



R.I.S.E. America Grant Program Impact

In partnership with



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Introduction and Background

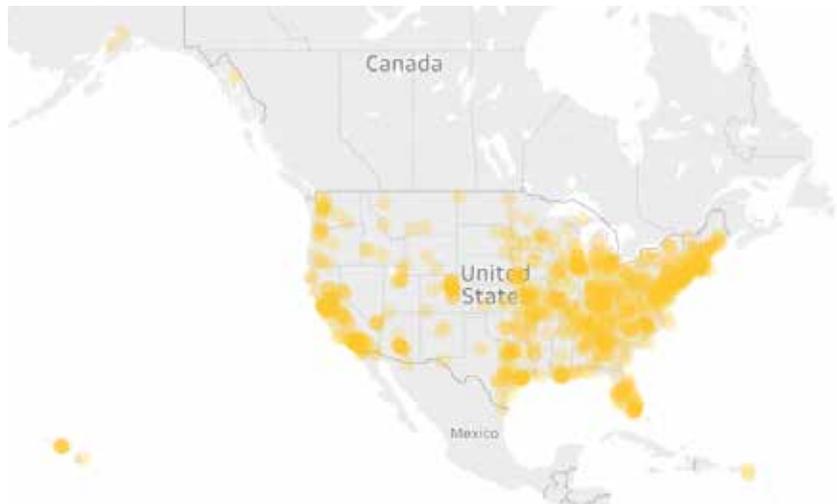
NBC's R.I.S.E. (Recognizing and Inspiring Student Expression) America Grant Program, inspired by the NBC drama *Rise*, which premiered in March 2018, was designed to provide a half million dollars to high schools across the country to enhance or revitalize schools' theatre programs. NBC partnered with the Educational Theatre Foundation (ETF) on the program.

The R.I.S.E. America Grant Program awarded \$10,000 to each of 50 high schools to support production expenses, technical equipment, master classes, and other needs of their theatre programs.

Announced January 9, 2018, the grant application requested some basic data on the school and theatre program, as well as a 500-word essay and two-minute video celebrating the program and explaining how they would use the \$10,000 should they win. Also required was a letter of recommendation from a school principal or administrator endorsing the application.

The response was overwhelming, passionate, and urgent. By the deadline of February 6, applications had been received from 937 schools, representing all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, Virgin Islands, and Guam. 93% of the schools were public, 48% were Title 1 (high numbers or high percentages of students are from low-income families), and 53% had active Thespian Troupes.

Location	No. of App.	Location	No. of App.	Location	No. of App.
AL	13	ME	16	OR	11
AK	3	MD	19	PA	37
AZ	14	MA	21	RI	7
AR	7	MI	25	SC	5
CA	126	MN	7	SD	7
CO	23	MS	5	TN	31
CT	18	MO	39	TX	49
DE	3	MT	4	UT	7
FL	38	NE	7	VT	2
GA	30	NV	8	VA	23
HI	7	NH	6	WA	11
ID	4	NJ	30	WV	13
IL	27	NM	2	WI	17
IN	17	NY	53	WY	2
IA	12	NC	26	DC	5
KS	16	ND	4	VI	3
KY	29	OH	28	GUAM	1
LA	13	OK	9	TOTAL	937



The more than 60 experienced theatre educators and industry leaders who served as judges for the review and selection process were overwhelmed. Each spent significant time to thoughtfully consider each school's request and carefully rank the many deserving schools. Most judges provided unsolicited comments on the experience that paralleled the sentiments of this one.

"It has been my honor to read and score many applications, proposals, grants, etc. throughout my career. To say that this was one of the most challenging projects I've been asked to judge is a huge understatement. Not only did it connect directly to my long-held conviction that theatre goes beyond art to build community with engaged and resilient people, it connected to my soul."

"Sophisticated or naïve writing couldn't mask the enthusiasm and passion of the students and the teachers in each and every application. Schools, frequently championed by a beloved and dedicated educator, across America are going against odds to give their students the opportunity and joy of theatre. As expressed by many of the students in their videos – they found family, friends, supportive teachers, a place to be community, to fit in when no place else feels right, and inspiration to aspire to their own futures."

"I hope that society can find a way to elevate and value these programs, students, and teachers. I hope the generosity of this grant is extended beyond this one moment."

"Thank you for the opportunity to revisit my own youth as a theatre nerd. I've been inspired to reach out to the high school in my community to see if I can volunteer or provide support to their theatre program!!!!!"

Reactions to Announcement of Grant Awards

Fifty schools were selected and notified in early March. Initial calls to congratulate each theatre program leader who submitted a winning school's application were received with huge excitement, often accompanied by joyful tears. These leaders planned the public announcement in their school and community to coincide with the premiere of NBC's *Rise* on March 9. Most shared photos and videos of the announcement moment, with reactions similar to Glenbard West High School (Glen Ellyn, IL) and Jefferson High School (Cedar Rapids, IA).



Glenbard West High School celebrates its selection for a R.I.S.E. America grant.



Student Officers of the Jefferson High School theatre program celebrated in front of an assembly when the news of the R.I.S.E. America grant award was announced.

Publicity on or soon following the announcement of the 50 grant recipient schools included coverage at the local level (like this [Kansas City Star](#) article, witnessing the award announcement at Leavenworth High School, complete with confetti cannons ([Leavenworth HS wins R.I.S.E. America Grant](#)), to articles on Playbill.com ([NBC Awards Grants to 50 High School Theatre Departments](#)) and *USA Today* ([50 High Schools Get R.I.S.E. NBC Theater Grants](#)).

Impact Overview

The adage “a little can go a long way” could not be better illustrated than by the effect of \$10,000 grants awarded to 50 high school theatre programs in big and small communities across the nation.

Project types ranged from technical (audiovisual equipment and training, acoustic panels, stage and costume storage construction and repairs, etc.) to production (show royalties previously out of reach, choreography and vocal coaching assistance, etc.) to professional development and special student experiences (master classes and workshops, attendance at professional productions, sponsor attendance at theatre conferences, etc.), but all awardee project leaders reflected a confidence that these expenditures could “change the game” for the program and its students.

As part of the (post-acceptance) grant stewardship requirements, all awardees were required to submit details of the planned use of funds, with a commitment to keep auditable records relative to this plan. Additionally, each awardee was surveyed on the status of the grant project at multiple points during 2018.

A common and much repeated response from the awarded schools reflected the gratitude they felt for the funds, the recognition, and the possibilities the grant award opened up to them.

Impact Themes

Some common themes are evident in the status reports from the 50 R.I.S.E. America schools regarding the impact the grant award is having on their theatre programs.

- **The Benefit of Credentialing:** Winning a grant “credentials” the theatre program in its school and community, bringing unprecedented levels of positive attention, support, and new expectations.
- **Professionalism Begets Professionalism:** Better facilities and equipment, exposure to professional theatre education and productions, etc., expands and strengthens student objectives, commitment, and performance quality.
- **Expression and Achievement Can Be Unleashed by Theatre Involvement:** The opportunity presented by the grant led individual students to new (often breakthrough) levels of artistic or overall school achievement and to the establishment of new personal goals.
- **Impact Scope:** Personal and community impact extends well beyond the directly involved individuals (e.g., theatre director and theatre-involved students).
- **Sustainability:** School theatre programs are enabled and strengthened by the grant projects (financially, capability, etc.) through a “multiplier” effect, well beyond the \$10,000 award.

Detailed examples from R.I.S.E. America grant awardee schools of how these themes were manifested, based on responses to the status surveys, are provided in this report. Each school’s address is followed by background from the school’s application, a description of the project and impact, as well as a direct quote from one of the school’s three status reports as provided to the Educational Theatre Foundation’s R.I.S.E. America program director.

Highlights from all of the 50 schools’ projects are summarized in a table that follows (Attachment 1).

The Benefit of Credentialing

Bonnabel Magnet Academy High School

2801 Bruin Drive, Kenner, LA, 70065

Technical Theatre/Show Support

Background

In a school with 63.5% of students receiving free or reduced lunch and a 73% graduation rate within a state that ranks #45 nationally, the Bonnabel theatre program members “inspire each other to come to school every day and understand the value of education.” The theatre director commutes an hour each way to serve as the only adult leader of a program where parental involvement suffers from most parents holding multiple jobs. Still, the students’ enthusiasm greets their director every day and fuels their motivation to fundraise by selling snacks and drinks after school and later, to rehearse shows into the evening.

Grant Request

The grant request was to invest in sets, costumes, props, and show promotion for the spring 2018 production of *You Can’t Take It with You*, a 1930s play that questions what truly is the American Dream. Additionally, two portable air conditioning units were purchased to replace the outdated ones that made so much noise they had to be turned off during performances.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

“The most satisfying moment for both myself and my students was when the community found out about our hard work and recognition of our receiving the grant. We normally have small audiences; however, the grant news spread and our school and community turned out in a big way.”

“We had a faculty night where we invited all the teachers and administration to attend our performance. It was the first time we had seen over 40 teachers in our audience! We had an alumni night where 80 former students attended our performance! My students were so thrilled that we finally were recognized for all of our hard work and amazing talent.”



Bonnabel High School's spring 2018 production of You Can't Take It with You.

Pine Island High School

223 1st Ave SE, Pine Island, MN 55963

Show Support

Background

While the school's theatre facilities have recently evolved from productions in a gymnasium to a newly constructed performing arts facility, other resources and experience have not similarly expanded to meet the demand, limiting the number of students who can participate and the quality of the experience. The sole program leader can only support one main stage production per year, given she is responsible for directing the acting, choreography and music, as well as scenic, lighting and sound design, costumes, and props.

Grant Request

The grant request was to help fund a second show with enhanced production capabilities, including a vocal coach assistant, and to seek technical direction and training to better utilize the capabilities of the new performance facility and to create opportunities for student technical crew experiences.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"The best part has been watching the excitement build surrounding the productions that have now been secured and announced. A lot of attention has been given to the arts and our theatre program post the grant award, and the impact is being felt beyond just the planned performances next year. For the first time we're offering two sections of our theatre class next fall because of high interest in the program. For the first time I have a student signed up to be a teacher's assistant because she wants more theatre experience and has already taken the theatre class. I have a group of upperclassmen now considering theatre and/or arts education as a viable postsecondary option. We are seeing triple the involvement (performers, crew, and orchestra). Our program has reached sustainability in that we can now support having two productions a year moving forward. Additionally, a plan is now underway to award a varsity letter in theatre. It feels as if the grant provided validity to the vision of the program we were trying to build, and the excitement is palpable!"

In a news piece by NBC affiliate KARE 11 in Minneapolis about Pine Island's selection as a R.I.S.E. America grant recipient, a student says, "As theatre kids, we have the spotlight, but we don't have the spotlight in school a lot, because everything's about the sports. Now to have people talking about us and what we're doing is a pretty cool thing."





Pine Island High School's Theatre Department chose a theme of "Come Alive" for its upcoming season, with new shows planned and new excitement surrounding the program following its receipt of a R.I.S.E. America grant.

Seaside High School

2200 Noche Buena, Seaside, CA 93955

Technical Theatre

Background

Seaside High School is in a poor town that is right next door to several wealthier ones – Monterey, Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach, and Carmel. Much of the workforce that supports those communities lives in Seaside, and their children attend this school. While many "job readiness" program such as welding, auto repair, and technology have solid support, the arts are not at the same level.

With an enrollment composed primarily of students of color and LGBTQ+ youth, the Seaside dramatic arts program works out of repurposed spaces on the campus, with no theatre venue or operating budget. Still, through partnerships with the local arts council and the local community college, it produces more than four shows per year, in a quest to demonstrate sustainability and gain the school district's support.

Grant Request

The grant request was to convert an old space into a permanent theatre on the SHS campus, with technical theatre equipment, and resources for productions planned in 2018-19. While very resourceful in the past, partnering with local theatres, fundraising, utilizing parent support, and borrowing tools, ownership of equipment will allow energy and favors to be spent elsewhere and demonstrate to the community and school leadership how theatre helps students thrive.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"Receiving the R.I.S.E. America grant was covered by every local news outlet. Being chosen as one of the 50 schools honored elevated our status in the community. After negative attention on our school recently due to a non-theatre related incident, we have now received positive coverage for the impact of our theatre program. Our most recent play was a series of scenes written by students about the interpersonal challenges of high school. The kids went deep sharing their identity struggles and internal monologues. About 75 audience members attended each show and we will be doing the show again at the National Steinbeck Center, one town over in Salinas.

"Additionally, the school's facilities leader added \$20,000 to the \$10,000 we received from the R.I.S.E. America grant to make this new space even more useful and permanent."



Prior to moving to a new theatre-dedicated space enabled by the R.I.S.E. America grant, community-building activities in the Seaside High School theatre program occurred in the wrestling room, and productions were staged on an outdoor courtyard.

How Professionalism Begets Professionalism

Nānākuli High School

89-980 Nānākuli Ave., Waiānae, HI 96792

Technical Theatre/Show Support

Background

Nānākuli High School is in the rural and economically challenged Leeward Coast area of Oahu, Hawaii, where 73% of the mostly Native Hawaiian students are on free or reduced lunch. The Nānākuli Performing Arts Center (NPAC) serves this school as well as students from other districts, some of whom travel over an hour via bus and foot to participate. Each year, the NPAC produces a minimum of three major productions as well as giving over 15 various performances at schools, conferences, and state, private functions reaching an annual audience of over 6,000 people. However, it does so without even basic facilities: students must move tables, create wing space, and put out folding chairs to transform the cafeteria into a theatrical environment in order to produce most shows.

Grant Request

The grant request was to fund the rental of an auditorium for one production to give students the opportunity to perform in a venue other than the school café; to purchase wireless microphone systems; and to cover cost of costumes, supplies, materials for various productions which cannot be funded otherwise.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"Part of the funds was used to pay for cost of extended rental period for costume rental for Shrek the Musical production. The impact on the students and NPAC program has been phenomenal. The audience turnout for this production was one of the highest we have had over the last 8 years. This also was the first time many audience members have come out to see an NPAC production. For the students, the impact of being in Shrek also was inspirational. The students had some doubts about being able to perform a production of this scale well and based on the response from audience members and

themselves, they now know that their abilities are only limited by how hard they are willing to work.

“The highlight has been seeing the faces on the students after each Shrek performance when they go out to greet and thank the audience for coming to the show. Seeing and hearing the response from the audience members on how much they enjoyed the show and the students’ performances and seeing the smiles on NPAC students’ faces makes the whole process worthwhile. Seeing the young children taking photos with the cast and the joy on both the children and the NPAC cast was a great feeling. Even more, hearing from audience members who have never come to a NPAC production remark how great the students were and how Shrek was even better than our local major community theatre shows, really made me proud. Note that our school is in a rural community on the West side of Oahu, with a negative stereotype, thus many people tend to not venture out to NPAC shows due to the distance and reputation. However, Shrek brought in a number of new audience members and we are hoping they will be returning audience for future productions.”



Nānākuli High School students sang “This Is Our Story” for large and appreciative audiences at the spring 2018 production of Shrek.

Charles Henderson High School

150 S George Wallace Drive, P.O. Box 1006, Troy, AL 36081

Technical Theatre

Background

In five years, the theatre director at Charles Henderson High School (a Title I school with 90% of students on free and reduced lunch) has seen the program’s resources grow from not much more than a box labeled “drama stuff for the plays” to an old library, to a current “cafetorium.” It has terrible acoustics, bad lighting, a slippery tile stage floor, and huge windows that let sunlight in, making it difficult to perform matinees or during the early evening hours.

Grant Request

The grant request was to use the money to invest in a bigger soundboard, more microphones, onstage monitors, better lighting equipment, an alternate flooring such as marley, and blackout curtains to cover the windows during performances. By showing students that their creative endeavors are important and deserve a high quality venue, the director hoped to validate their efforts and ignite the confidence they need to be successful. For many, she hopes, this may even inspire them to pursue a career in the performing arts or in theatre education!

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"We have ordered and received many items that have already enhanced our program such as new lights, a new light board, three new speakers, and several new microphones. I was able to take 25 students to Atlanta to the Fox Theatre to see the national Broadway tour of Something Rotten. We were also given a backstage tour by the principal actor and stage manager, who showed us the behind the scenes magic!

"The pride in my kids' eyes when they realize the quality of equipment we are using now than before is immeasurable. More students are able to use a microphone, work with lights, hear themselves in the monitors, etc. They feel more professional, and it has already made a difference in our productions and in their self-esteem. The opportunity to see a Broadway tour gave them inspiration that pushed them to research new musical theatre pieces, which they were able to showcase at our end of the year performance."



Left: Charles Henderson High School students attended a national tour production of Something Rotten and received a backstage tour. Right: New lighting systems at Charles Henderson High School, enabled by the R.I.S.E. America grant.

Leavenworth High School

2021 10th Avenue, Leavenworth, KS 66048

Technical Theatre

Background

Leavenworth High School is the oldest public high school in Kansas, with Fort Leavenworth and Leavenworth Penitentiary nearby. The theatre director provides peanut butter sandwiches to the kids who come to school hungry and discovered a student who came to school every day to find a "safe place" and a meal in Advanced Drama class because his drug-dealing father routinely kicked him out of the house at night.

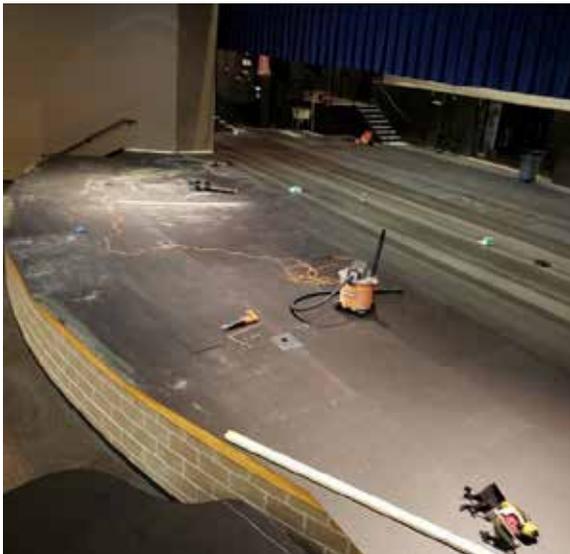
With a district budget of \$2,500, the program sustains itself via grants, fundraising, and, often, the director's and technical director's personal funds. A newly formed Booster Club also raises funds, most recently purchasing sewing machines for costuming.

Grant Request

The grant request was to replace a dangerously splintering stage. Patching was no longer viable. The director expected that the district would match funds to complete a new floor installation. Per the director, "Winning the grant will indicate that others believe in the students' amazing potential as well."

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

“There is a different sense of pride in our students school-wide. Leavenworth received a R.I.S.E. America grant. That is a huge deal. We will no longer have a safety issue on stage. We have received emails from not only local teachers but from all over Kansas who are so excited about the possibilities of productions and learning opportunities our students can have with a solid stage. As we plan our fall musical, students talk about the difference the sound will be on our stage [there will be tap dancing], the possibility of getting our show adjudicated for Internationals if we work hard enough, and more. The sense of pride is amazing, but more important, our students are inspired to work harder, become better, to be of higher caliber. We have begun to plan our opening night for our fall musical, inviting NBC and EdTA representatives, our superintendent, board of education, our high school administration, and our maintenance chief, so we can properly thank them, but more important, so they can witness how the stage will be used by our students. We hope that we can have a photo of our cast and crew with them after the show—on our new stage! The students, staff, teachers, and administration are so proud of the receiving the grant. Theatre at Leavenworth High School is viewed in a different light now—even more positive than before.”



Top left and right: The Leavenworth High School stage, and the pride of the school thespians and community, is being transformed with a new floor to replace an aging and splintered wood floor. Bottom: Leavenworth theatre program students proudly illustrate “Theatre Shirt Thursday” while posed on the new stage floor, which was purchased with the R.I.S.E. America grant.

Expression and Achievement Can Be Unleashed by Theatre Involvement

Many schools provided incredible stories of how one student was demonstrably changed by the opportunity provided to the theatre program by the R.I.S.E. America grant. These stories (schools and student names are not listed to protect privacy) included the following.

- *“One particular student has an incredibly difficult home life. She is one of 16 siblings, most of whom never graduated from high school. She auditioned for our first musical and found herself invested and passionate about something at school for the first time in her life. Currently, she is getting back on track to graduate because she wants to participate in our next musical.”*
- *“A freshman joined theatre with no stage experience but was enthusiastic about working with a team of artists. She was one of the students who helped organize the essay that was submitted for the R.I.S.E. America grant. She explains, ‘My school life has never been the same since I joined theatre. It showed me that I have a talent within me and that people can accept me for who I really am. I never imagined me performing on such a professional stage with time period furniture, dresses, and makeup. I have a true family in theatre with people that will remain my friends long after high school; which is something that I have always dreamed and hoped. Theatre made me find my new passion in performance, and now I know what I want to study in college. I have learned all about stage design, technical aspects like lighting design, costumes, and directing (which is amazing!). The grant gave me a purpose to dive in deeper to my care about my school life.”*
- *“A new student who is on the autism spectrum also struggles with ELA skills. He found the drama program on his first week of classes and immediately gravitated to it. He was surprised and completely thrown off when I invited him to be a part of our fall musical and to help with the tour of the children’s theatre show. He said, ‘No one has ever asked me to do that before.’ This R.I.S.E grant has allowed me to build up a theatre program that fosters a safe environment for these students, who don’t feel like they’ve ever had a voice before, to now get the chance. This student is now one of our ensemble musical members and a co-writer/creator of the book and lyrics.”*
- *“A student who struggles with anxiety, depression, and extremely low self-confidence told the teacher that she would have a really hard time volunteering to speak and perform. Since using our new texts, she volunteers to answer questions and has grasped the materials in a fantastic way, earning 100% grades on worksheets that accompany the textbook. She volunteered to read for a lead character in the play they are now reading. She said she couldn’t believe that she volunteered to read — she was just really enjoying the script and wanted to be a part of it. She said that learning about self-confidence, character growth, and the positivity that this class has shared with her, she’s been feeling more inspired to speak in her other classes and participate.”*
- *“A new student whose dad has always pushed for him to play baseball felt that his dad had lost interest in him when baseball didn’t work out. He was cast as a lead in my musical. When I told the student his dad had purchased a ticket to our show, he started to cry. He told me, ‘Well now I have to work extra hard. I want to make him proud.”*
- *“One student, a total sport jock, has found a love for theatre because of this grant. In his own words, ‘This experience for me was one of the best things that has ever happened. I never understood why some people cry when the football season is over, but after this I understand what it means to have something you care so much about be over. I have so much love for every single person in [our theatre program], I just want to explode. Theatre has definitely expanded my view on a lot of things. It made me realize how special it is to be yourself, it definitely made me more accepting of other people, and honestly I gained a new respect for people in the LGBT community. We are a family.”*
- *My new student teaching assistant “was able to study set design and construction as part of our fall production, spending at least an hour every day working hands-on with our art director in the design of a transformative set that changed from black and white to color as the show progressed. This spring she’s working to help design and construct custom puppets for production and is collaborating with costume and prop design to create a unified vision for the show. Through this work, she has decided to pursue theatre design as a career and is currently touring schools, creating a*

portfolio, and interviewing in programs.”

- “A young man stumbled into theatre class during his junior year of high school and had a natural talent for acting that he was unaware of. Over the next couple years, he had many performance opportunities but not many opportunities to see professional-level theatre. Because of the R.I.S.E. America grant we received, this student was able to travel to Atlanta to the Fox Theatre and watch the national tour of *Something Rotten!* He was able to go on a backstage tour and meet actors in the cast. His mother told me that when he returned home he announced that it was ‘the greatest thing he’d ever seen’ and that he’d ‘kill to be in a Broadway show.’ Shortly after our trip, he decided to pursue theatre in college. He auditioned at Troy University and received a theatre scholarship. I believe this experience pushed him to take that step and could very well have led him to his future career!”
- “Our stage manager and club treasurer of four years watched our club go from having virtually little more than the previous year’s scraps to work with to us winning the R.I.S.E. America grant and pulling in over \$10K in ticket sales (thank you R.I.S.E. America fame!) in her senior year. She wrote her college essay on how drama club taught her how to be resilient and work hard for the things you love. In the video we made about winning the grant, she’s the one who you can see immediately burst into tears. She really understood the club’s financial struggles and appreciated the relief and opportunities the grant brought the club.”
- “A student could not compete in district Individual Events because of monetary problems at home. Thanks to the grant, we were able to award her a scholarship to cover her registration fees. She will be performing a musical solo and will be an ensemble member in the large group musical number. She was so scared that I would be disappointed in her for not being able to afford the fees and was going to drop the class, and when she was told it wouldn’t be an issue thanks to the grant, she broke down in tears.”
- “A senior has been recognized at two district competitions he usually cannot afford to attend, receiving a superior on his monologues and All Star Cast at districts. I truly believe so much of his growth came from the work he gained with the guest artist we brought in to work with the students. He taught them how to truly play onstage, and it shows in this student’s work. He now has two scholarship auditions lined up because of his success at districts, which can help him afford to double major in calculus and theatre at UCF.”

Impact Scope: Personal and Community Impact

Malcolm Public Schools

10000 NW112th, Malcolm, NE 68402

Facilities/Storage

Background

Malcolm is a tiny farming community just outside of Lincoln. All students, K-12, are housed in one building. Since theatre is not a formal part of the curriculum, one-act play production is an extracurricular activity. Since a new director took over the program six years ago, the program has blossomed to include 45% of the high school students in some capacity. Rehearsals are at 6 a.m., given that the gym is the rehearsal space, and students have conflicts with evening sports practices.

In spite of limitations, the drama team has won a state championship, a state runner-up, and two third place finishes in five trips to the state one-acts competition. Two students won major scholarships for theatre performance.

Grant Request

To construct a 2,000 square foot steel-sided post-frame storage facility for the theatre program’s sole use so that sets and costumes can be stored/reused, greatly enabling the cost efficiency of productions. Having a dedicated “home” and rehearsal space will eliminate the disruption of tearing down sets after each rehearsal so that athletic teams can use the shared gym space and enable more technical theatre work to design, construct sets, props, and costumes.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"There have been many moments, many of them linked to the very generous gifts that have been given by not only the theatre families but by the community members, businesses, and surrounding areas. Many of the gifts have even come from patrons/supporters who are not directly connected to the program. The groundbreaking on Tuesday night was the 'OMG' moment, as it is starting to sink in that this is really going to happen."

On the day of the actual construction, "it was 102 degrees with a 15-25 mph wind. Needless to say, it was a battle, but the community was amazing. We had food provided by one of the locally owned BBQ joints, with parents and community members pitching in on the sides/drinks/snacks/etc. The town is all abuzz. We will have another work day next Saturday to put the sheet metal on, as we have a crew coming in to put the rest of the trusses up on Thursday night. This is so exciting!"

<https://youtu.be/C7XqYl88nqA>



The community came out to "raise" the building that will now house the Malcolm High School theatre program.

Vaughn Next Century Learning Center

13330 Vaughn Street, San Fernando, CA 91340

Technical Theatre

Background

Vaughn is located in a pocket of Los Angeles with a large concentration of immigrants, with 97% on free or reduced lunch. In 2008, more Vaughn students had lost someone to gang violence than had seen a play. After years of bargaining with athletic coaches for one solid week of the wingless stage in the 600+ seat "multipurpose facility" to stage a performance, the administration helped create a 75-seat studio theatre in a large classroom, lit mainly by light that floods in from the nearby nighttime soccer field. The practical upper limit on ticket prices is \$5, enabling only two shows per year (only one with royalties) and no new investment in facility improvements.

Drama can ignite the fire, urging students to push toward graduation. The National Association of State Boards of Education commented that the arts "teach things no other subject can; they tap into deeply cultural and expressive aspects of people's lives that are at the center of what it means to be human." The theatre program addresses topics seldom discussed in this community, like HIV, mental illness, and homosexuality. The director says the students love theatre and life. With more professional equipment, the director hopes to offer this community a higher quality arts experience overall.

Grant Request

The grant request was to install LED lighting (controlled by a wireless panel), as well as a cyclorama to splash lighting designs upon, train teachers and tech theatre students to use the lights, and fund stipends for community theatre lighting designers to mentor students, including two new freshmen technicians each year who the seniors could train, creating a sustainable program.

According to the director, "When struggling students learn to create entertainment from scratch, they are inspired to create more in life. In the current studio performance space, however, the lighting designers aren't able to do much creating; they simply don't have the right tools. They could be learning a valuable trade. Los Angeles has fantastic community theatres, who often pay people for operating lighting."

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"I watched Angel, who was just a quiet kid in my English 9 class last year, learn the lights and have him actually teaching me things. He still knows it better than me. He did his best to develop as an artist, and finally we have some actual lighting design. When a moment would freeze onstage, and he would slowly fade out, I knew he had become an artist, and that was a great feeling."



The Vaughn theatre program expects that lighting design will take their artistry and storytelling to the next level.

Sustainability

American Canyon

3000 Newell Drive, American Canyon, CA 94503

Show Support

Background

Though it has a beautiful theatre, nonexistent district funding limits the American Canyon High School Theatre Arts program to smaller sets and student-sourced supplies for sets, props, and costumes. They make it work but need investment to "step up" to the next level of achievement. Currently, they produce two plays per year but lack the resources

to produce a musical, given greater demands for on- and off-stage production costs, and a bigger publicity plan.

Grant Request

The grant request was to assist with set, costumes, props, lighting, and publicity expenses to make the program's first musical a success that will sustain the program at a high level. "Our goal is to make an engaging experience that stimulates the audience's senses in an environment that allows the actors to give their very best. We believe this production can be the start of a new journey for our theatre program. With support from the R.I.S.E. America grant, American Canyon High School's theatre arts can bring together all of the arts through music, dance, acting, and storytelling."

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"We produced our first musical, *Bye Bye Birdie*, in April! We have never had so much freedom to purchase set materials and tools, costume supplies, and upgrade our marketing materials. We are happy to report that with the grant money we received, we used a little more than half of it for the musical. We were able to double that investment and MADE \$10,000 in tickets and concessions over the run of the show, which means the other half of the grant money will go straight to next year's royalties and we still have money to put on high-quality productions next year."



American Canyon High School staged its first musical, Bye Bye Birdie, enabled by the NBC R.I.S.E. America grant it received.

Plant City High School

1 Raider Place, Plant City, FL 33563

Show Support

Background

By 2015, Plant City High School's once-thriving theatre department had experienced a decade of director turnover. Faced with a bank account of \$800, the new director (at her alma mater) has staged low-cost shows. The theatre department's participants and audience did not reflect the rapidly rising Hispanic population of the community and the school (47% Hispanic). The school is Title 1, with 74% on free or reduced lunch.

Grant Request

The grant request is to support production of *Aladdin (Dual Language Edition)* ("an opportunity for Spanish and English to be presented on the same stage to tell a magical tale that parents, students, siblings, and teachers all adore"). Rights and scripts alone cost \$1,600. Given the school economic profile, a participation fee is not an option.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"The success of the *Aladdin* production has fueled additional success for the program. The fall production won a superior and best play at Florida District 9 One-Acts Festival, allowing us to advance to compete at Florida State Thespian Festival for the first time in almost 10 years! Our community provided an additional \$8,000 to pay for all the students to attend the festival free of cost. The students are excited to invest in additional learning activities such as workshops and field trips to invest in their arts education and exposure. There is a new sense of self-worth and determination in everyone; they really believe they can do anything and are worth people's time and attention."



The Plant City High School Thespian Troupe 1449 celebrates winning superior and best play at Florida District 9 One-Acts Festival.

Henryetta High School

1801 Troy Aikman Drive, Henryetta, OK 74437

Technical Theatre/Student Enrichment

Background

Years ago, Henryetta, a town of 5,000, had a strong theatre program. The school's auditorium (the only one in Okmulgee County) was built for the performing arts. Alumni include Alice Ghostley, a well-known Hollywood actress, and Jeremy Hays, who starred as Raul in Broadway's *Phantom of the Opera*. Students were excited for the musical every year, but sadly, due to state budget cuts, the theatre went dark in 2012, and the auditorium soon became neglected.

In 2016, two students started Henryetta High School's Performing Arts Student Association (PASA) with the goal of reestablishing a program. With no theatre department, no funding from the school, and apathy from the music department, they faced an uphill journey. PASA grew from two to ten, and raised \$4,000 on their own. Most are from low-income families and have difficult home lives. Worst of all, they had to mourn the death of a classmate lost to cancer. But they persevered because of the family they found in theatre.

Grant Request

The grant request was to enable PASA to upgrade the obsolete sound system with new microphones and fund a trip to the Tulsa Performing Arts Center, as most students have not previously seen a professional theatre performance. With no other theatre programs within 30 miles, PASA proposed to invite the surrounding schools to their production to give hundreds of

students the opportunity to see a musical, hopefully inspiring more students to pursue the performing arts.

Outcome and Impact as Reported by the School

"The R.I.S.E. America grant allowed us to gain respect within our community and school that we were missing the year before. Two years ago, we started out with only nine students and one big dream. Now in year three, there are 80 students in the program. This is a huge achievement. I believe that the funds we got from the grant allowed us to put on a fabulous production which recruited many new members.

"We have people from the community reaching out and asking us for what we need help with, whether it is in donations or their own fundraising ideas. We even got attention from Broadway actors. Kristin Chenoweth donated to our program last year, and Jeremy Hays held a master class and invited students to sing and allowed everyone in our program to come for free.

"We also give students a place to belong. Many of the students in our program come from really bad home lives. This gives them an escape and an outlet that they might have never had if the program did not exist. This is a home. The R.I.S.E. America grant solidified how important this program is for the school and for the community, and now the nation is also telling our story."



The R.I.S.E. America grant has helped Henryetta High School to solidify its theatre program, restarted two years ago by students after the state cut all funding years before.

Toplines of Impact at All 50 R.I.S.E. America Grant Awardee Schools

Toplines of the projects and impact at each of the 50 R.I.S.E. America grant awardee schools is summarized in Attachment 1.

By the Numbers

The qualitative impact is undeniably compelling. But the final survey of the 50 grant awardees in January 2019 focused on quantifiable impact. Some of the key statistics and numerical outcomes reported by the schools are as follows.

Audience Size for Shows	Up 100%, from 150 to 300 per show	Henryetta High School
	Up 60%	Equipo Academy
	Up 50%	Digital Arts and Technology Academy
	Sold out every night of run	Bonnabel Magnet Academy
	Up 30% between 2017 play and 2018 musical	American Canyon High School
	Up 75%, from 200 to 350 per show (sold out all shows)	Mariposa High School
Box Office Proceeds	More than doubled, from \$3,000 to \$6,500	Henryetta High School
	\$12,000 profit, which will fuel the program indefinitely	Mariposa High School
Student Participation and Retention	Doubled from 40 to 80 ("motivated and enthusiastic!") students	Henryetta High School
	Retention up 20%	Henry J. Kaiser High School
	30-50 now attending drama meetings, up from 12-15 a year ago	Hamtramck High School
	Participation in theatre arts classes up by 26 students	American Canyon High School
	Auditioners for performance and tech roles up 20% from last year	Leavenworth High School
	Over 10% of the school auditioned (60 out of 560)	Mariposa High School
Funding/ Resources	New funding support from the school and school district	Henry J. Kaiser High School
	Two additional donations of \$5,000 and \$1,500, and the district is now supporting the program	Hamtramck High School
	Received an additional grant of \$6,300 to complete project	Park High School
	Requests to use our theatre space have doubled	Leavenworth High School
Access to Theatre Curriculum	From no theatre classes to now available to any student in grades 9-12	Enfield High School
	Class size up from 8 students per class to 12-17 per class	Bonnabel Magnet Academy
	Two whole sections of theatre added (+60 students per semester)	John Overton High School
	Expanded reach to middle school, which otherwise does not have access to theatre	Digital Arts and Technology Academy

Media Coverage and Publicity

Attention to the R.I.S.E. America grant program was robust at the national and local levels, both at the beginning (in conjunction with the NBC *Rise* television show premiere and the announcement of grant awards) as well as at local milestone and celebratory moments. Some examples are below.

- The grant application page at (new at the time) EducationalTheatreFoundation.org received 16,381 page views, and the news page received 627 page views.
- On the day of the premiere of NBC's drama series *Rise, Megyn Kelly Today* featured the Mariposa High School drama club and how they give back to their community. *Rise* star Damon J. Gillespie announced live that the club was the recipient of a R.I.S.E. America \$10,000 grant, which was then doubled with an additional \$10,000 award from NBC Entertainment.

Hastings-on-Hudson's multi-school production of *Hairspray* received local print/online coverage and later television coverage from an NBC affiliate. The story of how the school reached out to bring students in from South Bronx, Yonkers, and Stamford, CT, even garnered congratulations from Scott Wittman and Marc Shaiman.

The Story Goes On...

Unfortunately, the NBC *Rise* television drama was not continued for the 2018-19 season. But undoubtedly, the 50 R.I.S.E. America grant awardee schools' theatre programs and the impact from receipt of the grant award will continue. Here are a few quotes/examples of how awardee schools envision the near future of their programs.

- **Digital Arts and Technical Academy (Albuquerque, NM):** "Because the DATA drama program now has proper stage lighting instruments, some tools in the toolshed, fabric and other sewing supplies, we are excited to continue to build our program! Next steps are to establish an official Thespian troupe, attend the fall NM Thespian Festival and Competition, and continue to produce quality works of theatre not only for our school's community but the larger Albuquerque educational community. We also plan to continue our outreach efforts and provide three summer camps for middle school students this summer (2019) in order to provide more access and education about theatre and dramatic performance."
- **Henryetta High School (Henryetta, OK):** "Being awarded the R.I.S.E. America grant made the community around our school buckle down and pay attention. It gave us a chance to be seen and heard. There is an organization willing to donate a brand new sound system to our theatre. We have people from the Broadway community who have mentioned us and have given to our program. We are not stopping there. We plan on putting on another successful musical in the spring. The school tentatively plans on making the organization an actual class in the fall where they can read plays, study different acting styles, and work on the show in class."
- **Plant City High School (Plant City, FL):** "We are competing at the Florida State Thespian Festival in March, after receiving a superior rating at districts for the first time in almost 10 years. We just finished raising an additional \$8,000 from our community to pay for all the students to attend the festival free of cost. The students and parents are excited to invest in additional learning activities such as workshops and fieldtrips to invest in their arts education and exposure. There is a new sense of self-worth and determination in everyone; they really believe they can do anything and are worth people's time and attention."
- **Vaughn Next Century (San Fernando, CA):** "Having the increased funding for our program and excitement about our program inspired me to try a musical again, which previously had felt just too cumbersome. Through Donors Choose, I raised support for royalties, script rental, and some technical theatre supplies for *Aladdin (Dual Language Edition)*, and this spring, we are going to put this musical on. With the increased participation in our program (including participation from music department), we are doing multiple casts and will have multiple performances."

Conclusion

We know that theatre education impacts lives in the short- and long-term. Given the impact of the \$10,000 R.I.S.E. America grants to the 50 awarded schools witnessed already, the ripple effect is likely to be significant and immeasurable.

Many thanks to the NBC personnel who made this program possible. The Educational Theatre Foundation was honored to facilitate the grant program and track the outcomes.

Attachment 1

R.I.S.E. America Schools - Project Toplines

School	Project Type	Project Details	Testimony of Impact from the School
1 Alice High School (Alice, TX)	Tech/show support/ Thespian conference	Portable lighting and processors; portable audio system; Broadway musical royalties, props, and costumes; lumber; paint and craft supplies; expenses for 10 Thespians to attend ITF conference and perform original play	"Everything related to the grant has been amazing. We were on the local news and in newspapers. Having purchased working light and sound systems that are both portables has ignited so many dreams."
2 American Canyon High School (American Canyon, CA)	Show support	Costumes and props for Bye Bye Birdie; set materials for Bye Bye Birdie; royalties for 2018-19 school year	"The R.I.S.E. America grant is the seed that will grow into a full-fledged musical theatre program at our school. We produced our first-ever musical and MADE \$10,000 in tickets/ concessions revenue! We have never had so much freedom to purchase set materials and tools, costume supplies, and upgrade our marketing materials."
3 Baltimore City College (Baltimore, MD)	Tech/show support	Acoustical panels and curtains; Broadway script and royalties; Broadway set, props, and costumes; musical director stipend	"Students are now so excited about the possibilities for their student-directed plays. We are looking to do more student-directed work than ever before thanks to the R.I.S.E. America grant!"
4 Bonnabel Magnet Academy High School (Kenner, LA)	Tech/show support	Props, furniture, costumes, wigs, makeup, and Playbills for You Can't Take It with You; technical supplies for set	"The most satisfying moment was when the community found out about our hard work and recognition of the grant award. We normally have small audiences; however, the grant news spread and led to huge audiences for our show. The grant made the rehearsal and design process stress free and a true eye opener to my students. They had no idea what a professional production could look like."
5 Bound Brook High School (Bound Brook, NJ)	Tech/show support/ student experience	Costumes, wigs, and bald caps, piano accompanist, and light board, lights, and converter for The Addams Family; Broadway show tickets for 27 students and 4 chaperones; stereo graphic EQ; guest artist for masterclass	"In general, this experience has introduced our students to a wide range of arts professionals: cast members from NBC's <i>Rise</i> (through the Marshall's promotion we participated in), professional Broadway actors, even journalists and production staff from NBC. The students have learned that careers in the arts ARE attainable for them, through hard work and dedication. That is an experience we would not have been able to provide for them."

6	Boyle County High School (Danville, KY)	Show support/ special student experience/ classroom upgrades	Sets, costumes, and semi-professional actor for spring production; chairs, platforms, and mirrors for classroom; registration fees for KTA Festival	"In a school where competition reigns supreme, the fact that we "won" a R.I.S.E. America grant gave our drama program credibility and recognition. A specific example is the principal found matched our contribution from the grant to buy top-of-the-line risers AND dedicate a space for drama classes at the school. That says volumes about the impact the R.I.S.E. America grant had on our program."
7	Central Falls High School (Central Falls, RI)	Special student experience/ show support/ Thespian support/ professional development	Tickets and transportation to <i>The Phantom of the Opera</i> ; tools for set design; costumes for all performances; lighting, Playbills, t-shirts, and musical instruments for Shakespeare Festival; artists workshops; Thespian inductions and display items; professional development materials	"The R.I.S.E. America grant opened the door to the community of Central Falls. Many parents have asked me about the program and enrollment has doubled."
8	Charles Henderson High School (Troy, AL)	Tech	Sound board; onstage monitors; lighting equipment; alternative flooring; blackout curtains	"The pride in my kids' eyes when they realize the quality of equipment we are using now compared to before is immeasurable. They feel more professional and it has already made a difference in our productions and in their self-esteem. The opportunity to see a Broadway Tour show inspired them to research new musical theatre pieces to showcase at our end of the year performance."
9	Deubrook Area School District 5-6 (White, SD)	Tech	Follow spot and bulbs; stage panels; staging transportation trolleys and 4-tier chair stop; glassless rolling mirrors; and microphones	"Living in a rural area, experiencing Broadway shows is rare. The first thing we did with the R. I. S. E. America grant was pay for a group to attend <i>Cabaret</i> in Sioux Falls, SD, including for a bus and driver. <i>Cabaret</i> is a show that we would not be able to perform at our school, so this was a chance to expose students to a different type of theatre. The students loved the performance! Second, we purchased three 6' x 7' rolling mirrors to practice choreography. As they taught the rest of the cast, everyone used the mirrors to better understand their own movement. Finally the most expensive items we purchased were TWO new spotlights! They are fantastic and VERY bright, and a major boon for our theatre program!"
10	Digital Arts and Technology Academy (Albuquerque, NM)	Tech/show support	Tools and supplies; fabrics and sewing machines; lighting materials; transportation and snacks for touring and workshops	"The grant helped us transform our tiny classroom into a small blackbox-esque theatre and gave the students the opportunity to work with real state of the art stage lights and equipment; they have gained a new sense of pride and ownership over their creative work which we owe to the R.I.S.E. America project."

11	Dublin Scioto High School (Dublin, OH)	Tech/show support	Assisted listening devices and noise cancelling headphones; closed circuit camera and supplies; sign interpreter for two shows; digital portable sound board; printing needs; fidgets, stress balls, and sensory materials	"Our entire school community is excited about our theatre program's ability to offer fully inclusive theatre for our audiences. Our Principal even mentioned the impact of our R.I.S.E. America grant in his speech at graduation. We have received a lot of positive attention from organizations like VSA Ohio (Very Special Arts) and the Autism Society of Central Ohio, and offers of assistance from Columbus Children's Theatre and the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts (CAPA)."
12	Enfield High School (Enfield, CT)	Tech/show support/classroom materials	Textbooks, scene books, and songbooks; scrim and hardware; floor microphones; three lights	"Our students are very excited to have the opportunity (for the first time) to actually take a theatre course during the school day. The supplies we purchase with these grant funds will greatly enhance the quality of theatre education these students receive."
13	Equipo Academy East Las Vegas College Prep (Las Vegas, NV)	Tech/Thespian support	Lighting; sound; stage curtain/partition; risers for portable stage; International Thespian Society charter dues	"Our school was featured twice on our local news and posted over and over on social media. This has brought so much positivity and interest in our small school. The best experience for me was the amount of positivity I have received from other HS theatre teachers and arts organizations in Vegas, such as The Smith Center and the president of the Las Vegas Thespian Society."
14	Gautier High School (Gautier, MS)	Tech/storage/classroom upgrades	Storage shed; costume and prop closet; paint supplies and tools; classroom and auditorium repairs	"[Winning the grant] certainly helps with outreach because we are able to do so many more cool things to capture the attention of potential students."
15	Glenbard West High School (Glen Ellyn, IL)	Tech/show support/professional development	Wireless microphones, belt packs, receivers, and supplies; four choir microphones; equipment rack; training for tech students and teacher; costumes, makeup, and props for fall musical production	"A student who has been frustrated by the limitations of our equipment was so excited when he learned that a large bulk of the grant was to benefit the area of theatre he feels most passionate about. He was on Cloud 9 yesterday when the sound technician came for the first workshop. The R.I.S.E. America grant has changed his frustration to inspiration and quite possibly a future vocation."
16	Grand Center Arts Academy (St. Louis, MO)	Tech	Lighting system and lights; wireless microphone system; camcorder for classroom usage	I think the biggest impact the grant had on our students was in terms of their morale and sense of worth as a program. We have been doing so much on a shoestring budget, as is the case with so many theatre programs, and the students felt as though our theatre program was unappreciated by the district and the school. It took all of my self-control to wait what seemed like an eternity to tell the students the exciting news and when I finally showed them the video it was, well I was definitely teary, it was an inspiring and uplifting moment for all of us.

17	Hallandale High School (Hallandale Beach, FL)	Show support	Set, production rights, music, vocal coach, and Playbill for musical; black box theatre rental, set, production rights, and Playbill for play	"The majority of the Hallandale community has never seen live theatre. This is the first full length musical my school has ever done. When I started promoting <i>In the Heights</i> for September 27th and 28th I had to explain that big productions can run for multiple nights. Students and community members asked if it was "part 1 for the 27th and part 2 for the 28th". The R.I.S.E. America grant is introducing theatre to my community and I hope this support and awareness will continue to grow!"
18	Hamtramck High School (Hamtramck, MI)	Tech/show support	Lighting equipment; sound equipment; stage curtain; rehearsal furniture; library of scripts	"Our entire community has been energized by the grant. People are excited about our brand new drama program. Other groups have donated as a result of the coverage in local media. It has been a huge boost for us all!"
19	Harry S. Truman High School (Levittown, PA)	Special student experiences	Registration fees for the International Thespian Festival; tickets for a production in NYC; tickets for local theatre groups	"The grant has provided educational theatre experiences to our students to attend "Once" and to attend/perform at the state theatre festival."
20	Hastings on Hudson UFSD (Hastings-On-Hudson, NY)	Show support	Set construction, costumes, director and choreographer, and 10-piece band for multi-school production of <i>Hairspray</i> , involving students from Hastings, Yonkers, South Bronx and Stamford, CT.	Production in early 2019 received attention from Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman, the composer and lyricist team who wrote <i>Hairspray</i> .
21	Henry J. Kaiser High School (Fontana, CA)	Show support/ classroom upgrades/ professional development/ special student experience	Royalties, costumes and makeup, and props and show expenses for <i>The Addams Family Musical</i> ; classroom organizers; workshop stipend for actor; tickets to Riverside Fox Theatre for 35 students	"Before the grant, [our program] was considered unimportant. We resided in a cafeteria; I constantly had to fight for space and money. Now, we are considered an asset to the campus and district. Suddenly our cafeteria space is "Our" space. Suddenly, the district is supporting my program. That \$10,000, while wonderful, at the time could only put a small dent in our huge needs. But, because of it, we are getting a complete renovation of our sound and lighting and backstage."
22	Henryetta High School (Henryetta, OK)	Tech/special student experience	Body microphones; set materials for <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> ; tickets and transportation to a professional show	"The grant allowed us to gain respect within our school and community that was missing before. It brought attention from local donors and Broadway actors (Kristin Chenoweth donated and Jeremy Hays held a master class), but also helped us put on a fabulous production which recruited many new members. Two years ago we started out with only nine students and one big dream. Now there are 80 students in the program, many of whom view it as home."

23	Heritage High School (Leesburg, VA)	Tech/ classroom support/ student support	Add additional course to curriculum; upgrade lighting/sound equipment; create scholarship funds for students	"The money from the R.I.S.E. America Grant helped us expand the knowledge and skills of our students and staff in both the performance and technical aspects of theatre. For example, industry professionals were hired to instruct our students in advanced lighting techniques to prepare for our winter musical last year. These professionals showed students how to time and rig lighting for the show beyond the basics that our class covers. We would not have had the opportunity for this kind of instruction had the R.I.S.E. America Grant not been awarded to Heritage, and it has had and will continue to have a lasting impact throughout subsequent productions."
24	Hudson High School (Hudson, WI)	Tech	Rear traveler curtain; stage managers' wireless headsets; scene shop building materials and tools	"This money will impact our program for the next 20 years and beyond. Our students are SOOO excited to have more quality sound equipment and we directors are over the moon that we will finally have the curtain we need. We could have never gotten these things without the grant!"
25	Jack Yates High School (Houston, TX)	Special student experience	Travel to NYC to visit tourist sites, participate in a Broadway theatre workshop, and see a Broadway musical	"The best moment has been the support of our school district theatre arts department, local theatre community, peers and students. The students feel accomplished and excited about how their hard work will result in a memorable experience that will change their personal lives and the department."
26	Jackson County High School (Gainesboro, TN)	Tech/special student experience/professional development	Lighting and supplies; wireless microphones and cables; tools and supplies; computer; tickets for <i>The Marvelous Wonderettes</i> show; light and sound master class at Tennessee Tech University	"The amazement and awe in the eyes of students after the enrichment trip to the CCPH (regional professional theatre) captured their imaginations. Lighting and sound production ideas the students think were not possible now seem within reach."
27	James N. Gamble Montessori (Cincinnati, OH)	Tech/show support	Audio, microphones, and soundboard equipment; sublimation kit for t-shirt making as fundraising opportunity; MTI show license purchase	"[After establishing a middle school program as an Educational Theatre Foundation JumpStart Theatre school,] the R.I.S.E. America grant is helping us establish the Senior High Drama Program."
28	Jefferson High School (Cedar Rapids, IA)	Tech	Auditorium light board; wireless microphones	"For the first time in 30 years, our auditorium has light and sound equipment that is reliable and up to date. Audiences will see the difference, students will now have real world technical theatre training."
29	John Overton Comprehensive High School (Nashville, TN)	Tech equipment/installation	Blackout shades, tiles, and wall finishes; seated risers; mobile whiteboard; audio enhancement system; and stage light fixtures	"The kids have been so excited to get started! They want to see how it progresses and makes it grow."

30	Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy (Denver, CO)	Tech/ professional	Lights and installation; teacher professional development; Thespian conference registration	"Students are finally given the opportunity to be a part of a Thespian troupe and compete with other students in the state."
31	Leavenworth High School (Leavenworth, KS)	Tech	Stage flooring	"There is a different sense of pride in our students school-wide. We have received emails from teachers from all over Kansas who are so excited about the possibilities of productions and learning opportunities our students can have with a solid stage. As we plan our fall musical, students talk about the difference the sound will be on our stage [there will be tap dancing], the possibility of getting our show adjudicated for Internationals, and more. Our students are inspired to work harder, become better, to be of higher caliber."
32	Malcolm Public Schools, District 148 (Malcolm, NE)	Storage	Ground work and concrete for 40'x48' post frame metal sided building; commercial grade electrical connection and installation of propane heating	"Many [of our program's] 90 students have been involved in the building process in some way. They eagerly await any chance to come and help; these kids have embraced this project as their own. They know that it is for them, and they are so proud to be able to have a place to call their own."
33	Mariposa County High School (Mariposa, CA)	Show support/tech	Scripts, royalties, costumes, programs, and set design for <i>Disney's The Lion King</i> ; upgraded microphones; build puppet theatre and purchase additional puppets	"We were able to bring in a guest speaker; film director Deborah Attoinese came and spoke to 80 students over three classes about making short films in L.A."
34	Martinsburg High School (Martinsburg, WV)	Special student experience/ tech	Registration fees for the International Thespian Festival; LED lighting system	"The grant has enabled us to teach broader content, i.e.: set design, lighting design, and to travel and compete "
35	Mastery Charter Schools Foundation (Philadelphia, PA)	Show support/tech	Show rights, orchestra, set construction, costumes, and props for a production; repairs to stage lights	"The R.I.S.E. America grant is fostering a sense of community in the school. Students have waited for three years to be able to participate in a production and are finally able to. The school recently received money from Mastery's Annual Fund to expand upon the R.I.S.E. America grant and upgrade the stage lighting. We are anticipating theatre becoming a part of our [school's] culture once again."
36	Nānākuli High and Intermediate School (Waianae, HI)	Show support/tech	Extended rental of costumes for <i>Shrek the Musical</i> ; purchase of handheld microphones and accessories; royalties for <i>Dragonfly the Musical</i> ; auditorium rental fees for musical revue production in 2019	"The audience turnout and response for this production was one of the best in years. The students had some doubts about being able to perform a production of this scale well; they now know that their abilities are only limited by how hard they are willing to work."

37	Park High School (Livingston, MT)	Tech/show support	Purchase and installation of creative stage lighting and accessories; costumes for production of <i>Camelot</i>	"One of the students on our submission video talked about the importance of theatre in his life. He flew to San Francisco for an audition and now will be attending AMDA in NYC as a theatre major. Being a part of this project was very important to him."
38	Peekskill High School (Peekskill, NY)	Show support/ tech/special student experience	Costume rental and purchase and additional set/prop needs for production; wireless headsets and walkie talkies for tech crews; projector and lighting upgrades; tickets and transportation for dinner and a show at Westchester Broadway dinner theatre	"Our show's run was nearly flawless and the one word we kept hearing in public feedback was, "professional!" We are always telling the students how much we believe in them, but I think seeing the outside support really did something to their overall confidence. The sound upgrades were a game-changer."
39	Pine Island High School (Pine Island, MN)	Show support/ professional	Performance rights and scripts for <i>The Giver</i> and <i>James and the Giant Peach</i> ; hire an art director, set builder, and vocal coach; train in lighting design and techniques; purchase set, prop, and costume supplies for two productions	"A lot of new attention has been given to our theatre program, and the impact goes beyond the planned performances. For the first time, we're offering two sections of our theatre class because of high interest in the program. For the first time, a student will be a teacher's assistant because she wants more theatre experience. Students are now considering theatre and/or arts education as a viable post-secondary option. It feels as if the grant provided validity to the vision of the program we were trying to build, and the excitement is palpable!"
40	Plant City High School (Plant City, FL)	Show support/ professional	Show rights, scripts, sets, props, costumes, and other expenses for fall full-length production; hire musicians and workshop artists; registration for FATE (FL Association of Theatre Educators) Conference	"The excitement and buzz about the program has exponentially increased. The students are excited that they can dream almost as big as they can! Even just the idea that we will have floor mics and be able to do a "big name" musical makes them feel like they have been propelled into the big leagues."
41	PSJA North Early College High School (Pharr, TX)	Special student experiences/ professional	Bus transportation to Houston for university visit, Texas Renaissance Festival, and live theatre; tickets for performance of <i>Les Misérables</i> ; consultant fees for theatrical and film professionals; purchase of Lazer projector	We hired three former students who now work professionally in video and film to teach film making. The student created a number of films in different categories including narrative films, documentaries, and animations. For many of these students, this was their first film to be a part of writing, filming, directing, or working on in any capacity. We took a group of 29 students to see their first touring Broadway show; <i>Les Miserable</i> . We took a group of 28 students to Houston for a weekend where we toured the University of Houston's theatre program. Five of our seniors auditioned for the undergrad theatre program in either theatrical design or acting.

42	Rainier Beach High School (Seattle, WA)	Tech	Digital mixer and laptop for the sound board; lighting console; digital stagebox; parts and accessories for all equipment	"We are very excited to have a sound and light board that actually works. Our students deserve to be showcased and they will now get that chance."
43	Regis St. Mary Catholic School (Stayton, OR)	Storage	Concrete foundation; storage shed materials and installation	"We recently have been offered several furniture and prop items and we can now say "yes we can take them! We have room to store it!" The kids have expressed that a safe place to find and store our set pieces will be "the best!"
44	Scecina Memorial High School (Indianapolis, IN)	Special student experiences/ professional	Season tickets to Footlite Musicals and other theatres around Indianapolis; registration, flight, and hotel for Broadway Teachers Workshop and Theatrefolk Drama Teacher Academy; pulley system and pole for backdrops	"A student who is hoping to study theatrical engineering in college has been involved in the process of gathering quotes from various vendors, and once we purchase the equipment, she will get the opportunity to get more hands on experience than the limited time we have rented equipment for the musicals in the past. The grant is making it possible for my students to interact with theatre instead of learning through watching videos."
45	School Without Walls (Washington, DC)	Tech/show support	Sound mixer; wireless microphones; lighting system; executive stage kit; show rights for production(s)	It took quite some time to receive all of the equipment our drama program ordered with the R. I. S. E. America Grant funding due to school district bureaucracy, but I can say we finally have everything and the students are quite excited! We have stage lighting equipment, microphones, and a portable stage which we cannot wait to put to use with our first production of the year- <i>Shakespeare's Twelfth Night</i> in December. We here at School Without Walls High School cannot thank the Educational Theatre Foundation enough for providing us with the funding to make even our little multipurpose space feel more like a real theatre! Thank you.
46	Seaside High School (Seaside, CA)	Tech	Lighting software, components, and computer; audience riser; eight wireless microphones and body packs	"[The honor of receiving a R.I.S.E. America grant] elevated our status in the community. After negative attention on our school recently due to a non-theatre related incident, we have now received positive coverage for the impact of our theatre program. Our most recent play was a series of scenes written by students about the interpersonal challenges of high school. The kids went deep sharing their identity struggles and internal monologues. About 75 audience members attended each show and we will be performing it again at the National Steinbeck Center."

47	Shaker Regional School District - Belmont High School Drama (Belmont, NH)	Tech/storage	Storage shed; lighting computer program, CPU, and monitor; high lumen projector; electronic piano	"The drama students feel valued [by receiving the grant]; just as much as other groups, such as athletics. They will now have ownership of something on the school grounds."
48	The Howard School (Atlanta, GA)	Tech	Spotlights; wash fixtures; and rigging; with the option to also purchase a lighting controller	"As a school for students with language-based learning differences, the ability to experience while learning is the ultimate in true understanding. The grant has quickly increased enthusiasm for drama programming, on stage or behind, to a point we thought it would take 1-2 years to reach. Students in 8th grade and below are also expressing interest. Your grant has absolutely helped us to amplify drama across the school."
49	Union Senior High School (Union, NJ)	Tech	Theatrical lighting upgrade	With the money we received from the R.I.S.E. America Grant, the district purchased six Chroma-Q Color Force 48-inch LED strip lights for use to light our cyclorama for school play and musical productions, as well as other school and community events held in the UHS theatre. The lights have significantly cut down on purchase and rental costs for the program and have had a very positive impact on the theatre program as well as the school community.
50	Vaughn Next Century Learning Center (San Fernando, CA)	Tech	Lighting, supplies, and labor; audience seating and rack for storing; black velour drapes	"One student learned the lights and is now actually teaching me things. We finally have some actual lighting design. When a moment would freeze on stage, and he would slowly fade out, I knew he had become an artist, and that was a great feeling."

