



Young Playwrights' Theater

## About YPT

*“ I will never forget how it feels to be a child with a lot to say and no clear way to express it. ....YPT is a perfect vessel for teaching young people about literacy, about conflict resolution, about the power of the arts. But more than anything, playwriting helps young people find their voice...and an audience that is listening.”*

- Karen Zacarías, Founding Artistic Director - Young Playwrights' Theater

Young Playwrights' Theater (YPT) is the only professional theater in Washington, DC dedicated entirely to arts education. YPT was established in 1995 by renowned and award-winning playwright, Karen Zacarias, to give students in the greater Washington. D.C. area a vehicle for expressing their ideas through the art of playwriting.

Through a wide array of free, interactive in-school, out-of-school as well as summer programs at neighborhood schools and community centers, YPT has helped thousands of students explore the playwriting process from writing to revision to performance with professional artists to activate learning and nurture creativity. Targeting elementary, middle and high school students, YPT fully integrates into the existing curricula and uses an innovative approach to help educators teach the required standards. By understanding the power of language and how it can be used to express their ideas, students are able to realize their potential, both as individuals and artists. YPT shares student-written work with local, national and international audiences with free professional performances featuring local DC actors, directors and designers, in order to cultivate an appreciation for these young artists and to inspire others to write. In seeing their work brought to life for their community, these playwrights recognize their ability to affect the world around them.

YPT works with a diverse population of students throughout the Washington, D.C. metro area. 35% of YPT's students speak English as their second language, 64% live at or near the national poverty level, 98% qualify for the free lunch program and 95% attend schools that receive Title I Federal Assistance.

Over the years, YPT has been recognized with numerous awards including the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award in 2010, the highest honor in arts education. The award was presented to YPT by First Lady Michelle Obama in a special White House ceremony. YPT has also received two awards from HandsOn Greater DC Cares for Community Impact and Leadership, the Mayor's Arts Award for Outstanding contribution to Arts Education, and a Helen Hayes nomination for Best New Play, among other accolades.

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YPT continually strives to improve its program by soliciting feedback from teachers, a professional education evaluator as well as a Student Advisory Council and an Advisory Council of accomplished dramatists that includes acclaimed actress, playwright and professor, Anna Deavere Smith and Pulitzer-prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel, among others.

A nationally recognized leader in arts education, YPT strives to make the arts, and specifically theater, a core part of every student's education.

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