



# Young Audiences Western New York

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## **Young Audiences of Western New York Renews Commitment to Serving the Underserved, Receives Grants of \$100,000 from the John R. Oishei Foundation and \$10,000 from the New York Council for the Humanities**

**BUFFALO, NY (5/20/13)** Young Audiences of Western New York is proud to announce that they are the recipients of a \$100,000 grant from the John R. Oishei Foundation, and a \$10,000 grant from the New York State Council for the Humanities. These grants allow Young Audiences to renew their commitment to serving underserved populations.

The John R. Oishei Foundation grant of \$100,000 strengthens Young Audience's work in providing sustainable, arts education through its Most-at-Risk Program. The Most-at-Risk program serves high-risk teens living in Erie County. Through partnerships with the Erie County Departments of Mental Health and Social Services, and the Family Help Center as well as the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, the Most-at-Risk program aims to provide a safe and enriching environment to engage participants with a variety of professional artists. Participants will learn about professional opportunities and gain creative, positive experiences in spoken word, creative writing, music, theatre, and visual arts.

*"There is no question at all that providing robust arts experience programs to young people improves development of life skills," said Robert D. Gioia, president of the John R. Oishei Foundation. "The opportunities that Young Audiences provides for "most-at-risk" students and to working artists is irreplaceable, and the Foundation considers them to be a key partner to achieving our goals in education."*

Young Audiences has also been awarded \$10,000 for the highly competitive Director's Project Grant for *Family Programs with Local Artists* from the New York Council for the Humanities. With funds from the New York Council for the Humanities, Young Audiences will offer free *Family Programs with Local Artists* in libraries in the 8 counties of Western New York. Professional artists will engage families in conversations about cultural arts.

*"We at the Council are excited to support Young Audiences through this grant award, as their impressive slate of weekend programs promise to actively engage families," said Sara Ogger, executive director of the New York Council for the Humanities. "These programs will reach into the most rural and remote areas of New York State in the eight counties they serve. We think the programs are a great way to use the historic, artistic, and cultural strengths of Western New York to enrich our present and ensure our future."*

*The John R. Oishei Foundation strives to be a catalyst for change to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life for the Buffalo Niagara region. The Foundation was established in 1940 by John R. Oishei, founder of Trico Products Corporation.*

*The New York Council for the Humanities' mission is to help all New Yorkers become thoughtful participants in our communities by promoting critical inquiry, cultural understanding, and civic engagement. Founded in 1975, they are the sole statewide proponent of public access to the humanities.*

**ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:** *Young Audiences of Western New York's mission is to make the visual, performing, and literary arts a part of young people's lives in order to enhance their development as creative and productive human beings. They provide services in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming counties. Every day, they fulfill their mission through performances, workshops, and residencies in educational, cultural and community centers. Young Audiences of Western New York is celebrating 50 years of service in 2013.*

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# ARTS FOR LEARNING

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