Yale University President’s Public Service Fellowship

Proposal for Fellowship Placement • Summer 2019

- Organization: Yale Repertory Theatre/Yale School of Drama’s Dwight/Edgewood Project
- Full street address of organization: University Theatre, 222 York Street, New Haven, CT 06520-8244
- Website: https://www.yalerep.org/productions-and-programs/youth-programs
- Name and title of the Direct Supervisor (please note: the Direct Supervisor must be available to supervise Fellow on a daily basis): Emalie Mayo, Project Coordinator
- Phone number and e-mail address of Direct Supervisor: 2-1591; emalie.mayo@yale.edu
- Placement dates (8-11 weeks between Tuesday, May 28 and Friday, August 9, 2019): 8 weeks – placement must begin on Tuesday, May 21st, during PPSF orientation week. Will continue through Tuesday, July 16th.
- Are placement dates flexible? If so, please describe: The dates between May 21st and June 22nd are not flexible, due to the specific program demands dictated by the New Haven Public Schools academic calendar.
- Hours of the program (placements should be equivalent to full-time): Actual hours may vary but generally the day runs from 11:30am – 7:00pm, Monday- Friday, with some weekend/evening responsibilities; the 7.5-hour day span may vary during technical rehearsals, which stretch to approximately 10 hour days.
Placement Description

• Organization description (Mission statement, population served. 150 words or less.):

Dwight/Edgewood Project (D/EP) is a community outreach program created in 1995 by Yale School of Drama/Yale Repertory Theatre. Modeled after the acclaimed 52nd Street Project in New York, D/EP pairs children in grades 6-7 from New Haven's Barnard Environmental Studies School with YSD students. Over an intensive five weeks, students learn how to write a play, while experiencing success and empowerment through the arts on Yale’s campus. The youth, identified by the school’s administration/teachers, are interested in storytelling (but not necessarily theater) and can sustain the rigor of the program. The children are mentored by YSD students through the entire creative process, beginning with a blank page and culminating in a performance of their original works, produced and performed by their YSD mentors. Additionally, the program offers participating YSD students an opportunity to hone their teaching skills while providing a valuable way to connect with their neighboring community.

• Please write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting (50 words or less. This will be used as your agency’s project description summary on the PPSF website, so please be succinct):

The Fellow will mentor middle school student participants: most are paired 1:1 with a student, or support several students, throughout the program in various capacities. Additionally, the Fellow will provide critical administrative support for the program’s Management Team and Yale Rep’s WILL POWER! initiative. School of Drama student preferred.

• Please write a complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow. (Suggested length: one to two pages.)

Dwight/Edgewood Project’s 25th season will continue to celebrate not only the program’s longevity, but also our public school partnership. These two elements will serve to enhance an already strong arts education initiative while committing to its core objectives. D/EP offers Yale School of Drama students the opportunity to share the love of their craft with the community in which they reside, while learning valuable skills that often transcend their specific program of study. Also, D/EP gives the middle school participants, who are given the title of Playwright on day one, the skills of how to write a play and all the elements involved by taking their written word from the page to the stage. Most importantly, D/EP offers them
an avenue where their voice is validated. All components are within the context of a larger company where different generations come together in pursuit of a common goal.

D/EP is a four-week afterschool program with a time-tested curriculum:

Week 1 is about Company Building and Theater Making. Playwrights and Mentors learn about each other through theater games and social/emotional activities, followed by learning about technical theater through activities led by the Design Mentors. The objective of this week, beyond getting to know one another, is to begin building a theater vocabulary, which will be incorporated into their learning process in week 2.

Week 2 is dedicated to the Playmaking curriculum. Led by a Teaching Artist - typically a former D/EP participant, and guided by the Mentors, the Playwrights learn the step-by-step process of playwriting through visualization and writing exercises. At the end of week 2, every Playwright will have written a practice play that is read out loud by the mentors. This week also ends with the one-on-one pairing of Playwright and Mentor; this partnership will grow over the weekend writing retreat that begins at the end of week 2.

At the end of week 2, the full company of Playwrights, Mentors, Teaching Artist, Designers, Directors, Producing Director, General Manager, and Project Coordinator travel to a camp in northeastern Connecticut for a weekend retreat from Friday evening to Sunday where the Playwrights, supported by their Mentors and the Teaching Artist, will write their original play. The weekend also features games, waterfront activities, campfire songs, s’mores, as well as more opportunity for this company of artists to strengthen their relationships.

In Week 3, it should be noted that the adult company members who attend the retreat do not get a day off before we jump right into this week’s activities of design, rehearsals, prop making, and set building. These activities fully include the Playwrights into the entire process: drawing their ideas, painting props, watching rehearsals and giving notes. Mentors are assigned acting roles in two of the eight plays (acting in their Playwright’s play and one additional play). The week will end with final run-throughs of all 8 plays, where everyone gets to see the progress each team has accomplished.

Week 4 includes Technical Rehearsals, Performances, Receptions, and Strike. This final week is a whirlwind; the adult company rehearses in the morning, then again in the afternoon when the Playwrights are present, as lights, sound, and costumes are added. The Playwrights will also spend time out of rehearsal to record voice-overs, which serve as the introduction to each of their plays during performances, create thank-you projects for their mentors, and join an activity lead by a visiting Teaching Artist. These activities offer the Playwrights the chance to come back together and become artists once again. Past years have seen physical storytelling of an element of their play, basic fight choreography, and
peer interviews. The Playwrights then share what they learned with the adult company prior to the final dress rehearsal.

Week 4 culminates with performances of all 8 original plays for families, teachers, and friends; 4 on Friday night, 4 on Saturday night, each night concluding with a reception. Following Saturday’s final reception, the Playwrights will say their final goodbyes, and then the entire adult company will strike the production.

The next two weeks are dedicated to closing the program; the Fellow is a critical part of this process. Once D/EP has been “put to bed”, the Fellow will then assist the Producing Director, General Manager and Project Coordinator with any remaining D/EP requirements (final reports to funders, delivering packages of materials to the Playwrights, debrief meeting with Barnard School, inventory of materials, etc.), followed by possible research associated with Yale Repertory Theatre’s academic-year youth initiative, WILL POWER!

Although D/EP appears to be fully structured, it is important to note that each year is enhanced by what is learned the previous year. Since 2012, two training sessions with a social worker from the Yale Child Study Center are offered to the adult company, providing them with tools to better respond to some of the challenges experienced by children from the New Haven community. Additionally, each new company of adults offers the program new insights and experiences. D/EP’s success is based on building on what has worked while leaving room for the gifts each Mentor and Playwright brings to the table.

We can’t wait for this year’s D/EP program to kick off, and we hope the adult company will again include a PPSF. (See attached photo montage from D/EP 2018).

- Specific skills/experience required for the project (Please list):

  The Fellow should:
  o Have an interest in and enjoy working with middle school aged children from New Haven
  o Enjoy the challenge of acting as they may perform in at least two of the original plays
  o Assist in creation and implementation of introductory theater curriculum, i.e.: leading theater games, encouraging Playwrights to be their most creative selves
  o Assist in the creation of scenery and props, production load-in and strike
  o Work both collaboratively and independently; take direction from peers serving in managerial positions
  o Computer literacy is a must; i.e.: the creation of digital photo archives, signage, handouts, etc.
  o Must be self-motivated, flexible, and have good organizational, interpersonal, and time management skills
- Administrative office skills very helpful
- Will assist in the closing of the program by creating final reports, sponsor correspondence, participant correspondence

- Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, please include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement:
  - Pass a required background check
  - Preferred: Valid US (including US territories) or Canadian driver’s license (NOTE: company vehicles & parking are provided)
    - If a licensed driver, must complete Yale University driver awareness training class
  - Program includes work outside of the regular work week; includes mandatory weekend writing retreat off campus, theater load-in on one weekend, as well as one Saturday rehearsal, performance and strike (attendance mandatory)
  - Hours may vary throughout the program and may involve some evening rehearsals, meetings, and/or administrative work

- Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your agency in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, please describe any work that Yale students have done with your agency.

Since D/EP's inception in 1995, students from Yale School of Drama have played crucial roles in the development and continuity of this initiative. Those YSD students are often trained to serve as Mentors to the young D/EP Playwrights, work one-on-one with each child, actively lead classes/workshops/group theater games, and participate in the mandatory two-day retreat where the original plays are developed under the direction of a Teaching Artist.

Over 15 YSD students have now worked with D/EP through PPSF in several capacities: Producing Director, General Manager, Designer, Production Stage Manager, and Mentor. In each of those roles, the Fellow was a critical piece in ensuring the success of the program, either by assisting with the general management, partnering with an individual student, creating the world of our Playwrights’ work, assist in the close of the program, as well as providing support to Yale Rep’s annual WILL POWER! initiative following D/EP’s close. In past years, our Fellows were critical in executing many administrative tasks.
throughout the entire program and beyond its close. The Fellows allowed us to get tasks done in an effective manner and we also included them in our weekly management meetings about the direction of the program both in the present and the future.

Last year’s Fellow Madeline Charne, while serving as Production Stage Manager for the program, also served as an additional mentor for the students. Whenever a mentor was out during the programming day, needed a break from a student, or help with a student, Madeline filled in and supported the day to day of the program on a one on one basis, which was invaluable and had a high impact on every student she worked with.

Dwight / Edgewood Project 2018 – full company photo

2018 PPSF Madeline and Playwright Kazik
Top left: Mentors Moses and Abubakr in Playwright Allison’s play

Middle right: Mentors Patrick and Moses in Playwright Olyssa’s play

Bottom left: Mentors Abubakr and Kineta in Playwright Chelsea’s play

Bottom right: Mentors Zach and Stephanie in Playwright Jayden’s play
Top left: Mentors Caitlin and Stephanie in Playwright Deanna’s play

Bottom left: Mentors Caitlin and Kineta in Playwright Jenishka’s play

Middle right: Mentors Zach and Jakeem in Playwright Kazik’s play

Bottom right: Mentors Jakeem and Patrick in Playwright Aqilleus’ play
STAFF
Producing Director
HOLLY FITZMAURICE
Playmaking Teaching Artist
SOPHIE SIEGEL-WARREN
General Manager
DAN BARLOW
Project Coordinator
EMALIE MAYO
Yale Presidential Service Fellow
MADALINE CHARNIE
Directors
CHAD KINDMAN
KRISTA SMITH
Scenic Designer
JOHN BONDI-ERDCHENZY
Costume Designers
MIRA H. BOBANKS
ANGELA H. ROCHELLE
Lighting Designer
EMMA DEANE
Assistant Lighting Designer
CHRISTOPHER R. EVANS
Sound Designer/Composer
MEGUMI KATAKAYA
Production Stage Manager
MADALINE CHARNIE
Technical Director
MARTIN MONTAÑA
Projects of Yale Repertory Theatre and Yale School of Drama are supported by the work of more than 20 faculty and staff members throughout the year.

SPECIAL THANKS
Tara Davis, Yale Child Study Center; Justin Deland, Yale Undergraduate Productions; Karen King, Yale University Office of New Haven and State Affairs; Ashley’s Ice Cream and Donut Crazy; Holly Blacker and the entire Camp Wightman Staff.

ABOUT THE DWIGHT/EDGWOOD PROJECT
Created in 1995, the Dwight/Edgewood Project (D/E/P) is a joint community outreach program of Yale Repertory Theatre (YRT) and Yale School of Drama (YSD). Each June, D/E/P pairs 6th and 7th graders from Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School with Yale School of Drama students who serve as mentors, directors, designers, technical director, stage manager, and managers in this intensive four-week after-school playwriting program.

The purpose of D/E/P is to provide young writers the opportunity to discover their artistic and personal potential as a playwright and then see their words “come to life”. The YSD/YRT company members are facilitators of the young artists’ vision and help playwrights navigate the process of bringing their original ideas from the page to the stage. The D/E/P aesthetic is a pared-down, simplistic style of production in order to focus the attention on the play itself. Two-dimensional props and sets, limited number of sound cues, and simple costumes are used only as necessary to tell the story the playwright wants to tell.

SUPPORT
The Anna Fishbach Arents: Trust, Bank of America, N.A.; Trustee; Earle Stodola Community Youth Fund, Bob and Priscilla Danino; The Lucilla Lartot Foundation; Arthur and Marle Nacht; Sandra Shaver; Yale University Office of New Haven and State Affairs.

PLAYWRIGHTS
Seth Grade
DEANNA HEBERT
AGILEUS JAMES
ALLISON MIRANDA
KAIZI SAMMY
JAYDEN SMITH
MENTORS
Sixth Grade
STEPHANIE MACHADO
PATRICK YOUNG
ABUBAKR ALI
SEVENTH GRADE
CHELSEA ACEAHPONG
OLYSSA MACK
JENISHKA TORRES
CAITLIN CROMBLEHOME

JUNE 15 AND 16, 2018
YALE REPERTORY THEATRE/YALE SCHOOL OF DRAMA
James Bundy, Artistic Director/Dawn Victoria Nolan, Managing Director/Deputy Dawn
Chantal Rodríguez, Associate Dean
Kevin Divine Jr., Assistant Dean

PRESENT
THE 2018 DWIGHT/EDGWOOD PROJECT:
Doing Stuff That’s Cool to Us!

Two evenings of original plays written by students from Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School in New Haven.

FRIDAY, JUNE 15
DIRECTED BY CHAD KINDMAN

THE UNFORGETTABLE FRIENDSHIP
BY JENISHKA TORRES

Believe
BY JAYDEN SMITH

THE NATURE IS A STRANGE PLACE
BY AGILEUS JAMES

Lost Siblings
BY ALLISON MIRANDA

DOING STUFF THAT’S COOL TO US!

SATURDAY, JUNE 16
DIRECTED BY KRISTA SMITH

IS THIS MY HOME?
BY DEANNA HEBERT

FISHBOY AND THE BLOB
BY KAIZI SAMMY

TRAGIC LOVERS
BY OLYSSA MACK

DEVIL MEETS ROCK
BY CHELSEA ACEAHPONG

PLAYWRIGHT’S MENTOR

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