

MIFA Victory Theatre Vocational Education Program
Concept Paper 6/12

MIFA Victory Theatre Vocational Education Program is a collaboration of MIFA Victory Theatre with the Holyoke Public Schools and the International Association of Technical and Stage Employees (IATSE Local 53). It is the first educational program of its kind in Holyoke and its goal is to train secondary school age students for highly skilled jobs in the Entertainment and Media Industries.

The program is dedicated to fostering the arts by educating young people through a practical hands on syllabus in all aspects of administration, technical production management and media creation such as producing and general management, box office and front of house management, technical direction and stage management, lighting, sound and camera operation and wardrobe and cosmetology skills. Each student will be expected to exhibit the highest standards of artistry, professionalism and scholarship. Additionally, the program will encourage students to be confident and competent, able to think critically and creatively and to become leaders in their profession.

Technical Theatre students will complete the program with the ability to creatively process & solve challenges related to the demands of theater, film, television and special media production.

Professional teaching staff from the industry along with union practitioners will provide guidance and support to the student's academic, artistic and practical achievements. Also, the union will provide and encourage internships, as will the staff in outside productions and institutions. In the Harvard University study *Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century*, it was noted that "work-linked learning can be extraordinarily powerful in engaging students who are bored or turned off by conventional classroom instruction."

The following are areas that will be included in this program with a job description:

Producing and General Management: identification of product, sources of financing, contract development and oversight of successful project completion and facilities operation.

Box Office: marketing and selling of tickets, record keeping and reporting.

Front of House: management of public access and relations.

Technical Direction: organization of practical production support.

Stage Manager: organization of rehearsal and production schedules, liaison with performance companies.

Technical Assistants: support for all aspects of above.

Stage Crew: responsible for realization of technical support.

Running Crew: operation of equipment.

Props Master: responsible for making, obtaining and maintaining all hand and mechanical props.

Props Assistants: support above.

Sound Technician: responsible for devising sound.

Sound Assistants: support above.

Wardrobe: supervision and maintenance of costumes.

Camera Operator: filming and video.

Costume Assistants: building costumes, making alterations or repairs, cleaning and maintenance. May serve as behind the scene assistants or dressers.

Make-up Head: Responsible for makeup, replacement of supplies.

Make-up Crew: support above.

Lighting Crew: Assists with the hang and focus and running of lights.

Initially, training in stage, film and convention lighting, sound and make-up etc will augment the shops at Dean Vocational High School. Invited entertainment industry professionals and Union members will provide entertainment specific instruction. Work co-op opportunities will be as apprentices with the union at events throughout Western Massachusetts. MIFA Victory Theatre staff and invited guests will continue to work with Holyoke High School students in an afterschool club on production skills and theatre management. Their skills and training will be utilized on the many presentations at Holyoke High School as apprentices and they too will be eligible for the co-op work through the union.

When the Victory Theatre opens, in addition to the in school training and union apprenticeships in venues across Western Mass the theater will be utilized for hands on training, co-op opportunities and paying jobs.