

הידיעון

HAYIDION

RAVSAK

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ART AND AESTHETICS

WHY STUDENTS SHOULD RUN THE SHOW

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The stakes are high, and the show is literally in their hands. A student sits behind an ETC lighting console with her finger over the “go” button, one in front of a digital mixer with all ten fingers spread over the “mute” buttons, another student by his side catching any missing microphone channels, and one student with her finger over the next musical accompaniment track. The director calls a cue, and in unison they transition and cross-fade into the next scene. This happens hundreds of times during the rehearsals leading up to opening night.

These students are the technical theatre crew for the Jordan Alexander Ressler Arts Program productions of *You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and Disney’s *The Lion King Jr.* at Scheck Hillel Community School. They will execute all lighting, sound and microphone cues.

Opening night for any main-stage production begins long before the curtain opens. Much hard work goes into the seamless collaboration between the creative team (faculty) and the dedicated students. In the process, the students—across grade levels—develop wide skill sets, with a focus on audio and lighting. Beyond everything technical, these students pick up the invaluable skills of working and functioning within a team, collaborating, engaging and persisting in the face of challenge, accepting and growing from feedback, and constantly reflecting and improving on their work. The benefits of arts education cannot be overstated.

In a professional setting with their work on display on the main stage, these students interact with everyone from award-winning musical directors to professional sound engineers, while

supporting the student cast. They learn the tools of the industry and the tricks of the trade from educators with professional backgrounds, many actively engaged in the industry from local equity theatres to Broadway and other major venues and events. Additionally, the students are invited to participate in other real-world educational experiences, including backstage technical tours of local venues such as the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts and the New World Center, home of the New World Symphony, and representing the school on occasions such as public television fund drives alongside internationally renowned artists, with tours of the technical elements of the studio.

When students in the technical theatre crew earn enough show credits, they are inducted into the International Thespian Society, the Educational Theatre Association’s student honorary organization. In recent years, Scheck Hillel main-stage productions with student crews have included Disney’s *The Little Mermaid Jr.*, *Aladdin Kids*, *Into the Woods Jr.*, *Number the Stars*, *Feiffer’s People*, *Willy Wonka Jr.*, and *Seussical Jr.*

As students work their way up to running the technical theatre for events, shows and productions, these skills are put to use with our state-of-the-art equipment, thanks to our Jordan Alexander Ressler Arts Program endowment. From digital and analog sound consoles and a rack of 20 ULX-D wireless microphone systems, to conventional and LED stage lighting and intelligent moving fixtures, students receive first-rate training. At the heart of it all, it’s about crafting an educational experience that sparks and cultivates skill and talent, passion and ambition.