



Claude McNeal  
PRODUCTIONS

2023

# PROGRESS REPORT



# A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT/CEO AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

It is an exciting time for Claude McNeal Productions (CMP) and our future is looking brighter than ever. In 2023, our ACT Out social issue theatre program presented a **record-breaking** 238 performances: our **best year** since its inception in 1995. Our new partnership with the Indiana Department of Education has had a very successful first semester, with exciting results on the effectiveness of our mental health support programming. In March 2023, we moved into our new home at McGowan Hall in the historic Old Northside neighborhood and couldn't be happier. In June, we ran our summer performing arts camp and presented our first production in our new space in July with "Songs for a New World."

Since then, CMP staff have been working with McGowan Hall to position the venue as a vibrant center where civic, cultural, educational, and humanitarian pursuits thrive. This new collaboration is a perfect fit to bring together two entities that will together enhance the social, educational, and artistic lives of our community.

It truly is the beginning of a rebirth for our organization. Our new partnership with McGowan Hall will allow for increased Humanities and social issue theatre programming for students, training programs for young actors, and original theatrical productions for the community. A capital campaign is currently in the works to improve stage lighting and sound capabilities and to install a portable stage and stage curtains to create a fully-realized performance space. Thanks to very generous donations from the Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Mr. & Mrs. John and Carolyn Mutz (and others), phase one will be completed by the end of March 2024!

If 2022 was the year of "getting back on track," 2023 was certainly the year that we "took off." 2024 promises to be our best yet, and we invite you to stop by and see us!

We have a renewed vision for the future and the commitment to our mission **"to inspire and transform lives through the energizing power of theatre"** is stronger than ever.

Thank you, once again, to our funders, patrons, and program partners. Your continued support and collaboration mean the world to us!

Claude McNeal  
President & CEO

Jeff Owen  
Chief Operating Officer



ACT Out at the University of Indianapolis



# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

## OVERALL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING



Overall 245  
ACT Out 238



Overall 14,053  
ACT Out 13,270

### 2023 Figures Represent

A **30% increase in # of ACT Out shows** vs 2022, a 48% increase vs 2021, and a 113% increase vs 2020

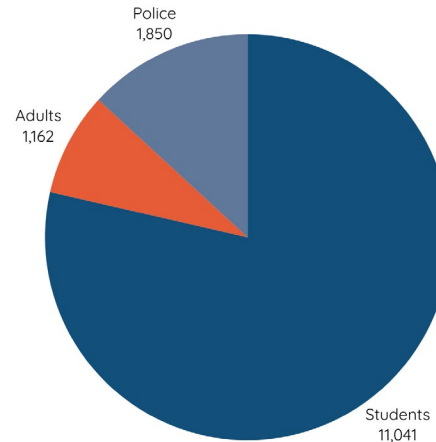
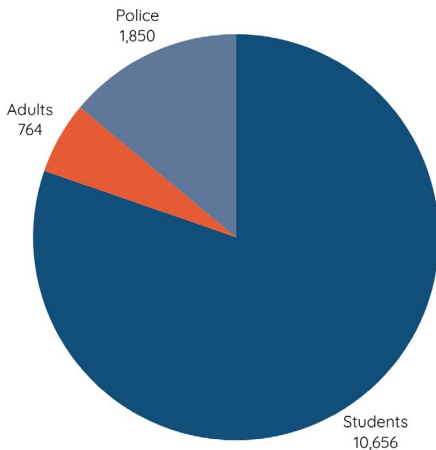
A **21% increase in # of TOTAL presentations** vs 2022, a 40% increase vs 2021, and a 109% increase vs 2020

An **86% increase in ACT Out participants** served vs 2022, a 113% increase vs 2021, and a 265% increase vs 2020

A **55% increase in TOTAL #'s served** vs 2022, a 70% increase vs 2021, and a 234% increase vs 2020

### TOTAL ACT OUT PARTICIPANTS: 13,270

### TOTAL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS: 14,053



## YOUTH SERVED BY PROGRAMS



**10,656 students** served by ACT Out



**281 Herron Classical students** (classes & shows)



**11 student** artists and interns



**93 student patrons** for HCS/IPAI Productions

# OUR PROGRAMS

We serve a variety of artists, schools and communities to bring alternative educational theatre experiences to children and adults. Our programs serve to inspire future artists and patrons, build healthy relationships, and build character, while instilling a greater sense of self, of cooperation, and belonging to a larger society. All of our programs focus first on the underserved inner-city youth of Indianapolis, where both the concentration of at-risk students and need for immediate impact is greatest.



## **Act Out** SOCIAL-ISSUE THEATER

ACT Out, our largest outreach program, is our social-issue theatre troupe that travels and performs across Indiana using theatre as a catalyst for open discussion and creating awareness about social issues surrounding mental health and education. Helping to transform the lives of over 550,000 people, ACT Out addresses the most pressing and complex issues facing students and adults today and encourages them to embrace individualized solutions.



## **Youth & The Arts** FOSTERING EDUCATION & INSPIRATION

Youth and the Arts (YATA) provides students with opportunities to learn, practice, and sharpen their theatre arts skills. Under the guidance of qualified artistic and academic professionals, students explore their creativity in a safe, honest and non-judgmental environment. Our YATA program provides classroom instruction during the school year and intensive summer performing arts workshops for high school students.



## **IN Performing Arts Initiative**

This professional summer theatre training program for high school and college artists features professional actors, directors, designers and choreographers working alongside students to round out a unique summer performing arts training opportunity for young theatre enthusiasts, working on and off the stage with the professional theatre company's annual Summer Stock production(s).



## **Humanities Theatre Presentations**

These original, award-winning productions bring the Humanities to life! Providing an exciting, theatrical approach to traditional classroom teaching, these presentations inspire future generations of theatre enthusiasts to better understand and appreciate our world's history as cultures, inventions, music, and literature come to life right before their eyes.



Songs for a New World, 2023

11,041

youth served in  
36 different schools

1,162

adults served

1,850

Indiana State Police Officers  
served in 37 state-mandated  
trainings across 16 different  
Indiana counties



Songs for a New World, 2023



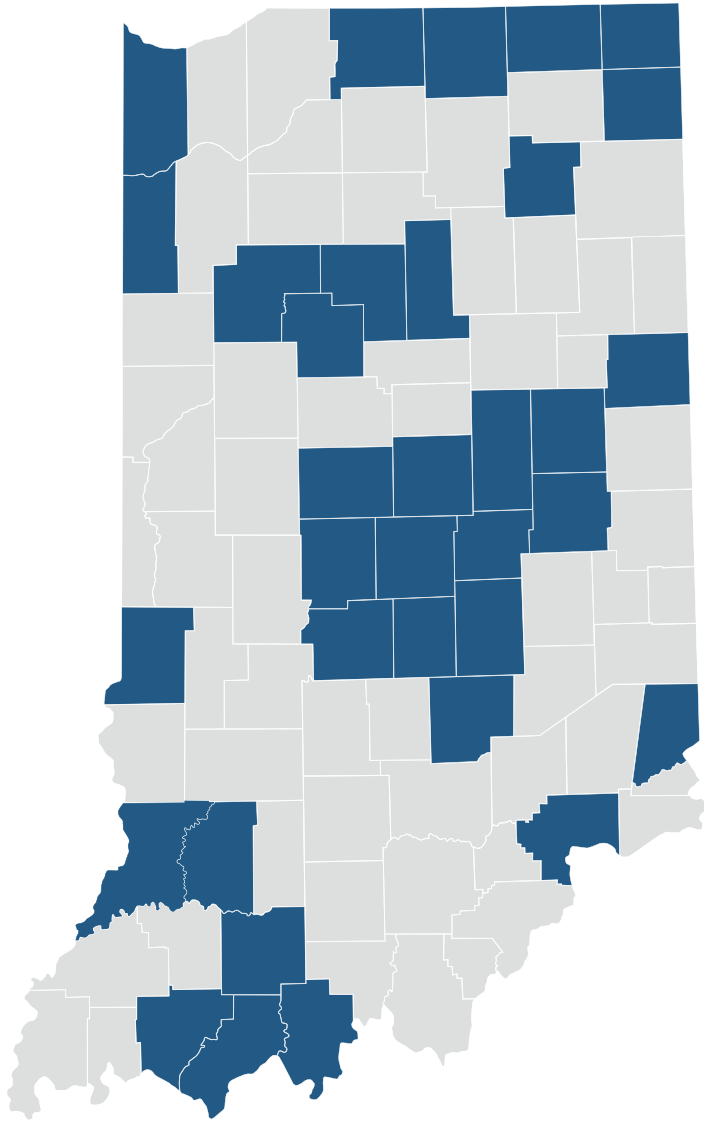


“THE INTERACTION BETWEEN STUDENTS AND ACTORS WAS PHENOMENAL. STUDENTS WERE ENGAGED IN ACT OUT AND THEIR QUESTIONS WERE THOUGHT-PROVOKING. STUDENTS WERE PROMPTED TO TAKE ACTION TO BRING AWARENESS TO MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP INTERACTIONS.”

**Jennifer Tackett**  
Language Arts Teacher  
Elwood Jr./Sr. High School



# COUNTIES SERVED



1. Marion
2. Hamilton
3. Hendricks
4. Morgan
5. Boone
6. Shelby
7. Hancock
8. Madison
9. Johnson
10. Bartholomew
11. Carroll
12. Cass
13. Daviess
14. Dearborn
15. Dekalb
16. Delaware
17. Dubois
18. Elkhart
19. Henry
20. Jay
21. Jefferson
22. Knox
23. Lagrange
24. Lake
25. Miami
26. Newton
27. Perry
28. Spencer
29. St. Joseph
30. Steuben
31. Vigo
32. Warrick
33. White
34. Whitley

“MANY STUDENTS SHARED THAT THE PRESENTATION WAS THOUGHT-PROVOKING AND EYE-OPENING. WE ENJOYED HOW THE ACTORS DOVE DEEP INTO SITUATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ARE NOT DISCUSSED OPENLY. THIS ALLOWED THE STUDENTS TO REALIZE THE ISSUES ARE NOT AS ISOLATED AS SOME MIGHT THINK.”

**Heather Ganske-Connolly**  
Mental Health Counselor  
Hobart High School





ACT Out at Herron High School



## THE RESULTS ARE IN

Our 2023-24 school year program in partnership with the Indiana Department of Education has ACT Out working with close to 3,000 students from 19 different Indiana schools located in 10 Indiana counties. To date, over 1,200 students have completed surveys during the fall semester. Mid-term evaluation results report the following:

- 83% of overall students who participated in the program are more likely to **pay attention to the feelings of others**.
- 77% of overall students will seek out more **peaceful solutions to conflict**.
- 72% of overall students will try to **stay calm** when there is a conflict.
- 76% of high school students will **think before they act in a conflict**, compared with 70% of middle school students, and 58% of elementary.
- 78% of high school students saw the program demonstrate skills to **help with conflict and anxiety**. 60% of middle school students saw skills, and 57% of elementary students.
- 93% of high school students agree that the program stressed the **importance of being kind**. 75% of middle school students agreed, and 72% of elementary students.

“ACT OUT PROVIDED OUR STUDENTS WITH AN ENGAGING LEARNING EXPERIENCE THAT CHALLENGED THEM TO REFLECT ON THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS. STUDENTS ARE NOW MORE AWARE OF HOW TO BETTER SUPPORT THEIR PEERS AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS THAT COMMONLY OCCUR DURING THEIR MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT. ACT OUT WAS JUST WHAT OUR SCHOOL NEEDED.”

**Brandy Hyatt**  
Principal  
Monrovia Middle School



# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE CURTAIN

## CMP STAFF

**Claude McNeal**, President & CEO

**Jeff Owen**, Chief Operating Officer

**Mary Lou Szczesiul**, Associate Director & Youth Instructor

**Zach Stonerock**, ACT Out Director

**Jerry Panatieri**, Company Production Manager

**Josiah McCruiston**, Summer Program Director

**Tina Sullivan**, Strategy & Marketing Counsel

**Gail Marcopulos**, ACT Out IDOE School Recruiter

**Aaron Henze**, ACT Out Marketing Associate

**Tessa Roberts**, ACT Out Marketing Associate

## CMP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Charles Gilbert**, Chairman

**Rob Skaff**, Treasurer

**Ronan Marra**, Board Member

**Jim Phillips**, Board Member

**Wanda Riesz**, Board Member

**Napoleon Williams**, Board Member

**Claude McNeal**, Corporate President

## ADVISORY BOARD

**Amanda Krenson**, Attorney-at-law

**Nataly Lowder**, Executive V.P. & Chief Advancement Officer, Eiteljorg Museum

**John Mutz**, former Lt. Governor, and civic leader

**Ann O'Hara**, Attorney-at-law

**Terri Bourus, Ph.D.** - Editor, New Oxford Shakespeare

**Janet McNeal**, President, Herron Classical Schools

**Mac McWhirter**, past president, People's Bank

**Judith Lisi**, retired President & CEO Kravitz Center for the Performing Arts

**Dr. Kathleen Golightly**

**John Ratzenberger**, actor, television star of "Cheers"

## PAST HONORED BOARD MEMBERS

**Tom Binford**

**Kurt Vonnegut**

**P.E. MacAllister**

## ACT OUT ACTING TROUPE

**Thomas Bennett Ayres**

**Sabrina Duprey**

**Hannah Embree**

**Shawnte' Gaston**

**Haley Glickman**

**Trent Hawthorne-Richards**

**Aaron Henze**

**Austin Hookfin**

**LaKesha Lorene**

**Chandra Lynch**

**Devan Mathias**

**Jamaal McCray**

**Tessa Roberts**

**Tristan Ross**

**Christine Zavakos**

## SUPPORT CMP

Visit [claudemcnealproductions.com](http://claudemcnealproductions.com) to view our sponsors and funding partners and to see how your gift makes a difference!

## DONATE TO CMP

Visit [claudemcnealproductions.com](http://claudemcnealproductions.com) and click on the "Donate Now" button. Make a secure donation through PayPal.

## JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

We're on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter & Instagram. Follow us for updates!

## CONTACT US FOR MORE INFO

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# OUR 2023 PROGRAM PARTNERS

Collaborations are critical to our outreach. Partnering with us in education and theatre programs throughout 2023 were the following organizations:



## PEACE LEARNING CENTER (PLC)

In its 17th year, elements of our partnership included the sharing of ideas and resources, while providing presentations on bullying and teasing, self-esteem building, teambuilding, peaceful conflict resolution, and the core topics associated with social and emotional learning.



## HERRON CLASSICAL SCHOOLS (HCS)

Our work with HCS (at Herron since its inception in 2006, Riverside since 2017, and Herron Prep Academy since 2021) has been the perfect “laboratory” for some of the innovative programs we offer. This year, we worked with over 280 students in the theatre department, teaching beginning, intermediate and advanced theatre courses, as well as directing and mounting their spring production of “Macbeth.”



## MCGOWAN HALL

In March 2023, Claude McNeal Productions (CMP) moved into our new home at McGowan Hall in the historic Old Northside neighborhood. In June, we began our summer performing arts camp and presented our first production in the venue in July with “Songs for a New World.” Since then, CMP staff has been working with McGowan Hall management to help them realize their vision for the future,

where they are “positioned as a vibrant center in the community where civic, cultural, educational, and humanitarian pursuits thrive,” states Executive Director, Robert Newport. This new collaboration is a perfect fit to bring together two entities that will together enhance the social, educational, and artistic lives of our community. Educational and mainstage productions are already planned for 2024!



## INDIANA DRUG ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION (IDEA)

Since 2008, a health and human service initiative by the Indiana Drug Enforcement Association has partnered ACT Out with the Indiana State Police to provide a unique way of presenting state mandated training for all new police officers in the areas of domestic violence, dealing with hazardous materials, SIDS, blood borne pathogens, mental illness, human trafficking, autism, de-escalation, and Alzheimer’s. Each year, ACT Out works with up to 2,000 police officers.



## FIREFLY CHILDREN & FAMILY ALLIANCE/ IN DEPT. OF CHILD SERVICES

Since 2017, CMP has partnered with Firefly Children & Family Alliance (formerly the Children’s Bureau of Indiana) and the Indiana Department of Child Services (Region 10) to provide much-needed, additional ACT Out programs to IPS and surrounding schools on the areas of abuse prevention, conflict-resolution, self-esteem building, and more. Each year, we work with over 1,500 students.



# OUR 2023 PROGRAM PARTNERS



## INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (IDOE)

In 2023, CMP's ACT Out social issue theatre program began a very successful partnership with the Indiana Department of Education to provide our live interactive theatre programs for up to 3,000 elementary, middle, and high school students across the state of Indiana during the 2023-24 school year. In partnership with the IDOE and their Title IV technical assistance funds, presentations focus on providing mental health support, in particular the issues of preventing school violence, bullying and teasing, and learning loss anxiety due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



## INDIANAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS (IPS)

Since 2022, ACT Out has partnered with the IPS Equity Advancement Team to provide professional learning services on racial equity for IPS school leaders and staff. In these sessions, IPS staff members participate in live interactive experiences focused on discrimination in the workplace, conversations focused on issues of equity, or other emotionally charged situations that emerge while working together and creating an inclusive working environment/positive workplace culture. Over the past few years, CMP Staff have also been working with the IPS Executive Director for Enrichment Programs (and more recently their Fine Arts Coordinator) to help target our educational theatre programming to IPS students and schools most in need.

# OUR 2023 SPONSORS

**Our 2023 educational theatre programs were made possible by the following sponsors:**

Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc.

Lilly Endowment, Inc.

The Indy Arts Council and the City of Indianapolis

Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts

The Braveheart Foundation

Nickel Plate Arts

Herron Classical Schools

Downtown Optimists Foundation

McGowan Hall

McGuire Scenic (now Tyler Scenic)

SIA Foundation (Subaru of Indiana Automotive)

# McGOWAN HALL

Claude McNeal PRODUCTIONS

1305



Claude McNeal Productions' new home at McGowan Hall

## MISSION

To inspire and transform lives and organizations through the energizing power of theatre and of theatre-related educational programming, while creating timely and relevant original works that enhance and stimulate performing arts in central Indiana.

## VISION

We are well-known for our progressive, innovative, relevant, and original-concept social issue theatre and mainstage programming that enriches the lives of our community. We are a leading voice, advocate, and premiere destination for the performing arts and arts training.





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