

Education at Ford's Theatre

Cultivating the next generation of leaders by developing student voices, infusing the arts into classrooms and strengthening the teaching of history and civic understanding across the country.

As the country continued to manage the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, our education team worked tirelessly to pivot existing programs into virtual experiences, developed new virtual resources and found new and expanded ways to answer the needs of the public and the education community. With almost ten years' experience providing innovative distance learning experiences, Ford's Theatre education programs have motivated, engaged and enhanced the experience of students and deepened professional development for their teachers. It is through the unique, interdisciplinary blending of the arts and humanities that Ford's Theatre offers students and teachers new perspectives, adjusted educational environments and a learning experience like none other.

Virtual Student Learning

More than **25,000** students were directly served by our virtual education programming.

9,223 students participated in a Virtual Field Trip.

201 students participated in our new pilot program, *Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast*, and developed podcasts of their own.

428 students performed speeches by Abraham Lincoln and other notable public figures through the Lincoln Online Oratory Project and Festival, following virtual residencies with Ford's Theatre Teaching Artists.

10,137 students watched the free, on-demand recording of our one-act play, *One Destiny*, which tells the story of Lincoln's assassination through the eyes of two men who were present that night, actor Harry Hawk and Ford's Theatre manager Harry Ford.

2,125 students listened to the free radio play *Necessary Sacrifices*, which explored the two documented encounters between Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln during a period of national crisis.



A student explores Ford's Theatre via Google Expedition. Photo by Trisha Goins.

Education Program Feedback



Students participating in the Lincoln Online Oratory Project and Festival.

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The whole experience was worthwhile. The kids loved preparing and presenting the project... Ford's Theatre made it very easy to participate and was very supportive... Parents were very impressed with the project.

- Teacher participating in the Lincoln Online Oratory Project and Festival

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All in all, this program is the best professional development I have ever been involved in. It definitely helped me during the most challenging year of my career, and I am really looking forward to continuing my professional growth in the future as a Ford's Theatre National Oratory Fellow.

- Teacher participating in the National Oratory Fellows

Virtual Professional Development for Teachers

Ford's Theatre Society worked with teachers in **48** states and the District of Columbia.

33 teacher leaders in **16** states and the District of Columbia were part of the National Oratory Fellows program. Collectively, they provided oratory-integrated instruction for **2,677** students during the school year.

14 educators from across the country participated in our Virtual Summer Teacher Institute. These educators shared their learning with more than **700** students last school year.

In all, **455** teachers participated in newly developed virtual professional development workshops on a wide variety of topics including Lincoln's legacy, Civil War Washington, the history of Ford's Theatre and the Ford's Theatre Approach to Teaching Oratory.



Ford's Theatre Virtual Field Trip.



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STAND UP, BE HEARD: THE PODCAST

Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast

Ford's Theatre Society developed a new pilot program, *Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast*, where **201** high school students created podcast episodes about youth leaders and causes important to them. This program offered young people a platform to engage with each other on the topic of youth leadership, highlight the work teen and youth leaders are doing to effect positive change in our country and allow students to make connections between leaders of the past to youth and teen leaders of today. The program also allowed students to connect oratory and performance skills with a contemporary medium. Last year's student-developed podcasts can be found here: www.fords.org/for-teachers/programs/stand-up-be-heard-the-podcast

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The best part of this project was being able to talk about and inform people about an issue very close to my heart.

– *Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast* participant

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I think it's an amazing experience to be able to work with an amazing group of people and learn more about a certain topic. I very much enjoyed it.

– *Stand Up, Be Heard: The Podcast* participant

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Parent Feedback

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I just wanted to let you know that my son and his class attended the Zoom field trip at Ford's today, and it was WONDERFUL! I sat in while it was happening, and your colleagues were just fantastic – my son was spellbound for the entire time, something that almost never happens during Zoom presentations, and they were so engaging and kind... He honestly rarely talks that much in class so that really is a testament to their engaging presentation.

– *Parent of student participant in a Ford's Virtual Field Trip*

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Our Words, Our Power

Ford's Theatre developed and launched a new virtual professional development series called *Our Words, Our Power*. This speech series focused on how people, public figures and private citizens use their words to inspire change and shape our world. Each workshop included a performance of a notable speech or poem on a particular theme, a facilitated discussion on the speech's impact, the emotions evoked and the relevancy of the words today, and applicable tips that anyone can use to improve public speaking. Each workshop was facilitated by Ford's Theatre Teaching Artists and Master Oratory Fellows. This in-depth new series engaged **87** teachers.

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I really enjoyed the workshop today. The format worked quite well in that it provided enough time for participants to listen and discuss.

– *Our Words, Our Power* participant

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Reaching Students Across the Country

An Idaho class engaged in learning about President Lincoln's assassination using Ford's Theatre Resources.

← Tweet



Stacie Christensen
@Christensens5th

Working together to create a human timeline to illustrate the significant events leading up to Lincoln's assassination. Thanks for all the great resources, @fordstheatre! #WhereLincolnsLegacyLives @FordsEdu @BSDEducation @HorizonBSD #ITeachHistory



Expanded Virtual Field Trips

While students were not able to visit and tour our historic site in person for most of the year, Ford's Theatre invested resources to significantly expand our Virtual Field Trip program. This program explored President Lincoln, Civil War Washington and the history of Ford's Theatre for students, teachers and the general public. In the past year we provided virtual education programs for **13,162** students, teachers and online learning enthusiasts. This was an increase in participation in virtual programming by **636%** since the 2018-2019 school year (the last full year unaffected by the pandemic). By developing easily accessible virtual educational programs, Ford's Theatre was able to serve underserved communities in the D.C. area and beyond.