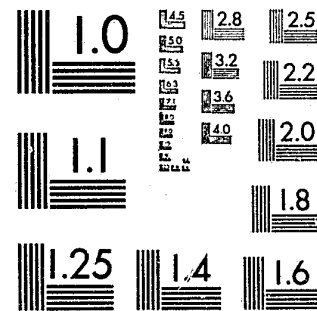


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92987

# The THEATRE Connection

OCCUPATIONAL EXPLORATION THRU THE PERFORMING ARTS

A Training Manual for  
A Court Employment and Training Program  
by Andrew Klein



Funded by  
State Employment and Training Council/Department of Manpower Development  
GOVERNOR'S YOUTH GRANT

and  
Balance of State Prime Sponsor-Quincy CETA Consortium  
Quincy District Court

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# The THEATRE Connection

OCCUPATIONAL EXPLORATION THRU THE PERFORMING ARTS

A Training Manual for a Court Employment and Training Program  
by Andrew Klein

Chief Probation Officer, Quincy Court, Quincy, Mass.

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May 1, 1982

U.S. Department of Justice  
National Institute of Justice

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Theatre Connection Participant  
 earns money to pay back his victim restitution.



Mike Kullen, A.P.N., 12/10/81

## Preface

### A. Putting Offenders to Work

Since 1975, the Quincy Court has been putting offenders to work so they can earn an honest wage while making up for their crimes by paying their victims full restitution. In addition to extensive placements in the private sector, we came to rely on CETA for serving high-risk, low skilled offenders. Initially we developed various group-work projects supervised by court probation staff. In the summer of 1977, court crews did simple maintenance work at the Metropolitan District Commission's Nut Island Sewage Treatment Plant. The next year we sent crews to various islands that dot Boston Harbor to do routine landscaping work.\* When the the warm weather ended, we placed crew members in a variety of public worksites throughout the court's jurisdiction.

By placing no more than two at each worksite, the offenders were afforded not only strict supervision, but individualized job training. One court supervisor placed 23 different offenders in various worksites, monitored their attendance, ran interference with worksites when necessary and hired and fired participants. Funds from CETA's Youth Employment and Training Project (YETP) title paid for his and his workers' salaries.

Through this project, offenders interacted with agency personnel who provided them with positive role models, they were exposed to "real" work and the court was provided with individual assessments of each participant's potential. Worksites varied in what they offered offenders in the way of employment and job training. Some proved good for certain offenders but were unsuited for others.

\*See Appendix "Law Breakers Reclaim Island Jungle."

Work Sites Included:

1. Quincy Court
2. Norfolk County Hospital
3. Quincy Department of Public Works
4. Quincy Library
5. Faxon House
6. South Shore Area Jewish Community Center
7. Quincy School Department
8. Quincy Dog Pound
9. Quincy City Hospital
10. Quincy Council on Aging
11. Weymouth Fire Department
12. Braintree Park Department
13. Hull Housing Authority
14. Quincy YMCA
15. Randolph Housing Authority
16. Glastonbury Abbey
17. Bridge Over Troubled Water

Scheduling Department  
Cafeteria  
Adult Probation  
NYPUM Program\*  
Kitchen  
Housekeeping

Highway Department  
Switchboard  
Maintenance Department  
Groundskeeping  
Custodial Work

Maintenance Department

Maintenance Department

Cleaning Station  
Litter Pickup  
Maintenance  
Construction  
Maintenance

If an offenders's work was unsatisfactory, s/he was pulled from the worksite to answer to the court. As a result, worksites didn't feel that the offenders had been dumped on them, and therefore, if the first individual placed with the firm failed, most worksites were willing to try again.

Although many worksites were excellent, the court was still unable to place higher-risk offenders, nor could it assure that all placements encouraged suitable work habits and promoted individual growth among participants. Thus, the court realized that it needed a worksite where no one would be turned away; a project where deadlines were an integral part of the program in order to simulate the real, profit-motivated, world — a worksite that would train participants for real jobs in the real world.

\*National Youth Project Using Minibikes (a YMCA/Honda Program for juvenile offenders).

**The Bargain Center, Inc.**  
Quincy's Largest Department Store with the Smallest Price  
1 WASHINGTON STREET  
QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS 01904

**Milham Model Products Co., Inc.**  
Curtains  
7-475

**THE PROCTER & GAMBLE MANUFACTURING COMPANY**  
780 WASHINGTON STREET

**Thayer Central, Inc.**  
123 Moore Road, East Weymouth  
7-475

**Jecce's**

**PETROLEUM COMPANY, INC.**  
43 OLD COLONY AVENUE • WOLLASTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02170 • (617) 471-0155  
Elizabeth P. Williams, Director

**barker's**  
1450 Hancock St., Quincy, Massachusetts 02169 Tel. 472-2122

**SOUTH SHORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INC.**  
July 29, 1980

August 1, 1980  
Mr. Jack Williams  
Quincy District Court  
Earn-It Program  
50 Chestnut Street  
Quincy, MA. 02169

Dear Jack:

R. D. Barker,  
years to participate  
District Court v.

We wish to  
program basic  
further devel

Best regards  
Richard P.  
R. D. Barker  
RDB/1

Jack Williams, Business Liaison  
Earn-It Program  
Quincy District Court  
50 Chestnut Street  
Quincy, MA 02169

Dear Mr. Williams:

The Earn-It Program continues to be everything--plus much more--that we expected it would be when we originally became involved with the court and this idea for a better way of dealing with youthful offenders.

We, at the Chamber, have utilized the program on a number of occasions, with nearly total satisfaction. With 1200 members from the business community we are aware that a good number have participated in the program. Praise for it is overwhelming.

We are highly supportive of continued funding, via State or Federal grants, for the Earn-It Program, and consider this to be an excellent use of tax monies.

Best wishes for many continued successes.

Sincerely,  
Ronald F. Frazier  
General Manager

## B. Work Sentencing

Putting offenders to work is a much greater challenge than putting them in jail and with much greater payoffs both for them and the community-at-large which must foot the bills. Making offenders pay restitution or perform unpaid community work service helps make victims whole again, compensates the community-at-large, and provides offenders with a correctional experience. These sanctions also provide another experience for offenders: work — an all too foreign experience to many young offenders.

Work provides the offender the means not only to repay his crime victim but to become an honest, law-abiding, productive citizen. Like oil and water, offenders and work are often not natural allies. Work presupposes self control, internal discipline and a certain amount of foresight as well as a variety of skills which flow from these achievements: getting up each morning, relating to peers and authority, and repeating simple tasks routinely. It also requires basic math, reading and vocational skills. For persons lacking these essentials, job placement in the private sector is out of the question; no amount of referrals to the state employment office, lectures from the judge or probation officer, persistent perusal of the want ads, or job counselling and resume writing will compensate.

Those offenders who commit most street crimes are young and unemployed. They include a disproportionate number of chronically unemployed drop-outs, many with disabling (but undiagnosed) learning disabilities, from undisciplined, single-parent homes, dependent on welfare aid. Many would sooner knock over a business than knock on its doors for a job. Those directly released from court or jail bear the additional burden of criminal records unmitigated by employment records.

To help this population go on to become productive citizens, employment and vocational training is essential. Congress recognized the special needs and problems faced by offenders when creating the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), stipulating them as a target group. CETA and similar programs are ideal for court-related restitution and work sentencing programs. However, these programs must be tailored to meet the special challenges of hard-core, high risk/low skill offenders. The potential of these programs to turn offenders around and to help their victims through cost-effective work programming is worth the attendant risks, as demonstrated by *The THEATRE Connection*, one such program developed by the Quincy Court.

# The THEATRE Connection

This manual describes The Theatre Connection. It is designed to help both courts that want to develop employment and training programs as well as manpower agencies that want to better service criminal offenders. We hope others learn from our mistakes as well as our successes in this area.

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# Introduction — Quincy Court Probation

The Quincy Court district covers an area with a population of one-quarter million in seven cities and towns of Massachusetts' South Shore — from Quincy, a blue-collar, industrial city to Cohasset, a wealthy beachfront suburb of Boston. Almost one quarter of all the offenders tried in the court live within the city limits of neighboring Boston. The court handles all juvenile offenders (youngsters who have not reached 17 years of age) and adult misdemeanants and felons which the District Attorney elects to prosecute there.

The court has long pioneered the use of restitution and work sentencing. To make it effective, the Probation Department, in partnership with the South Shore Chamber of Commerce, has developed a unique program called Earn-It, the largest juvenile and adult court restitution and community work/service program in the country. Offenders who are employed are placed on strict payment plans in order to repay their victims. Unemployed/low risk offenders are placed in a wide variety of private sector jobs on a temporary basis, long enough to earn the money necessary to pay back their victims and to get a toehold of experience in the job market. If they owe no monetary restitution, offenders are placed in a wide range of public and private nonprofit agencies to complete unpaid community work service.

Over the last six years, Earn-It has struggled with the challenge presented by the unemployed offenders who cannot be placed in the private sector because either they are high risk or extremely low skilled or both. They include mostly young, violent, addicted, as well as illiterate, unskilled and undisciplined offenders.

Unfortunately this group of unemployed high-risk offenders constitutes those who commit the bulk of street crime. Sixty percent (60%) of those on probation in Massachusetts, for example, are between the ages of 15 and 24. Of these, 53% are unemployed at the time of their arrest and three quarters are high school dropouts. This age group also constitutes almost 70% of probation recidivists.\*

To meet this challenge, the court turned to employment and training programming offered by CETA. After developing several short-term work programs, discussed in the preface, the need became obvious to the court for creation of a long-term employment and training project so that offenders

\*Within this group (48%) are between the ages of 15-19. "Analysis of Risk/Need Cases in Nine Massachusetts Pilot Courts," Donald Cochran, Office of the Commissioner of Probation, Boston, MA., December 7, 1981.

would not only repay their crime victims and stay out of trouble while doing so, but also learn enough job skills and acquire the discipline to go on to find permanent work or to enroll in long-range academic or vocational training programs. After careful planning, we came up with our most sophisticated and successful effort, *The THEATRE Connection: Occupational Exploration Through the Performing Arts*.

## CHAPTER I — Putting the Program Together

.....

### A. Developing the Idea

The idea for The Theatre Connection was developed in response to a request for proposals (RFP) for programs in the performing arts issued by the Massachusetts Department of Manpower Development to be funded through the Governor's Special CETA Youth Grant.

Quincy Court chose the theatre for three basic reasons:

1) Not only would it meet the RFP guidelines, but the actual work involved in theatre arts (costuming, set construction, and playbill and poster production) involve basic skills transferable to other areas. Constructing stage sets, for example, requires basic carpentry; costuming requires sewing; producing playbills and posters requires skills in graphics, printing and drafting. Such skills are necessary for positions in construction, commercial arts, or clothing manufacturing;

2) While acquiring these skills, theatre would add an element of excitement absent in detached and routine sewing, carpentry or graphics skills training. Each play, for example, would provide an individual work project with a specific deadline. Offenders would see their work take shape and then actually utilized on display. Though most participants were academic failures, the work, we hoped, would tap their latent creative energies — energies most recently focused on more antisocial endeavors.

3) We surveyed our community and found many theatre resources. The South Shore had thirty different local amateur community theatre groups, all struggling with limited resources to produce annual or semiannual productions. We proposed to offer these groups free labor to build their sets, produce their posters and construct their costumes. All they had to do was provide us the supplies. In return, we would get real work assignments with real deadlines for use before real audiences.

### B. Securing Funding

After reviewing dozens of proposals, the Department of Manpower Development awarded us \$59,000. We were funded because our project met local cultural needs while also providing short-term employment and job training for unemployed, indigent youth. The project would help local, non-profit theatre groups and the hundreds that patronize them, enriching the cultural life of the community; and, equally important, the project would allow offenders to earn enough money to pay back the victims of their crimes while receiving supervised vocational instruction.



However, monies from the performing arts grant covered only administrative costs (including staff salaries) but not stipends for the participants. Therefore, in order to fund the year-long project we envisioned, we had to piggyback the arts grant with other funding. Monies from the Youth Conservation and Community Improvement Project awarded through the local CETA office provided us with most of the extra money we needed — approximately \$100,000. — to pay stipends to 20 participants, aged 16 to 21. In order to secure this grant, the project focus had to also address community needs outside the arts, and the final project addressed several issues:

— The City of Quincy had a half-finished amphitheatre named after Ruth Gordon, a venerable Quincy-born actress. The Mayor wanted it completed, but the city lacked the resources to do so. The site had become overgrown with weeds and rubble. We proposed to provide the workers to finish the amphitheatre.

— The declining school-age population had prompted the closing of elementary schools throughout the district. School Committees were left with empty buildings costly to maintain. We proposed to rent space for the project's operation in one of these unused schools.

— Professors at Quincy Junior College needed more work to supplement their wages, especially during the day since most of their classes were held in the evenings. We proposed to hire teachers from the Junior College to provide remedial instruction and G.E.D. classes for our participants, all of whom were high school dropouts.

In addition to these awards, the court had secured Justice Department funds, enabling us to employ another half-dozen 15 and 16-year-olds on a part-time basis.

### C. Designing the Project

Occupational Exploration Through the Performing Arts sponsored by the Trial Court of Massachusetts, Quincy Division, was intended to provide a holistic approach to the employment and training of youths through the arts. The primary worksite was a workshop entitled "The Theatre Connection" wherein participants were to learn the discipline of work along with a variety of marketable skills used in the creation of theatre production elements. A minimum of 35 youths were to be employed for a period of 12 months: They would receive G.E.D. instruction and career counselling in addition to skills training in set design and construction, costume design and construction, graphic design and production, lighting/sound design and operation.

The actual work products undertaken by the Project were to be supplied by the local theatre groups. They would place orders for specific staging, costumes, handbills and other theatre arts related work with the Project. Their only obligation was to provide the materials to be used and work which could be done by our amateur crews.

The young offenders were to be divided into three work crews to complete the assignments provided by the community theatre groups. Each crew would be taught by different instructors, one knowledgeable in costuming, another in set design and construction, and a third in graphics. In addition to the three instructors, each area was to have its own work supervisor to insure order and discipline. Periodically crews would rotate so each participant was exposed to each area.\*

Between theatre projects crews would work on the Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre and other special projects or exercises designed to introduce them to additional skills.

Each week, crew members were to be released for up to 12 hours of remedial and G.E.D. instruction. We hoped that by offering the academics alongside work participants would realize the connection between basic academic achievement and obtaining good jobs.

### D. Budgeting and Equipping the Project

The Quincy Court is actually a Division of the District Department of the Trial Court of Massachusetts. It is not an independent administrative agency and has no authority to administer its own programs or accept grants. In order to receive the Project monies, we convinced the City of Quincy to take over the fiscal administration of the project. They did so at no additional cost to the project.

This arrangement solved one problem but created others. While it enabled us to accept the monies in the first place, it did not allow us to spend them as needed. We had to wait to receive reimbursements for project expenditures. Routine time lags of several months between requesting and receiving money created constant cash flow problems. On two occasions we had to take out bank loans to pay staff instructors during particularly slow periods in City Hall. This problem could be avoided if projects administered their own funds directly. On the other hand, to do so the project would have to develop a bookkeeping, accounting and fiscal management capacity which we lacked.

The Project budget was fairly straight forward and is listed below.

### Budget

I. SALARIES		
Director	\$	16,000.00
(3) Theatre Arts Instructors		11,000.00 each
(2) Supervisors		10,500.00
		13,500.00
Workmen's Compensation		2,400.00
TOTAL		74,900.00
Participants Salaries		
37½ hr./wk @ \$3.25/hr.		65,655.07

\*See appendix for a client flow chart and Project Skills Training Chart.



II. RENT	
Myles Standish School (includes heat)	5,000.00
III. G.E.D. INSTRUCTION	
Quincy Junior College (2 part-time instructors)	11,000.00
V. EQUIPMENT	
(3) Sewing Machines @ \$89.95 each	269.85
(1) Table Saw	349.88
V. SUPPLIES	
G.E.D. Texts	125.87
Table Saw and hand tools under \$50.00*	1,615.91
Paint and Hardware (paint, brushes, scissors, tape measures, hardware)	653.03
Lumber (Lumber, nails and metal braces)	262.64
Office Supplies (silk screen, paper, posters)	416.36
TOTAL	\$160,248.61

### E. Selecting a Site

With funding secured we chose the Myles Standish School as our work site. We rented one of the classrooms for the G.E.D. instruction and the gymnasium which made a perfect work area once we partitioned it into three workshops: one for set, costume and graphics. The gymnasium had a stage at one end which was ideal for setting up the scenery we built to see how it looked before delivery to community theatre groups.



*The gymnasium provided us with ample room for large set construction.*

One school committee member expressed reluctance to renting the space to an offender project, but by combining the rent (\$5,000.) and the G.E.D.

\*These supplies include: hammers, handsaws, screwdrivers, pliers, T squares, tape measures, levels, power drills, saws and sanders.

contract (\$11,000.) together, we proved an irresistible financial inducement to the Committee.

A brief survey of existing commercial building rentals convinced us that renting an unused public building was the only financially viable alternative for a project such as ours.

### F. Recruiting Participants

Due to the Project's direct link to the Court, we had no trouble recruiting sufficient employees for the project. We accepted only those offenders who were rated as "maximum risk" on a scale developed by the Massachusetts Probation Commission that has been statistically validated across the state. The rating is done by probation officers as part of the intake process for all new probationers.

MASSACHUSETTS PROBATION SERVICE ASSESSMENT OF OFFENDER RISK		SCORE AT:			
		INITIAL	FOUR MOS.	TEN MOS.	TERM
1. PRIOR RECORD (ADULT OR JUVENILE) DURING PAST 5 YEARS 0=3 or more 1=two 2=one 4=none					
2. NUMBER OF PRIOR PERIODS OF PROBATION SUPERVISION DURING PAST 5 YEARS 0=2 or more 1=one 4=none					
3. AGE AT FIRST OFFENSE 0=16 or younger 1=17-19 2=20-23 3=24 or older					
4. NUMBER OF RESIDENCE CHANGES DURING PAST 12 MONTHS 1=2 or more 2=one 3=none					
5. EMPLOYED/SCHOOL ABSENCE DURING PAST 12 MONTHS					
<div>EMPLOYED</div> 0=2 months or less 1=3-4 months 2=5-6 months 3=7-8 months 4=9 months		<div>SCHOOL ABSENCE</div> 0=26 or more days 1=21-25 days 2=16-20 days 3=11-15 days 4=10 days or less			
6. FAMILY STRUCTURE 0=currently resides away from family, few or no family ties 1=resides in one-parent home 2=parent not supporting children 3=single, emancipated from parental home, strong family ties, or married no children 4=resides in two-parent home 5=parent supporting children					
7. ALCOHOL OR DRUG USAGE PROBLEMS 0=frequent abuse, needs treatment 1=presently in treatment 2=occasional abuse, some disruption of functioning 3=prior problem 4=no apparent problem					
8. ATTITUDE 1=rationalizes negative behavior, not motivated to change 2=dependent or unwilling to accept responsibility 3=motivated to change, receptive to assistance 4=motivated, well-adjusted, accepts responsibility for actions					
TOTAL RISK SCORE					

Offenders scoring less than 15 are considered maximum risk, with a predicted recidivism rate of 37%; those scoring 16 - 25 are considered a moderate risk, with a predicted recidivism rate of 16.5%; individuals rating over 25 are considered minimum risk with a recidivism rate of less than 5%.

Most of the high risk offenders we sought were C.E.T.A. eligible and many of them owed substantial restitution for an assortment of offenses, ranging from run-of-the-mill misdemeanors to felonies (excluding offenses with firearms, rapes and capitol offenses). Probation officers surveyed their caseloads for appropriate program candidates.

Other offenders, who owed Community Work Service, and had failed elsewhere, were also placed at the Theatre Connection by the Probation Department as a worksite of last resort.

### G. Staffing the Project

Staffing was the key to making the Project work, especially the three theatre arts instructors. In addition to them, the Project consisted of a Director and a Community Theatre Group Coordinator (who, after the initial recruitment of work from the local companies, doubled as a work supervisor) and a full time Work Supervisor.

The project Director was hired from the court staff; he had previously run a smaller CETA program (mentioned in the preface) and had worked extensively with offenders. The Work Supervisors policed the Project, assisting the Instructors in overseeing the daily work. They also were in charge of discipline as well as maintaining personnel records on tardiness, absences, sick time and vacation time. One full-time Work Supervisor was an ex-offender currently in a Pre-Release Center in Boston. Ex-offenders can make good crew leaders since they relate easily to offenders and vice versa. They also tend to be intolerant of manipulative behavior, engendering a certain respect among participants. Their experiences can also help convince young offenders that criminal careers are not as glamorous as they might suppose. The three Theatre Arts Instructors not only had to teach their skills to the offenders but also had to work with the community theatre groups translating the groups' wishes into concrete work projects, doable by the offender work crews.

To recruit the instructors, we placed an advertisement in the Boston Sunday Globe, trade papers and local colleges with theatre arts degree programs. We were fortunate to be able to attract extremely experienced and talented individuals for very low salaries such as the resume of our graphics instructor illustrates:

RESUME

EDUCATION: 1976-1977 Graduate Studies, Boston University  
 B.F.A., Emerson College, Boston, Ma. - 1976  
 Major: Dramatic Arts, Scenic Design.  
 Minors: Fine Arts, English.

School for the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.  
 Silk Screening, Basic Drawing.

Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theatre Center, Waterford, Ct.  
 Workshops in Acting and Movement.

DESIGN SKILLS: Scene Painting, Set Construction, Costume Design.  
 & Construction, Lighting Design.

DESIGN EXPERIENCE: Designer, "The Importance of Being Earnest,"  
 Lyric Stage Company, Boston

Designer, "The Wiz,"  
 Canton Players, Canton, Ma.

Designer, "Hedda Gabbler,"  
 Lyric Stage Company, Boston

Resident Designer, "The Theatre Connection"  
 Quincy, Ma.

Designer, "A Phoenix Too Frequent,"  
 Michael Schulman Workshop, New York

Designer, "Caucasian Chalk Circle,"  
 Harvard University, Cambridge, Ma.

Designer, "Paradise Remanded" (Musical),  
 Harvard University, Cambridge, Ma.

Designer, "Lifelines,"  
 Reality Theatre Company, Boston

Resident Designer, Youth Theatre Workshop,  
 Old Saybrook, Ct.

We did not have any formal orientation program for the Project staff. All, however, spent their first week in the court in order to familiarize themselves with court and probation procedures. We wanted staff to see how the Theatre Connection fit into court and probation supervision as well as meet their future crews' Probation Officers.

Due to the temporary nature of the Project, all staff were hired as independent contractors (consultants) so that we did not have to set up medical plans or withhold payroll taxes. This simplifies program administration a great deal, especially if the project is not covered by an existing workmen's compensation plan. Ours was such a project.



*Graphic's Instructor Madeline Yusna helps plot scenery design.*

*Project Director Peter Schottmiller models latest creation of costume shop.*

## Chapter II — Running the Project

### A. Obtaining Work

Funded, staffed, designed, and located, the Theatre Connection's curtain rose on October 1, 1980.

To get work orders, program staff checked the telephone directories and local arts councils for the names and addresses of local theatre groups. We found thirty organizations over an area from Boston to Brockton and sent them all flyers introducing our project.

We invited them to come to the court and meet us. The turnout was overwhelming. They crowded into the court's largest courtroom, usually reserved for Monday's arraignments of all persons arrested over the weekend. Project and court staff put on a skit illustrating how the Project would turn around offenders while aiding local cultural efforts; one of the court's judges starred as a wayward youth, much to the amusement of the audience. Theatre Connection instructors displayed their portfolios and answered questions about the project. While coffee and pastries were being served, we secured our first work projects from the local groups. The projects were both large and small, including two from noted Boston Theatre Companies.

THE THEATRE CONNECTION  
(Occupational Exploration Through The Arts)  
East Norfolk District Court  
50 Chestnut Street  
Quincy, MA 02169  
471-1650

---

The following services are being made available to non-profit theatre groups

SCENE SHOP

Entire Set Design or Units  
Renderings, Construction Plans, Elevations  
Set Building and Painting  
Recovering of Flats, Repair, Bracing  
Stagecrafts  
Props, Mouldings, Painting, Stenciling  
Special Effects

COSTUME SHOP

Costume Research and Design  
Costume Building and Pattern Crafting  
Repairs and Alterations  
Specialized Skills: Wigs, Masks, Hats  
Shoes, and Make-up

GRAPHICS SHOP

Graphic Design / Printing  
Posters, T-Shirts, Programs  
Lay-out, Paste-up  
Duplicating  
Set Graphics

CREWS

Stagehands, Ushers, Dressers  
Lighting Put-in and Run  
Prop and Make-up  
Set Put-in and Strike  
Movers

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

Transportation of materials and finished work will be the responsibility of the theatre group. Arrangements for production crews must be made at least two weeks prior to run. Any services or work provided by the Theatre Connection must be recognized in programs. Complimentary tickets should be provided whenever possible for those individuals having worked on the production. No theatre group may privately contract the services of any staff member without the permission of the Program Manager.

Flyer sent to local community theatres.

## B. Organizing the Work

The first thing the set shop did was construct temporary walls dividing the gym into three work areas for set, graphics and costume. A large table which held three sewing machines and plenty of area for material to be spread out was built for the costume shop. A smaller table was built for silk screening in the graphics shop. In the area designated for set, a tool closet was constructed. At the end of each day all tools had to be returned to this closet which was then locked by the set instructor.

Each shop was headed by an instructor with expertise in that area. His or her job was twofold: He or she had to meet with the community theatre people to help them specify exactly what they wanted done. Then he/she had to bring the plans home and devise daily work schedules to accomplish the project, including what would be necessary as well as the supplies, tools and materials to be used.

Many projects involved all three shops working simultaneously. For example, while set constructed staging, graphics produced posters and sewing created costumes for the Brockton Player's production of *Hello Dolly*. Some other projects were more limited. Sewing produced costumes for the Boston Shakespeare Company's *Twelfth Night* while shop designed and constructed the stage sets for Canton Player's *The Wiz*.

Although the instructors could obviously do most of the projects faster and better than the crew members, they tried to let participants do their own work even if it meant simple tasks had to be repeated until done correctly.

In all three work areas, participants shopped for their own supplies for each work project. During these shopping expeditions participants had to decide what material was needed, budget accordingly, and complete the project with what was then purchased. Comparative shopping was encouraged.

PRODUCTION WORK PROJECTS FOR THE THEATRE CONNECTION 1980-1981		
SHOW	THEATRE COMPANY	JOB
ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST	Curtain Call Weymouth	Layout/Print Program Costume Consulting
A CHRISTMAS CAROL	The Company Weymouth	Costume Design/Construction
HEDDA GABBLER	Lyric Stage Co. Boston	Costume Design/Construction Set Design/Construction
HELLO DOLLY	Brockton Players Brockton	Set Design Consulting/Tech. Directing and Set Construction
HELLO DOLLY	Brockton Players Brockton	Costume Consulting/Construction Poster Layout/Printing
TWELFTH NIGHT	Boston Shakespeare Company	Costume Construction
THE WIZ	Canton Players Canton	Set Design/Construction
THE GOOD DOCTOR	Eastern Nazarene College Wollaston	Set Design/Construction Costume Design/Construction
THE NORMAN CONQUESTS	Lyric Stage Co. Boston	Set Design/Construction
A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM	Milton Players Milton	Costume Design/Construction
ANYTHING GOES	Dorchester Arts Council Strand Theatre-Boston	Set Design/Construction Costume Design/Construction
OLIVER	Eastern Nazarene College Wollaston	Set Design Consultation and construction
SHOW	THEATRE COMPANY	JOB
THE GOOD DOCTOR	Eastern Nazarene College Wollaston	Program Design/Layout
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	Hingham Civic Music Society	Stage Crew

During the time between these fourteen theatrical productions, the shops were kept busy with various miscellaneous projects designed to expand the participants' skills. These projects included building a float for the annual Quincy Christmas parade (we came in fourth!), silk screening T-shirts for the United Way Little League Team and constructing a portable changing room for the Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre.

SKILLS TRAINING PROJECTS FOR THE THEATRE CONNECTION	
PROJECT:	FOR:
1. Christmas Parade Float (3rd. Place Winner)	Quincy Christmas Parade
2. Wall Construction/ Tool Shed Construction	The Theatre Connection Work Site
3. Changing Room - Portable	Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre
4. Courthouse Signs	Courthouse Offices/Renovation Projects
5. Name Plates - Wooden Painted	Courthouse Employees
6. Wooden Coatracks	Courthouse
7. Wooden Bookcase	Courthouse
8. T-Shirts - Silkscreening	Save the Children of Atlanta Campaign
9. Little League Posters	Sponsored by United Way/Randcock Bank
10. Puppet Theatre- Backdrops Puppets	For Quincy Public Schools
11. Scale Models Built From Draftings of Ground Plan	Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre
12. Costume Mannequin	For fitting costumes for costume shop
13. Macrama	Independent Design Project
14. Decoupage Plaques - Boxes	Independent Design Project
15. Camisoles/Shirts	Independent Design Project
16. Quiltmaking	Independent Design Project
17. Batik	Independent Design Project
18. Quincy Mural	Courthouse
19. Painting-Interior	Courthouse Offices
20. Hand Cut Stenciling	Fabric/Wallpaper
21. Measure/Draft the ground plan for the Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre	Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre

Because it was difficult to judge when each project would be completed, extra projects always had to be on hand to assure work assignments for program participants. This work was divided among three shops.

### 1 The Set Shop

The set shop designed stage sets and then built them. First, crew members sketched what they thought the set should look like. Once this was approved by the Community Theatre company, cardboard scale models were constructed. These models were then measured and plans drawn for the life-size sets. After these conversions were made, the crew estimated the supplies, equipment and other resources needed. Once these were acquired, the sets were constructed. All construction had to be modular to allow disassembly so that the sets could fit through the school doors and be transported to local theatres to be reassembled. Particular instruction was given on operation of the skillsaw and other power equipment.

### 2 The Graphics Shop

The graphics shop painted the scenery, ranging from abstract trees to shop interiors, and designed patterns, for example, for wallpaper which it then stencilled on appropriate stage set walls. The graphics work also included more detailed jobs such as silk screening posters and playbill covers used by the local groups. Instruction emphasized lettering, silk screening and mechanical drawing.

### 3 The Costume Shop

The sewing shop researched costumes for each production, looking up appropriate dress styles for a given historical period. This involved trips to the local library. Renderings of costume designs were then made and measurements estimated for purchasing cloth. Next, material was bought, measured and cut up for sewing. Finally the sewing machines were pressed into service.

Despite our concerns, we found that our macho young men participated eagerly in sewing as long as they used the sewing machines. Apparently they were delighted with the machinery — which showed the wear and tear of constant use after the first several months.



Set Constructions by The THEATRE Connection

C. Charting Daily Work Plans

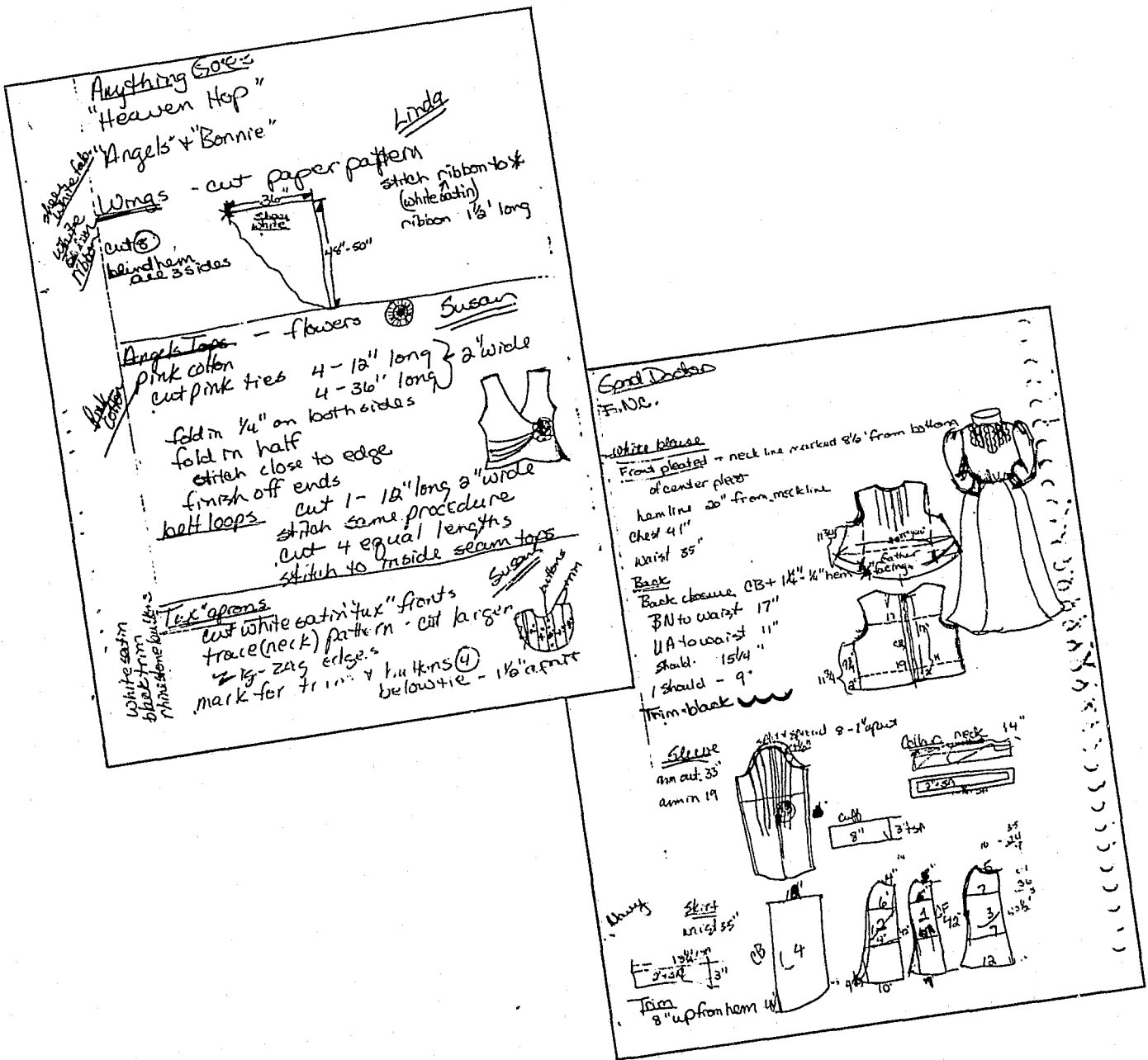
Each day in each shop the instructor prepared plans for the day's work. Each day's plans were very detailed, outlining what had to be done, what tools were necessary to do the task, and the materials to be utilized. For example, the daily work plan for the Graphic Shop for the production "The Good Doctor" entailed the following:

I.	Paint Dome Gold (previously constructed) (3 people)	Spray Paint	Gold Paint-Newspapers (open the 'windows!)
II.	Layout stripes on Dome and paint blue. (3 people)	Pencils Rulers Brushes Paint Cans	Blue Paint
III.	Measure out two 18' lengths of muslin-2'3" wide. (2 people) Measure out two 20' lengths of muslin-2'3" wide. (2 people)	Tape Measure Pencils	Muslin
IV.	Layout Folk Designs (from renderings) on two 20' sections and paint	Pencils Chalk Tape Measure	Rendering — Pink, green, yellow, black and white paint

That same day, the Set Shop's work plan was to assemble the state room constructed the previous week for a production at the Strand Theatre in Boston. The material was the modular set units (mostly wood, plasterboard and metal) and 1 3/4" wood screws.

Meanwhile, the Costume Shop was working on clothes for "Anything Goes." The day's plan called for cutting paper patterns and then cutting the pink cotton material for "Angel's Tops." Four pink ties had to be cut 12" by 2" and another four 36" by 2". They had to folded 1/4" on both sides, folded again in half and stitched close to the edge, after the ends were finished off.

A second set of instructions called for the construction of belt loops — cutting one 12" long by 2" wide strip, stitching according to the instructions given above, cutting into four equal lengths and stitching each piece to inside seam tops. These instructions were accompanied by sketches of what the finished product was supposed to look like.





## D. Teaching Work Skills

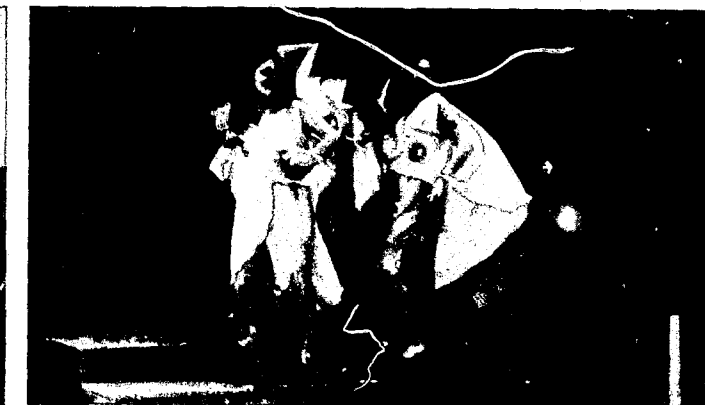
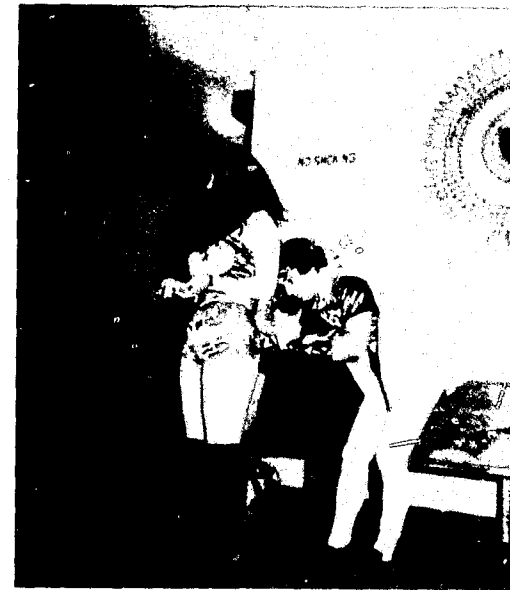
Skills training came as a by-product of daily work assignments dictated by each project undertaken for a community theatre group. We chose this approach consciously, although certain trade-offs were involved. Occasionally we had to teach certain skills out of sequence to accommodate the exigencies of a particular project. However, what we lost in orderliness, we gained in interest and excitement by working on real projects.

The skills learned by those crew members who stayed employed with the program for more than several months included elementary carpentry, drafting, mechanical drawing, sewing, designing and silk screening. In and of themselves, these skills were not enough to allow participants to go on to full-time employment in carpentry, commercial art, or clothing manufacturing much less in the theatre arts. However, this was neither our goal nor within our capacity to accomplish.

Our goal was more limited, but basic: to encourage severely disadvantaged, unemployable, drop-outs to learn enough work habits and skills to gain entry-level jobs or admission into more sophisticated vocational or academic programs. To accomplish this, we emphasized basic work habits that most people take for granted, including coming to work regularly and on time (even after pay day!); accepting supervision and constructive criticism, restraining from abusing or fighting with other employees; reporting to work both sober and straight; completing tasks once begun; and so on.

For most participants, the Theatre Connection represented their first experience with long-term employment, not to mention their first return to classroom instruction. By requiring participants to measure all materials and translate scale models into lifesized creations, as well as shop and budget for each work project, we hoped to impress upon them the relationship between G.E.D. instruction and employment.

Notwithstanding this, as our results later demonstrated, participants were exposed to some basic skills with application broader than the theatre. In the set shop, carpentry skills were learned, including the use of power equipment and hand tools; Graphics taught participants how to do basic lettering and layout as well as the fundamentals of design, while Costume taught the youth basic hand and machine sewing as well as how to make clothes patterns and then sew their own clothes. All three shops taught participants how to plan, budget, shop for supplies and organize work tasks.



*The THEATRE Connection at Work.*

## E. Teaching the Three R's

Vocational training requires some attention to developing fundamental reading and math proficiency. Every offender referred to the Connection was a high school dropout. Therefore, G.E.D. instruction was required of all full-time participants. In addition, reading classes were held three hours each week in two sections, each section containing ten participants. Similarly, there were two math sections. The instruction itself was provided by faculty at the local junior college.

Of course, it is one thing to tell dropouts, who do not look back on their school days with a great deal of enthusiasm, to participate. It is quite another to make them learn. The teachers found that a disproportionate number of the participants suffered from previously undiagnosed learning disabilities, hyperactivity, dyslexia, and in a few cases limited intellectual capacity. But, we had a few successes. Nine participants were able to pass high school equivalency exams by the end of the program; still more increased their reading and math skills.

The key revolved around the instructors. They treated the participants as responsible adults and consequently did not evoke juvenile "high school" behavior from their students. They realized that this was a demanding and difficult task. Demanding because they were constantly being tested by most of the participants in the program; difficult because the participants' were so varied and, in most cases, so limited. The instructors made reasonable demands, firmly, and structured each lesson plan tightly. Free, open or loose classroom participation invited only anarchy and although tried at first was quickly abandoned. Choices, including reading matter, were restricted because too much choice overwhelmed many of the offenders.\*

Because all the participants had long ago quit school, there was little linkage with established academic programs. Several participants expressed the desire to go back to school and they were encouraged to do so; calls were made to their home schools to facilitate their reenrollment.

Notwithstanding the fact that earning a G.E.D. was the ostensible purpose of the classroom instruction, many of the offenders in the program were ill equipped to pass the exam. We only encouraged participants to take the exam if we felt that they had a reasonable chance of passing it. We did not want participants to get their hopes up only to have them dashed by the exam results. As a consequence, of those who took the exam all but one or two passed.

Given all the constraints, not the least being the patterns of academic failure presented by the participants, the College Coordinator of Basic Skills who supervised the Project's G.E.D. instructors rated the program as very successful. Relating academic instruction to "real" work, promoted offenders' return to the classroom for remedial tutoring.

\*See appendix for a list of texts used.

## F. Maintaining Discipline

Many of the offenders had criminal histories of assaultive behavior. Even if they were all more typical youths, with so many employees, power tools, delicate sewing machines, effective discipline was crucial. As we quickly learned, to obtain order had to be strictly enforced! Also, they had to be based on the "KISS" principle (Keep it short and simple). The overriding project guidelines were:

1. Fighting was not permitted and would result in immediate termination from the program.
2. Drugs and alcohol in or near the worksite was forbidden.
3. Tardiness and absenteeism was tolerated only up to a point and always resulted in reduced pay checks.\*

Because the Theatre Connection was tied to the court, participants knew that bad behavior would be made known to their probation (or parole) officers. If they got fired, they would not be able to make restitution payments required by the court and would have to face the consequences, i.e., incarceration.

\*Knowing the population we were dealing with, we tried to be as flexible as possible; for example, days missed for court or probation appointments were excused absences and participants were not docked for this time.

## CHAPTER III — Evaluating the Program

### A. How the Theatre Connection Actually Operated

Despite our best efforts and our detailed program design, we experienced several operational problems and were not able to meet fully program goals and objectives.

**Program Design:** Our planned, orderly rotation of crews from one shop to another quickly disintegrated. Orderly group G.E.D. instruction was similarly disrupted several months into the program. Both plans suffered from the same problem: a higher than anticipated turnover rate.

Our high-risk offenders proved to be just that. Many got into trouble on and off the job requiring their termination from the program. Others moved from the area or left the program for other reasons. Forty-eight offenders worked in the program full-time while 18 juveniles worked part-time. (Another twenty-four worked at the site in order to perform unpaid community work service. They did not participate in G.E.D. classes and merely assisted the regular work crews.) The average length of participation lasted a little less than six months.

As a result, rotation from one shop to another was done on more of an individual basis; and similarly, the G.E.D. teachers had to individualize lesson plans since class composition changed continuously.

**Discipline:** Despite our rules, we were unable to provide the strict discipline we had hoped to enforce. This inhibited the ability of the theatre arts instructors to teach their crew members theatre arts skills since they had to spend a significant amount of time controlling participant behavior. The cause lay not in our rules but in our supervising staff — we had too few. Due to funding cuts, the local C.E.T.A. office was unable to provide us with the three qualified public service employees needed to supervise each of the work crews. Instead, they were only able to fund one supervisor position, and therefore the Project Director had to share this responsibility; however, the Director had to spend considerable time away from the project in order to administer it, leaving little time for supervising participants. From time to time the court provided additional supervisors, however this proved almost useless since these individuals lacked the familiarity with participants needed to gauge permissible and impermissible behavior, i.e., the difference between necessary work activity and just plain running around.

**Project Length:** We had planned a year-long program, with the offenders on the job for eleven months. The results of the national election, which occurred in the interim, brought massive federal cutbacks, causing the program

to terminate two months early. We had planned to tackle the Ruth Gordon Amphitheatre as soon as the spring thaw came. Unfortunately, the cutbacks came simultaneously with the thaw and the theatre was never completed.

**Activities:** One area that did meet our expectations was the work products. Notwithstanding daily crises and shortages of supplies — not to mention temper, the constant roar of power equipment, sewing machines and participants — all theatre projects were completed on time. The key to our success was our extreme care not to overbook ourselves.

Many participants readily developed necessary skills to help get each project off the ground. Based on specifications from instructors, some participants designed and built furniture and scenery for shows on their own. Many had artistic talents, including several young men who in other respects showed the dulling effects of years of constant drug abuse. They designed the backdrops for a puppet theatre on their own as well as collages of five different Victorian scenes later used as painted scenery for a production of *Hello Dolly*.<sup>\*</sup> It was at times like these that instructors felt less like "babysitters," and more like professional theatre arts instructors.

Participants varied in the degree of pride and interest they exhibited in their work. It was gratifying to see that by the end of the project more attended performances of the show they had worked on than had occurred at the beginning of the project. It was also exciting to see them interested and totally enraptured by a visiting state manager who told them stories of backstage life and being a Rock Show "Roadie." They even asked questions right through their afternoon break. The Stage Manager arranged for them to see the show he worked on, "Shear Madness" at the Charles Playhouse. The participants loved it, especially because the audience helps solve the murder in the show — although their particular contributions were sometimes as inappropriate as they were enthusiastic.

### B. How the Project Affected Participants

#### RECIDIVISM

The first aim of the project was to keep participants out of jail by keeping them employed and paying back court-ordered restitution. As Congress recognized when it created C.E.T.A., persons with a record and history of incarceration face great difficulty in securing jobs. We, obviously, didn't want their records to get any worse.

Sixty-six youths (48 adults and 18 juveniles) were paid participants at the Theatre Connection over the course of the ten months it operated. Based on statewide recidivism figures for high-risk youthful probationers, 36½% or 24

<sup>\*</sup>See Appendix "Collages for *Hello Dolly*."

should have been rearrested during the course of the project. Project recidivism was substantially lower. Five adults and two juveniles were rearrested during the length of the program, 10% of the total. Most of those who recidivated did so after termination from the program for absenteeism, assaults on the job, or other unacceptable work behavior; three of these individuals worked less than four weeks at the Connection.

#### RESTITUTION

Approximately \$24,549.00 was paid back to crime victims as a direct result of the Theatre Connection. The average offender owed \$370.00 to one or more victims. The largest amount paid through the Connection was \$2,780.00 to a coin shop owner in compensation for a shop burglary; the smallest amount owed was \$57.00 for a broken window.

Without the program, it is doubtful that any of this money would have been returned to crime victims. By requiring offenders to turn over portions of their salaries to their victims, the Theatre Connection served not only offenders, but those they offended. This provided a positive rationale for the existence of the program, notwithstanding its other attributes.

In addition, 24 offenders worked part-time at the Connection as part of a community work service order. They worked for free as redress to the community for their offenses. These individuals performed a total of 888 hours of community work service.

#### TERMINATIONS

Of the 49 C.E.T.A. participants, 11 were fired for poor performance or for being rearrested during the course of the program — several were subsequently sentenced to correctional institutions. Nineteen went on to full-time jobs or job training programs. Private jobs include work at a Boston bank, a local construction company, an insurance company, an ice cream factory, a tow truck company, a clothing chain, a cleaning company and an apprenticeship position in carpentry. The job programs included other C.E.T.A. training programs and Jobs for Youth, located in Boston. Four other participants entered the armed services. Two went back to school full-time. Nine passed their G.E.D.'s while six were judged by their instructors to be within 6 months of passing if they continued to study.

Of the 18 juveniles supported through court funds, seven returned to school and one went directly into a full-time job. Five were fired from the program.

In both sets of participants, i.e., C.E.T.A. and court supported individuals, another half-dozen either completed the program or left the jurisdiction and we have no follow-up information on these people.

#### SUMMARY

The statistics above do not tell the complete story, however. For many, many offenders the Theatre Connection gave them a good opportunity to turn their lives around. The improvement in their behavior was noted by the criminal justice officials charged with their good conduct. As one Justice familiar with the program wrote, "many minor miracles" resulted from the Project. Without going into individual case histories, but presenting a few insights beyond the mere statistics, the following are a few examples of how the Project influenced some participants:

- A severely deprived, almost catatonic youngster, was brought out of his shell and was able to relate normally to peers and staff.
- A young man, credited with over 40 house breaks who had never worked before, not only remained crime free during the Project, and paid back his victims, but went on to a full-time job.
- Another youth, whose brother was in state prison for murder and who lived hand-to-mouth on the streets, was able to stabilize, stay out of trouble and begin to get his life together.
- A young girl, a former runaway who had gotten into much trouble away from her family, was able to learn enough in the costuming department to make hers, and her sister's own clothes to save her family money.

#### C. How We Would Do It Again

##### 1. Putting It Together

Because local conditions vary, the Theatre Connection will never be replicated in its totality, even in Quincy. But, there are some basic operating principles that provide the foundation for a project that can obtain similarly positive results with hard-core, high-risk, juvenile and adult offenders:

**No Creaming:** In order to make the aggravation worthwhile, the project must take the neediest of offenders, the highest risk and lowest skilled; to insure additional controls over their behavior they should be under some form of court supervision, like probation, parole or stay of sentence. Priority for selection should go to offenders who owe the court restitution but cannot make payments due to their unemployability.

**Achievable Work:** The work must be simple and basic, doable by young men and women with little academic or vocational skills, aggravated by poor self-discipline, a low threshold of frustration and a poor self-image.

**Exciting Work:** The work, though simple, must be exciting in order to sustain participant interest. (We have found, ironically, that the least skilled employees are the first to complain about uninteresting work, even if that work is beyond their capabilities.)

**Beneficial Work:** All projects supported by public funds are subject to public criticism for being make-work/taxpayer-ripoffs. Programs for offenders face the additional charge that they are taking jobs that should go to "good kids." Thus, the work of the project should be of benefit to the community in a highly visible manner. Victims as well as offenders must benefit!

**Tight Control:** The work must be tightly supervised, backed by the court's total resources. Program participants must be aware that if they cause problems, they will answer not only to the project (i.e., face termination), but the court (i.e., face incarceration). The court, for its part, must establish and enforce a policy that iterates the connection between successful program performance and successful meeting of probation conditions.

**Funding** can be kept to a minimum if the Project secures cooperation from other agencies or community groups. We got each community theatre group to supply us with materials. This free lumber, paint, cloth, etc., allowed us to utilize most of our money for staff salaries and participant stipends.

Also, as we discovered, if the project reaches out for nontraditional court/social work/job training personnel there is an excellent labor pool willing to work for less than one might expect. We tapped the theatre arts for our personnel. No doubt, there are other groups of highly trained and motivated people who could similarly be recruited for creative employment programs. We learned that once such personnel are brought on board, it is a tragedy to waste their unique talents on maintaining discipline and order rather than on providing skills training. Our lack of adequate supervisory staff forced us to compromise the utility of our theatre arts instructors.

Funding can also be minimized by building on existing resources such as those we used from the court. Court probation officers recruited and helped screen our participants, saving project staff from these tasks. Rather than administer the grant ourselves, we got the City of Quincy to do it for us at no cost.

**Equipping** the Project is essential for smooth operations, obviously. Projects should insist on sufficient lead time in order to acquire necessary supplies before the participants arrive. One way we found to successfully address a cash flow problem was by establishing charge accounts with suppliers.

**Budgeting** the Project should be fairly simple and straight forward. Most of the costs are fixed, including salaries of staff, building rental, and the cost of the G.E.D. contract. The only routine, nonfixed costs are those for supplies, including lumber, paint, cloth and so forth. The need for these supplies varies depending upon the work products undertaken at any given time. Although most of our supplies were provided by the local theatre companies, we had to stock up on extra supplies too. We did this because we didn't feel we could make the local groups pay for mistakes or practice runs. Often it took several

tries before a costume, or a stage set, etc., came out the way the instructor wanted.

Unpredictably, the costs of the participant salaries in our project were not very fixed. There was a much higher than expected rate of turnover. As a result, there frequently were several unfilled positions while waiting for a new participants' C.E.T.A. paperwork to be completed. This meant that the Project built up a substantial amount of lag money, almost \$20,000. This could have been prevented if the Project had overhired by two or three participants from the beginning. Lag also accumulated as a result of docking participants' salaries for lateness, excessive sick time and missed work days.

**Selection Sites** should be made with an eye to costs. We were able to help ourselves and at the same time help a public agency by locating our operation in a vacant school building. This is an effective strategy for gaining the type of community support that is essential to operating successfully.

**Recruiting Participants** is straightforward, given the project's criteria. We mixed various populations, adults and juveniles, full-time and part time, paid and unpaid participants, males and females. Although this resulted in a multitude of different reports and paper monitoring systems, the mix helped us maintain order, by insuring a daily critical mass of participants who did not form firm cliques and allegiances that might have systematically challenged the supervisors.

**Staffing** can prove your greatest strength as well as your greatest weakness. We have already discussed the merits of bringing in non-traditional employees and not wasting their unique talents. However, we cannot overstress the need for a good staff-client ratio, probably at least 1 to 5. We didn't maintain that ratio and the program suffered as a result. Lacking sufficient full-time staff, a program could rotate staff members or use part-time staff to mitigate the negative impact on the program.

**Designing the Program** should be an exercise in simplicity. The simpler the program design the better. Reality is always more complicated than plans on paper. Flexibility should always be built into any plan so staff won't expend their efforts trying to adhere to an unrealistic program design. As mentioned, adequate start-up time is critical for program commencement.

As cited previously in the above comments on budgeting, maintaining critical links with the court is critical. Not only did these links allow our program to be more cost efficient, but they provided a compelling reason for the participants to enter the Project and take it seriously. The Project offered them positive inducements, including short-term employment, job training and G.E.D. instruction. The court complemented these by offering negative inducements for participants who failed to enroll or complete the Project, including possible incarceration for failure to pay restitution to their crime victims.

From the court's point of view, the use of its probationers and offenders as project participants insured them intensive supervision, much more than probation could do on its own. Project staff were able to learn a great deal about the participants in a short period of time and pass on relevant information to the probation officers and the court where appropriate.

## 2. Running the Project

As we found, getting work was easy. However, it was not evenly spaced. Theatre groups seemed to schedule plays during the same time periods, and yet it is essential to have enough work to keep all participants reasonably busy. For this reason, we found it imperative to always have additional work projects on hand during lulls in production orders. The work projects listed in the second chapter all fit the bill.

Emergency work projects, during particularly long lulls, such as building coat racks or book shelves, can also help use up left over wood, varnish and other supplies otherwise wasted. The work must be reality oriented at all times. By organizing the work around actual projects with due dates, we sacrificed the luxury of a more orderly, sequential development of daily lesson plans by instructors. However, we think it was worth it because it provided participants with real work, each assignment having a specific deadline. It must be remembered that these high-risk employees, all high school dropouts, have already failed more traditional methods of instruction. They need immediate results or become quickly discouraged, and some become disruptive. A more ordered classroom atmosphere for skill training probably would have backfired for all concerned.

We were able to provide more traditional classroom instruction in the area of G.E.D. tutoring. First, we kept it down to a maximum of two hours a day. Second we had skilled, college instructors who kept the sessions on a professional, non-school-like basis. The instruction was geared to a specific end — passing the high school equivalency test (even though we knew this was only a device in some cases to provide remedial instruction). Enough of the offenders were really interested in getting their G.E.D.'s that those who weren't behaved.

Easily overlooked, especially during the hustle and bustle and daily operations is an important component of such projects, public relations. Public support should be encouraged. Good public relations is a must for a project such as the Theatre Connection, especially since it was publicly financed and dependent upon other public institutions, including the school committee (rental and G.E.D.), the court (recruitment and screening of participants) and the City of Quincy (fiscal administration). In order to encourage public support, you must inform the public what you are about.

Although the Theatre Connection was not page one, fast breaking news, it provided good copy for feature stories in the press and on television — an added bonus, the work products of the Project made great TV backdrops for television reporters. The reporters who visited the Project came away very enthusiastic, as the following story indicates:

## They learn a trade, pay a debt

QUINCY — Members of "The Theater Connection" are not only designing and building stage sets for amateur theatrical productions. They are also making restitution to the victims of their crimes.

The program, conducted in the Myles Standish School on East Squantum Street, is an offshoot of the nationally hailed "Earn It" program instituted by Quincy District Court Justice Albert Kramer.

There are now 22 boys and three girls, ranging in age from 15 to 17, enrolled in "The Theater Connection," according to Andrew Klein, chief probation officer at the district court.

The youngsters work on stage sets under the direction of instructors including Pat Rogers, who designed costumes for the Boston Ballet; Susan Bucini, who did costumes for the Muppets; and Madeline Yusna, who designed the set for an off-Broadway play starring Christopher Plummer, Klein said.

The cost of jailing these youngsters would be ten times the cost of the present program," Klein said. "In addition, compensation is being paid and they are learning something of practical value."

The youths must make restitution for sums ranging from \$100 to \$3,000. They are paid the minimum wage for a 37-and-a-half-hour

week. Two-thirds of their pay goes toward restitution and they receive the remainder. To enter the program, a youth must qualify for a CETA job, coming from a low-income family.

Those in the program are also given time to study for the General Educational Development Test, which is administered by Quincy Junior College teachers. Almost all of the probationers in the program are school dropouts, Klein said.

Peter Schottmiller of Quincy, head of the program, said about 70 youngsters have gone through the program since last September, through their obligations and gotten jobs through paid their obligations and gotten jobs through the court or on their own.

The probation department received a \$146,884 grant from the federal government and \$80,000 from the Department of Manpower Development to fund the program.

John Williams, a probation officer who works with businesses in the area to find jobs for probationers, said because of the good record of "The Theater Connection" it could be funded again.

Some of the area theatricals they have provided sets for include, "Fiddler on the Roof," "Hedda Gabler," and "The Whiz."

Last weekend the youths worked on their

own time on sets for "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" which was presented by the Canton Players.

"They were paid a nice tribute by a Brockton theatrical group recently when they completed work on the sets for 'Hello Dolly' presented by the group. All the names of the members of 'The Theater Connection' were listed on the program with a special note of thanks from the theatrical company," Klein said.

"One of the hardest parts of the program for the youngsters is getting here on time," Schottmiller said. "The hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and if any of the enrollees are late they are docked for the amount of time lost."

Oddly, some of the phases of the work that Schottmiller thought the boys would balk at, such as sewing, proved to be no problem. Carpenter is also popular, he said.

Williams said that since the start of the "Earn It" program for probationers, results have been impressive.

"For instance, prior to 'Earn It' back in 1975 only \$35,000 was recorded in restitution payments. With the new program that figure jumped to \$100,000 in 1978 and as of the end of 1979 stood at \$176,000," Williams said.



Class work — Members of "The Theater Connection" study graphic arts in one of the classroom sessions at the Myles Standish School in North Quincy.  
Article by Maurice Reardon  
(Staff Photo by Jerry McCullough)

6 The Patriot Ledger, Tues., March 17, 1981



Finally, a word about discipline. As we have already stressed, a healthy staff/participant ratio is essential. Clearly defined, strictly enforced basic rules are necessary. Apart from this, all a project can do is its best to maintain an atmosphere of busy commitment to work. Ultimately, order will be maintained because the participants, or at least the vast majority of them want order maintained because they are interested in their work and want to learn more.

### 3. Meeting Goals and Objectives

Work works.

At a glance it may seem an anomaly that a court became involved in the theatre arts. After all, what does "Hello Dolly" have to do with the administration of justice and the protection of the community?

Everything. Notwithstanding the millions of dollars that the Justice Department has pumped into law enforcement through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, employment and employment training programs such as those sponsored by C.E.T.A. have a more direct impact on crime and produce better results if carefully administered in programs like the Theatre Connection.\*

Projects like the Theatre Connection can reduce recidivism, can generate substantial money for victims of crime, and can successfully provide incentive and remedial skills for high-risk, low-skill juvenile and adult offenders to enter the job market or longer-term academic or vocational training programs. In addition, such projects can be administered for less cost than non-community-based programs, including incarceration, and can generate strong public support if based on the principles outlined in the beginning of the chapter.

Courts must realize that community-based corrections demands they reach out to the community and develop projects like the Theatre Connection.

Employment programs must realize that to meet the needs of hard core offenders, they must reach out to the courts to get the clients who are not going to walk in their door on their own.

In the absence of federal funding, other sources will have to be tapped. Ultimately, such projects may have to be profit generating to insure their continuation.\* But they should continue.

\*John Augustus, the father of probation, did not merely supervise his charges out of the Boston Police Court. He gave them work in his Shoe Cobbler's Shop.

\*There are examples of such profit making projects that exist including San Francisco's famous Delancy Street Project that began as an offender run restaurant and now is a national corporation.

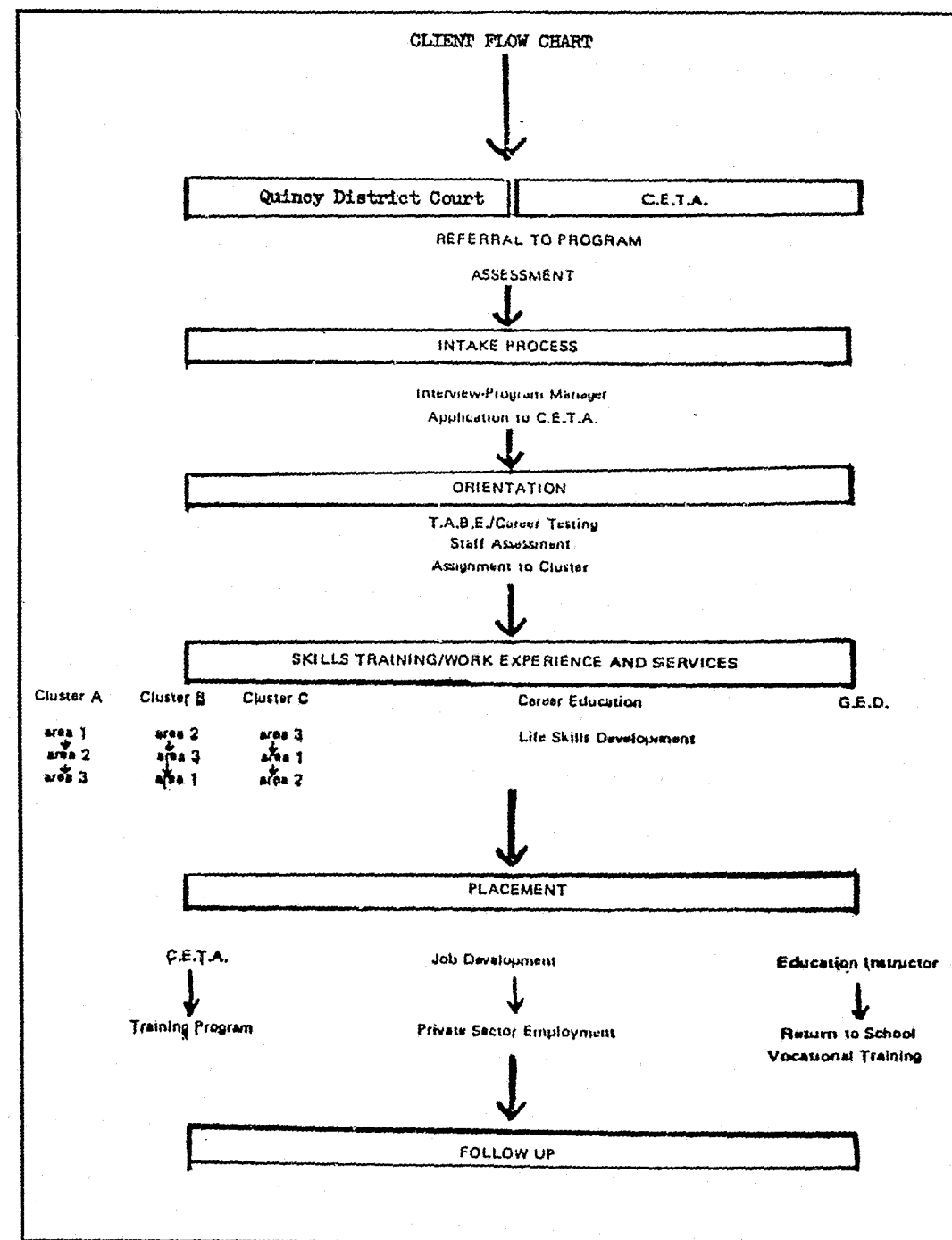
## Appendix

1. Article on Peddocks Island
2. Client Flow Chart
3. Skills Training Chart
4. G.E.D. Texts Used
5. Collages for "Hello Dolly"



Excerpts from article appearing in The Patriot Ledger, August 22, 1977



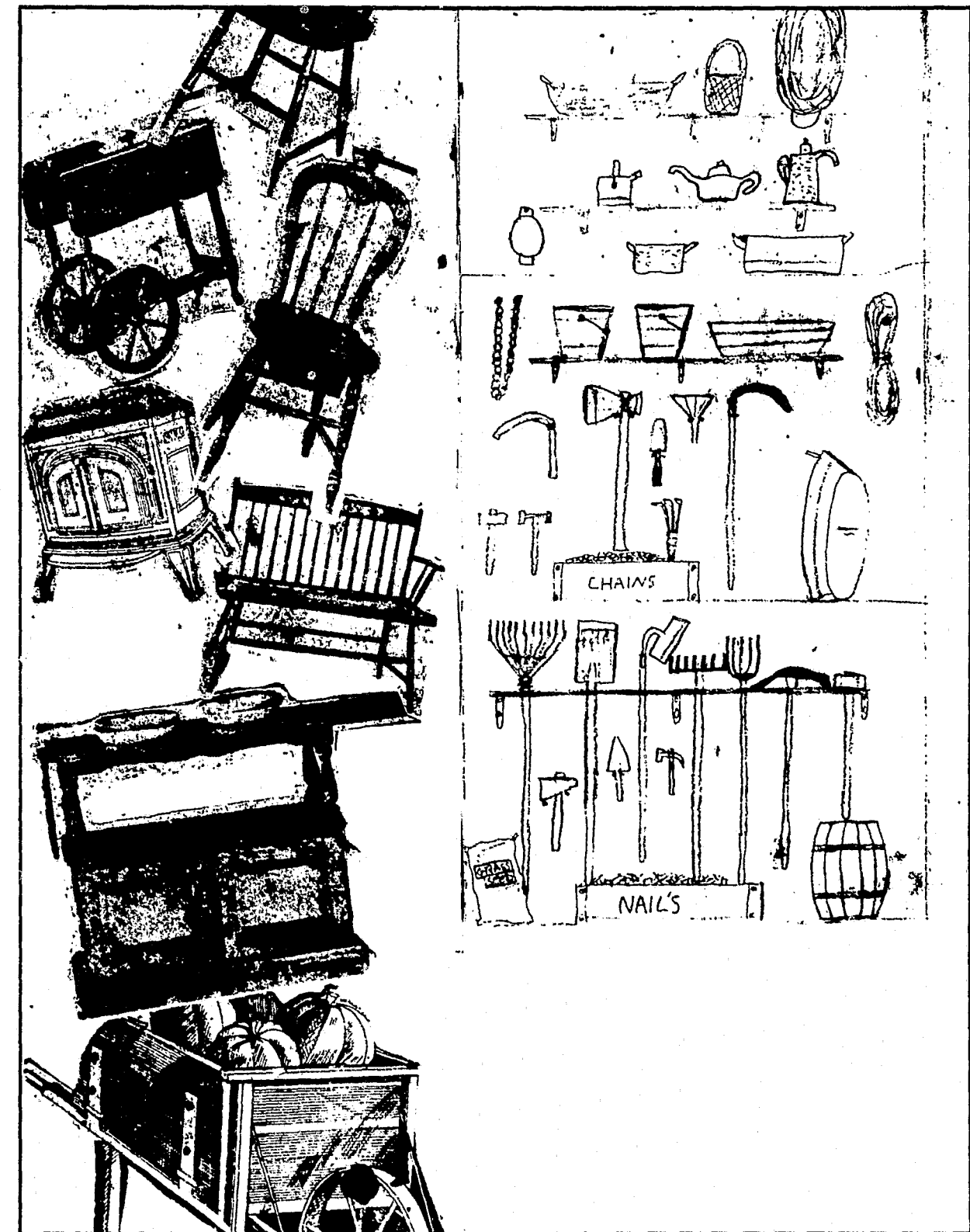


SKILLS TRAINING CHART					
TIME FRAME	SKILL AREA 1 (Graphics/Fabrics)		SKILL AREA 2 (Stage Sets/Lighting)		SKILL AREA 3 (Restoration/Construction/Operation)
	Location: Workshop and Community Theatres Instruction: Graphic Designer Costume Designer Skills: Graphic Design, Silk Screening, Printing, Duplicating, Collating, Lettering, Lay-out, Paste-up, Painting, Sewing, Pattern Draft- ing.		Location: Workshop and Community Theatres Instruction: Set Designer Skills: Set Design, Drafting, Carpentry, Painting, Wallpapering, Silk Screening, Lighting Design/Operation, Electrician work, Stage Crafting.		Location: Ruth Gordon Theatre/Niki Site Instruction: Park Dept. Personnel (Set Designer) Skills: Landscaping, Masonry, Carpentry, Stenciling, Painting, Construction
OCTOBER	CLUSTER A AND SUPERVISOR Work Products: Tickets, Programs, Posters, Designs, T-Shirts, Costumes, Show Banners, Set Fabrics Services: Dressing/Make-up Crews, Set Crews		CLUSTER B AND SUPERVISOR Work Products: Set Designs, Sets, Set Pieces, Stage Furnishings, Props, Set Refurbishing, Lighting Designs Services: Set crew, lighting crew, hanging lights, running lights, repair of lights		CLUSTER C AND SUPERVISOR Work Products: Access ramps and handicapped seating, cement forms, cement seating, stage platforms, stenciling seat numbers, painting seats, changing house, landscaping
NOVEMBER	CLUSTER C AND SUPERVISOR Work Products and Services the same.		CLUSTER A AND SUPERVISOR Work Products and Services the same.		CLUSTER B AND SUPERVISOR Work Products: Completion of above seating work, cyclorama, scene houses, sets, set pieces, continued landscaping
DECEMBER			CLUSTER C AND SUPERVISOR Work Products and Services the same.		CLUSTER A AND SUPERVISOR Work Products the same. Services: Set Crews, Lighting Crews, Ushers, House Managers
JANUARY	CLUSTER B AND SUPERVISOR Work Products and Services the same.		CLUSTER C AND SUPERVISOR Work Products and Services the same.		
FEBRUARY					
MARCH					
APRIL					
MAY					
JUNE					
JULY					
AUGUST					
SEPTEMBER					

## I. G.E.D. Texts

The Quincy Junior College G.E.D. program used the following texts for the G.E.D. component at the Theatre Connection.

Texts Used: *Jaffe's Opportunity for Skillful Reading*, 3rd Edition.  
 Instructional/Communications Technology Inc.'s, *Critical  
 Listening and Reading* series level G through L.  
 McGraw-Hill's *Writing Skills I*  
*Basic Spelling Skills*



*Examples of collages for "Hello Dolly"*

## MORE

For more information about court restitution and work programming, write the National Institute for Sentencing Alternatives (NISA). NISA is funded by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation in cooperation with the Quincy Court to offer training in the development of programs that will make possible the broader use of sentencing alternatives.

## NOTES



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**END**