors deeper insight into the artistic process. We will also ensure accessible and inclusive experiences for all audiences, offering ADA-accessible performances and sensory-friendly matinees. Tickets will remain family-friendly and affordable, with additional student discounts available at www.ropoplayhouse.org.

A Charlie Brown Christmas embodies RoPo Playhouse’s mission by connecting generations through creativity, collaboration, and joyful storytelling. Join us this holiday season, get your tickets at www.ropoplayhouse.org/charlie-brown-christmas and be part of the celebration!

About RoPo Playhouse:

At RoPo Playhouse, we empower young artists to create original theatre that reflects and unites the Rogers Park community. Our programs combine education, mentorship, and hands-on performance opportunities to cultivate creativity, collaboration, and leadership.

Contact us!

John Doe, Marketing Director, johnropoplayhouse@gmail.com

555-1234-6789, inforopoplayhouse@gmail.com, ropoplayhouse.org

6738 N Sheridan Rd, Chicago, IL, 60626

Part V: Marketing Strategy

RoPo Playhouse's branding and messaging reflect our identity as a vibrant, inclusive, and educational community theatre centered in creativity and connection. Visually, our brand should feel bright, welcoming, and imaginative to capture both the youthful energy of the students we work with and the warmth of the community we engage. A potential logo idea could include an icon of a playhouse with an open door, symbolizing the theatre's emphasis on community and being a space for all. The tone across all of our communications, like social media posts, posters, and educational materials, should come across as encouraging, collaborative, and community-centered, focusing on our slogan of "Developing Artists. Shaping Leaders." This can be accomplished through bright and vibrant colors, with a hand-drawn feel for approachability. What makes RoPo Playhouse unique in our identity is that we are aiming to balance professionalism with the idea of being a living classroom for theatre.

RoPo Playhouse builds lasting relationships with its audience through strengthening its connection in community events, partnerships, educational programs (i.e, school and youth programs), and accessibility initiatives. Through collaborating with the local community and public organizations, the company's lifespan will extend into the future, which in turn will

increase its impact on theatre across Rogers Park. The organization's workshops, youth performances, and mentorships engage participants of all ages through educational material. Together, these efforts create an environment of inclusivity across the community where theatre serves as a space for creativity, learning, and connection.

Our marketing budget is designed to maximize audience engagement, community reach, and ticket sales while remaining cost-effective. Key priorities include digital marketing: targeted social media ads, geo-focused promotion within Rogers Park, boosted event listings, email drip campaigns, and ongoing website SEO updates. These efforts will ensure our productions stay visible and accessible. Print materials, including posters, postcards, and program inserts, will be distributed throughout schools, cafés, libraries, and community centers to increase neighborhood awareness. Community outreach efforts will involve partnerships with local schools and youth organizations, participation in neighborhood events, and submissions to free community, news, arts, and theatre calendars to broaden our reach. We anticipate these efforts will increase ticket sales, expand audience diversity, and strengthen our local presence by ensuring consistent visibility both online and within the Rogers Park community. By strategically investing in marketing that meets our audience where they are, we aim to attract first-time attendees, deepen relationships with returning patrons, and support the long-term sustainability of The RoPo Playhouse's programs.

Below are our cost estimates for our marketing budget summary for *A Charlie Brown Christmas*:

ROPO PLAYHOUSE <i>A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS</i> BUDGET SUMMARY		
Expenses:		
Digital Marketing:		
Social Media Ads (Sponsored Facebook and Instagram Posts)	\$ 100.00	
Email Marketing	\$ 300.00	*Mailchimp expense, \$100 per month
Website/ SEO	\$ 288.00	*WordPress expense, \$96 per month
Traditional and Print:		
Posters	\$ 550.00	*50 posters from Staples, 12" x 18"
Mail	\$ 149.99	*100 postcards from Staples, 7" x 5"
Postage Stamps	\$ 1.00	*Fringed Tulip Stamps for 1 cent, 100 stamps
Total:	\$ 1,388.99	

Budget Plan

EXPENSES									
Salary and Guest Artist Fees									
	Full-Time Staff							\$78,000	
	Part-Time Staff							\$47,500	
						Total			\$125,500
Operating Expenses									
	Administration (Est)							\$40,500	
	PR & Marketing							\$11,192	
	Concessions (Est)							\$334	
	Development							\$10,000	
						Total			\$62,026
Production Expenses									
	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>							\$8,550	
	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas</i>							\$12,625	
	<i>New Works Festival</i>							\$1,100	
	<i>Shrek The Musical Jr</i>							\$16,732	
						Total			\$39,007
						Total Expenses w/o Contingency			\$226,533
Contingency Funds									
									\$22,653
						Total Expenses w/ Contingency			\$249,186
REVENUE									
Earned Income									
	Season Subscription							\$1,104	
	Individual Ticket Sales							\$27,900	
	Senior Citizen Ticket Sales							\$6,400	
	Student Ticket Sales							\$740	
	Mainstage Season Program Ad Sales							\$11,400	
	Rental							\$6,850	
	Theatre Education Classes							\$5,550	
	Show Tuition Fee							\$9,300	
	Concessions							\$6,994	
						Total			\$76,238
Unearned Income									
	Board of Directors							\$4,000	
	Individual Donors							\$164,750	
	Show Sponsors							\$15,000	
	Grants							\$202,000	
	In-Kind Donations							\$1,500	
						Total			\$387,250
						Total Revenue			\$463,488

REVENUE								
EARNED INCOME								
Season Subscription								
	Mainstage	23 Seats	@	\$48		\$1,104		
					Total		\$1,104	
Individual Ticket Sales								
	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	507 Seats	@	\$15		\$7,605		
	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas</i>	630 Seats	@	\$15		\$9,450		
	<i>New Works Festival</i>	78 Seats	@	\$15		\$1,170		
	<i>Shrek The Musical Jr</i>	645 Seats	@	\$15		\$9,675		
					Total		\$27,900	
Senior Citizen Ticket Sales								
	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	134 Seats	@	\$10		\$1,340		
	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas</i>	226 Seats	@	\$10		\$2,260		
	<i>New Works Festival</i>	74 Seats	@	\$10		\$740		
	<i>Shrek The Musical Jr</i>	206 Seats	@	\$10		\$2,060		
					Total		\$6,400	
Student Ticket Sales								
	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	14 Seats	@	\$10		\$140		
	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas</i>	25 Seats	@	\$10		\$250		
	<i>New Works Festival</i>	5 Seats	@	\$10		\$50		
	<i>Shrek The Musical Jr</i>	30 Seats	@	\$10		\$300		
					Total		\$740	
					Total Ticket Sales		\$36,144	
UNEARNED INCOME								
Board of Directors								
	Board Dues	8 Members	@	\$500		\$4,000		
					Total		\$4,000	
Individual Donors								
	Life Changer	3 Donors	@	\$10,000		\$30,000		
	Mentor	4 Donors	@	\$5,000		\$20,000		
	Family	15 Donors	@	\$2,500		\$37,500		
	Collaborator	22 Donors	@	\$1,000		\$22,000		
	Friend	96 Donors	@	\$500		\$48,000		
	Patron	290 Donors	@	\$25		\$7,250		
					Total		\$164,750	
Show Sponsors								
	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Alden Village North Helah Care, Chicago, IL				\$5,000		
	<i>A Charlie Brown Christmas</i>	Windtrust Bank, Chicago, IL				\$5,000		
	<i>Shrek The Musical Jr</i>	Glenwood Dance Studio, Chicago, IL				\$5,000		
					Total		\$15,000	
Grants								
	State	Illinos	Creative Project Grant			\$12,000		
	City	Chicago	League of Chicago Theatres			\$10,000		
	Foundation	Bavless Family Foundation				\$180,000		
					Total		\$202,000	
In-Kind Donation								
	a5 Branding & Digital	Video Graphics				\$1,500		
					Total		\$1,500	
					Total Unearned Revenue		\$387,250	

SALARY & GUEST ARTIST FEES

Full-Time Staff

Managing Director						\$30,000	
Artistic Director						\$30,000	
Benefits For Fulltime						\$18,000	
					Total		\$78,000

Part-Time Staff

Development & Fundraising Manager						\$9,500	
Audience Services Member						\$9,500	
Technical Director						\$9,500	
Production Manager						\$9,500	
Education Coordinator						\$9,500	
					Total		\$47,500

Salary & Guest Artist Expense Total \$125,500

OPERATING (NON-PRODUCTION) EXPENSES

Administration

Postage						\$1,000	
Internet						\$6,000	
Insurance						\$15,000	
Office Equipment						\$7,500	
Office Supplies						\$7,500	
Business Entertainment						\$1,000	
Travel						\$2,500	
					Total		\$40,500

PR & Marketing

Social Media Ads						\$100	
Email Marketing	12 Months	@	\$100			\$1,200	
Website/ SEO	12 Months	@	\$96			\$1,152	
Season Brochure	3000 Brochures	@	\$2			\$6,000	
Season Posters	50 Posters	@	\$11			\$550	
Individual Show Posters		@	\$11	x 4 Shows			
Mail	1000 Postcards	@	\$1			\$1,490	
Promotional T-Shirts	50 T-Shirts	@	\$14			\$700	
					Total		\$11,192

Concessions

Water	4 Packs (40-count)	@	\$5			\$18	
Juice Boxes	2 Packs (40-count)	@	\$16			\$32	
Candy	4 Packs (30-count)	@	\$32			\$128	
Chips	3 Packs (54-count)	@	\$23			\$70	
Soda (Coca-Cola Mini, Variety Pack)	4 Packs (30-count)	@	\$21			\$86	
					Total		\$334

Development

Donor Brochures	4000 Brochures	@	\$2			\$8,000	
Mailhouse Service	2000 Brochures	@	\$1			\$2,000	
					Total		\$10,000
					Total Operating Expenses		\$62,026

Total Operating (Non-Production) Expenses \$187,526

PRODUCTION EXPENSES***Much Ado About Nothing***

Director	\$1,000	
Stage Manager	\$1,000	
Costume Designer	\$800	
Scenic Designer	\$800	
Lighting & Sound Designer	\$800	
Scenery Material	\$1,000	
Lighting & Sound Material	\$300	
Costume & Wardrobe	\$2,250	
Makeup & Wigs	\$100	
Properties	\$300	
Misc Expenses	\$200	
Total	\$8,550	

A Charlie Brown Christmas

Director	\$1,000	
Choreographer	\$800	
Music Director	\$800	
Stage Manager	\$1,000	
Costume Designer	\$800	
Scenic Designer	\$800	
Lighting & Sound Designer	\$800	
Scenery Material	\$800	
Lighting & Sound Material	\$300	
Costume & Wardrobe	\$1,900	
Makeup & Wigs	\$300	
Royalties (Script and Music Tracks)	\$2,825	
Properties	\$300	
Misc Expenses	\$200	
Total	\$12,625	

New Works Festival

Scenery Material	\$250	
Lighting & Sound Material	\$250	
Costume & Wardrobe	\$250	
Properties	\$250	
Misc Expenses	\$100	
Total	\$1,100	

Shrek The Musical Jr.

Director	\$1,000	
Choreographer	\$800	
Music Director	\$800	
Stage Manager	\$1,000	
Costume Designer	\$800	
Scenic Designer	\$800	
Lighting & Sound Designer	\$800	
Scenery Material	\$1,000	
Lighting & Sound Material	\$300	
Costume & Wardrobe	\$6,750	
Makeup & Wigs	\$100	
Royalties (Script and Music Tracks)	\$2,082	
Properties	\$300	
Misc Expenses	\$200	
Total	\$16,732	
Total Production Expenses	\$39,007	
Total Expenses w/o Contingency	\$226,533	
Contingency Funds	\$22,653	
Total Expenses w/ Contingency	\$249,186	

Donor Letter

Riley Bulson, Courtney Rodd, Quinton Mysliwiec

6738 N Sheridan Rd

Chicago, IL, 60626

November 19, 2025

Michelle Obama
Co-Founder
Higher Ground Productions
6600 Sunset Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90028

RoPo Playhouse Donor Letter

Dear potential sponsor,

RoPo Playhouse is a 501c3 not-for-profit educational theatre company located in Rogers Park, IL. Our mission is **"Developing Artists, Shaping Leaders,"** and we dedicate ourselves to providing education and leadership skills to the next generation of theatre makers through opportunities to create and develop new work and engage with theatrical professionals across multiple generations in the greater Chicago area.

One of the most inspiring examples of our mission in action is that of RoPo Playhouse alum Gwen Grossman, who began with us at age fourteen in our very first New Works Festival. Gwen discovered a passion for lighting design during the festival, and worked closely with our intergenerational mentors to develop her technical skills. After graduating high school, she went on to earn a BFA in lighting design and is now a sought-after young professional in Chicago's storefront theatre scene. She is currently serving as the resident lighting designer for a prominent off-Broadway new works company. She returns to RoPo Playhouse often to teach workshops, hoping to offer current students the same encouragement and hands-on guidance that helped her find her way. Her story exemplifies how RoPo's investment in emerging artists doesn't stop when they leave our programs. It continues outward, strengthening the next generation of theatre makers across the city.

We write to you today to request your support through a donation that will help advance our mission and sustain our vital work. The instructors, mentors, and board members at RoPo Playhouse have many ideas to continue fostering creativity, learning, and professional development among students in our community! In recent years, our registration numbers have skyrocketed, and we are thrilled to welcome so many new students into the RoPo Playhouse

community. **Your support can make these opportunities possible.** This year, we are raising funds to update our lighting, sound, and projection equipment so that our students can train on the same tools they will encounter in professional theatres across Chicago and beyond. These upgrades will directly support our upcoming productions, allow us to offer more hands-on technical workshops, and help us bring in additional guest artists that will broaden our students' creative endeavors.

Please consider making a gift of \$100 to support our upcoming season and help us continue providing high-quality arts education to young theatre makers.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of community members like you, whether you've supported us in the past or are considering your first gift. Your contribution strengthens not only our classrooms and productions, but the entire network of young artists who come to RoPo Playhouse seeking a place to learn, grow, and belong. Thank you for being an essential part of our community and for helping us shape the next generation of leaders in the arts!

Sincerely,
RoPo Playhouse

Reflections

Riley:

Developing a theatre company over the course of the semester gave me only a taste of how complex theatre organizational leadership truly is. One of the central challenges that I felt we encountered throughout the building of the company was reconciling our creative ambitions with the practical realities of operating a sustainable company. The constraints of budget and funding as well as limited staffing forced us to focus on prioritizing the goals that deeply aligned with the company's mission and vision, rather than making choices that were more instantly gratifying. We learned that making bold choices that still served the long-term health of the company was extremely important to trying to establish the culture and presence of the institution within the Rogers Park and greater Chicago area community. I noticed that we found the most success when we focused on sticking to our mission and vision statements.

I also discovered through this class how important it is to not only create a board that aligns with the company's vision and is a powerful helpful resource, but to learn how to communicate with clarity and compassion with that board as a leader figure in the institution. Understanding what the board does, how they do it, and what kinds of challenges they can help you solve is extremely important for the strength and sustainability of a company. Another important skill for working with a board is compromise and flexibility, because learning how to use a board to your best advantage while also keeping them happy and invested is vital.

Integrating creative vision, management strategy, and visual branding was essential in building an organization that was artistically compelling, sustainable, and driven by our mission and vision statements. Creative vision and visual branding helped convey the artistic heart of the company, and management strategy was vital in translating that creative vision and ambition into

tangible products. Ultimately, I enjoyed the process of building our theatre company and learning the joys and challenges of creating an influential, sustainable, and important institution.

Courtney:

I have grown a lot from taking this class. Not only was it fun to connect my two majors in an academic setting, but it also opened my eyes to the extensive planning, collaboration, and creative problem-solving that go into running a theatre company. I began to see how each department, decision, and artistic choice contributes to shaping the identity and purpose of a theatre organization.

I grew up performing in community theatres in my hometown, and this class has helped me understand so much more about the reasoning behind their decisions and the effort required to keep a company operating. I used to think primarily from the performer's perspective, but now I recognize how mission-driven theatre truly operates. The work that theatre leaders do isn't just for financial stability; it's to bring their vision to life, to support artists, and to serve a community in meaningful ways. Understanding this has given me a new appreciation for the theatres I grew up in and the people who kept them running.

This class has also strengthened my confidence in my future career. Having experience both as an actor and now on the administrative side, I feel more prepared and more excited to merge these worlds as I continue developing professionally. I've realized how valuable it is to understand both the artistic and the organizational perspectives, especially in a field that relies so heavily on collaboration and shared purpose.

As a marketing major, I especially loved the marketing and branding portions of the course. Learning how a theatre shapes its public identity, communicates its mission, and builds

genuine relationships with its audience reaffirmed that this is exactly the kind of work I want to pursue. This class didn't just teach me about the theatre industry, but it also helped me see where I fit within it and how I can use my strengths to support the arts in the future.

Quinton:

Over the last few years, I have shifted my career choices to a more “businessy” “politically” side, where I started to discover some interests I can see myself using in the near and far future. However, that also means my approach to theatre has changed to be different as well. I still enjoyed the elemental aspects and skill-based based of it, but as of now, I view theatre as a developmental, more communicative tool that continues to benefit my life. Still, theatre is something I hold dear, and continue to be an active member in.

When I saw that this class was available, it piqued my interest. I looked forward to seeing how to run a business, manage money, market it, advertise it, and build a business with my ideas from the ground up. Because in doing so, it can help me with my finance major in getting me a good all-around basis in the business world, with a class like no other. It's funny that, having a business major, there is no mock trial to run a business, only the fundamentals and the basics to create one all throughout the courses.

The first couple of weeks of the class got me confused because learning everything started slowly with a bunch of readings, which I didn't think meant anything to the entirety of the class. But as the semester continued, I understood the importance of running a theatre business by doing your research. Although some of the books were long and the chapters dragged on longer than I had interest, I was still able to pick up the key things, and from those key things I learned and understood how to apply them to our assignments. Our discussions in class also

amplified my understanding of what may have confused me is now clearly stated and ready to be learned again.

Two things that have stuck with me most are how to advertise to potential donors he's mainly by doing research on them and building a relationship with them, as just throwing the word around of your company is supposedly very unimpactful, with unreliable, mixed data that cannot help you understand what your audience is made of. Another was the entirety of the budgeting assignment, which really helps me put my finance knowledge to use in this class, as I love applying knowledge to new assignments because it proves I have learned and understood the concept. It was a lot of work, but doing the research on where my group's company will get its money from was very interesting.

I have to say the group work wasn't the best because I had different thoughts compared to my other members, who usually outvoted my opinions, and I had a role in their ideas. I was not entertained by having my group's company mission be oriented around education. I did feel out of place sometimes, just trying to complete what I could to split up the work equally for us three. Fortunately, there were no conflicts between us, and we were able to set up any problems just through text and communication. But I guess from saying that, the group work teaches me to be flexible and adaptable to my situations.

This was a great class, it's a class I believe every theatre student should take.