

THE YOUNG ARTISTS & WRITERS PROJECT

The Young Artists and Writers Project (YAWP), sponsored by Stony Brook Southampton's MFA in Creative Writing, is dedicated to mentoring middle and high school students in the development of creative expression and critical thinking through the writing and performing arts.

The goals of YAWP include:

- To enhance critical thinking, collaboration and communication skills
- To help each student find and develop his/her unique voice
- To foster the use of creative expression as a way to solve problems and promote compassion and global awareness
- To advance 21st century skills while supporting ELA requirements
- To provide students from diverse school districts with a collaborative, non-competitive community experience
- To develop and support the next generation of readers and writers.

YAWP programs pair professional writers and artists with middle and high school students in a variety of interdisciplinary writing programs, including scriptwriting, personal essay, poetry and fiction. Programs conclude with special projects and public presentations, as well as potential publication in the YAWP Ezine.

Workshops are offered in school residencies as well as in spring break and summer workshops on the Stony Brook Southampton campus.

YAWP provides Stony Brook's MFA in Creative Writing with important community outreach, offers a teaching practicum for the Creative Writing MFA's graduate students, and helps to shape the next generation of writers and artists.

YAWP PLAYWRITING

The YAWP Playwriting Program is a two-month school residency that introduces students to the principles of dramatic writing. Teaching artists guide students through a curriculum exploring the elements of dramatic writing and assisting each student in the discovery of his/her unique perspective and creative voice.

Each student who participates in the program completes a one-act play. One play from each participating class is selected by committee for professional staging at Avram Theater, Stony Brook Southampton. Students then audition to perform in, assistant direct or stage manage the plays under the mentorship of the YAWP staff and professional theatre artists for two public performances.

A NOTE ON CONTENT

During the course of each YAWP program, there is much discussion with students about the content of their plays, from language to subject matter. Students are asked – encouraged – to “write what they know,” to create characters their own age, dealing with concerns they share, using their own words. They are also told that we will not censor their work.

Non-censorship is fundamental to the success of the YAWP programs. We believe that creativity cannot thrive in an environment of restriction, and that validation of voice promotes self-esteem. We therefore use an approach of “How?” and “Why?” with students, as opposed to “Can't” or “Shouldn't.” Students who have been tentative about writing often feel liberated by this approach – and the YAWP Programs thus become a forum for all students to safely explore the issues that affect their lives, as well as an opportunity for parents, educators and community members to increase their awareness of the concerns facing young people today.

We do discuss what is gratuitous versus what is earned when it comes to creative expression, a discussion that continues at every opportunity throughout the creative process. We find this helps students to consider and define for themselves the best, most effective way to convey their point or message. We also emphasize that our policy of non-censorship is limited to the confines of the YAWP classroom, and does not extend to, or advocate, violating a school or family code of conduct.

Finally, though, what ends up on the page - or the stage - is the playwright's call, which often results in content that “raises a few eyebrows.” The important element is that these plays are a reflection of our young people's voices today. We neither condone nor oppose the students' creative choices, but we do believe they have a right to be expressed. Most importantly, we applaud their courage for taking the risk to be heard.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

PIERSON HIGH SCHOOL

Superintendent: Katy Graves
Principal: Jeff Nichols
Assistant Principal: Michael Guinan
Classroom Teacher: Gary Schulman
YAWP Teaching Artists: Victor Giannini and Will Chandler

Participating Students:

Ava Albinson	Phoebe Arkinson
Emelia Baltz	Simone Batiste
Emily Brownstein	Gaylin Davey
Jamie Farnam	Hudson Galardi-Troy
Penelope Greene	Grace Horan
Jamar Jones	Hannah Kirwan
Alexandra Makoid	Eve Marsden

BRIDGEHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

Superintendent/Principal: Robert Hauser
Principal: Michael Miller
Classroom Teacher: Lindsey Sanchez
YAWP Teaching Artist: Will Chandler

Participating Students:

Autumn Coffey
Aziza El
Jalisa Hopson

YAWP SUMMER SCRIPTWRITING WORKSHOP

Stony Brook Southampton Campus – July 2018
YAWP Teaching Artists: Danielle Berg, Will Chandler

Participating Students:

Loomis Hall	Amelia Lewis
Ethan Murano	Erin O'Connell
Luca Villano	Dante Zangrillo

YAWP FACULTY & STAFF

SOUTHAMPTON GRADUATE ARTS OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

Robert Reeves, Associate Provost
Carla Caglioti, Executive Director & Assistant Dean

YAWP PROGRAMMATIC STAFF

Executive Director – Emma Walton Hamilton
Program Director - Will Chandler
MFA Director/YAWP Fiction & Personal Essay – Lou Ann Walker
Playwriting – Will Chandler & Emma Walton Hamilton
Screenwriting – Annette Handley Chandler
Poetry - Julie Sheehan

YAWP PRODUCTION STAFF

Director – Emma Walton Hamilton
Associate Director - Will Chandler
Producer - Stephen Hamilton
Production Manager/Tech Director - Frank Imperiale
Costumes and Props - Yuka Silvera
Costume Assistant: Alisha Kraus
Lighting - Andrew Botsford
Production Assistant - Victor Giannini

2018 High School Playwriting Program Teaching Artists

Danielle Berg Will Chandler Victor Giannini

Special thanks to the following for their support of YAWP:

Assemblyman Fred Thiele, Michael Avram,
The Alec Baldwin Foundation, Jules Feiffer,
Rich Ficara/Cedar Point Productions,
Peggy Grigonis, Laura Lyons, Mike Gasparino,
Hampton Ballet Theater School, John Waldron
Ross School, Aventura Motors, Sag Harbor Variety Store

1.

A STICKY RELATIONSHIP

By Autumn Coffey

BRIDGEHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

Directed by Rebecca Edana

Peanut Butter.....Ayanna El
Jam/Jelly.....Julian Cheng

2.

THE SKETCHBOOK

By Penelope Greene

PIERSON HIGH SCHOOL

Directed by Tristan Vaughan

Talia..... Eva Doyle
Jackson.....Dylan Krueel

3.

THE RACE

By Aziza El

BRIDGEHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

Directed by Susan Stout

LouisJalisa Hopson
Ryan.....Autumn Coffey
Voices.....Aziza El

4.

PLEASE, LISTEN

By Amelia Lewis (The Hewitt School)

YAWP SUMMER WORKSHOPS

Directed by Valerie diLorenzo

Elliott.....Myles Zappola*
Lucy/Mia.....Hope Hamilton*

*The Ross School

5.

DEADLY WATERMELON

By Hudson Galardi-Troy

PIERSON HIGH SCHOOL

Directed by Megan Minutillo

Diana.....Lola Lama
James.....Yanni Bitis

The 2018 YAWP Performances
are dedicated to the memory of
Frank Maglio
friend, supporter and champion of the arts