

Arizona Arts Proficiency Seal

Queen Creek Unified School District

Capstone Reflection

Thinking about the process and product of your Capstone, reflect upon what you are most proud of and what you might do differently if you were to complete a similar project in the future.

I am most proud of my cast and how I was able to create a space where we could all be super productive every rehearsal and still have lots of fun. They keep telling me how much they miss my rehearsals and how kind of a director I was and that truly brings me a lot of joy. I am proud knowing that I am able to be in charge of people while still being a friend to them which is something a lot of people in the theater industry struggle with. Something I would do differently is maybe to ask more questions earlier on. A lot of things regarding the website part specifically I assumed would just make sense when I got to them which wasn't completely true. Ultimately being better at thinking ahead would have helped it go a bit smoother and relieve some stress.

Explain how your life experiences are reflected through your project.

My project reflected my life experiences by focusing on the main motif of understanding and acceptance of not only yourself but also everyone around you. Many people would refer to me as strange which is typically seen as a bad thing. This comes from not only being a young arts student but also being queer. Coming to terms with this over the course of my life has taught me to accept myself and to not be okay with others not accepting me. Throughout my life I have also learned compassion for others who are strange like me. This lesson has been taught to me after having to see many people that I loved experience the worst of it, I know many other students who have fallen into deep depressions and even come close to self harm simply because the world around them wasn't tolerant of someone who might be a little different. My

life experiences make me want to strive for a more tolerant and accepting world and my capstone was just the first step.

Thinking about the Extracurricular hours you completed, reflect upon what you learned through the experiences and/or how you have been impacted as an artist?

The hours that I included were from when I stage managed Queen Creek High School Theatre Companies 2023-24 fall show, "You Can't Take It With You." Through this experience, I learned a lot about how to manage people and still be a friend. This is something a lot of people in theater struggle with. During this show, I learned that the best way to do this is by simple communication. Sometimes theater can get frustrating and when you are in charge of your peers you may have to correct behavior and in a way get them in trouble. One way we solved this issue is when we decided to make rules for the show we had a discussion with everyone and we all made rules we agreed on. I also made sure to remind my cast often of my responsibilities so that when I did have to get stern with them they understood where it was coming from and we avoided conflict. This show helped remind me why I love stage managing and want to become a teacher and that is because I love making theater happen. Lastly, this show also solidified to me that I am good at what I do.

How is your life positively impacted by the arts?

My entire life I have struggled to find my purpose, I felt this pressure to figure out exactly who I wanted to be as soon as possible. This was very hard for me because I have so many passions and I want to be able to pursue all of them. Through theater and the arts I can use all of my skills to create something beautiful and meaningful. Without the arts, I would have no outlet for not just my frustration but also my joy and I have no idea where I would be now without it because my life pretty much revolves fully around the arts. Another way the arts have

positively impacted me is by giving me a safe space to go to at school. Being queer in high school can sometimes be hard so whenever the outside world became a little too much to handle I always knew I had a place to go. The theater room at our school is a beacon of hope for me. You walk into that room and you can feel the passion and creativity in the air, and you feel truly safe. Without the arts, I full-heartedly believe my life would have no real purpose.

How do you plan to include artistic experiences in your future after high school?

After high school, I plan to attend Hastings College for Theatre Education. It is very important to me that I choose a career that is a catalyst for artistic expression. I figure the best way to do this is by striving to give students the opportunity that my director has given me through the past for years. I want to give kids a safe space to express themselves and a place where they can hone all their creativity into something meaningful. After college, I plan to teach for a while at a typical school and gain some experience. My ultimate end goal is to have my own theater company and own a beautiful theater. I want to be fully in charge of what art I put out into the world and create my own beacon of creativity and light in the world.

What advice would you give incoming freshmen about studying the arts to help them make the most of their experiences while in high school?

I would tell any incoming freshman that if you have ever had even an ounce of creativity in your body it is so important to channel it somewhere. Art is how we can change the world and have a real influence and a voice in the world that we live in. Whether or not you plan to pursue the arts everybody needs a creative outlet. Being in the arts has taught me not only how to be a well-rounded arts student but also how to be a truly good person. Theater has given me social skills beyond compare and taught me communication and compassion in a way I never dreamed possible.