

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018



MISSION STATEMENT

The Robinson Community Learning Center welcomes community and Notre Dame partners who strengthen the Northeast Neighborhood of South Bend through relationship building and educational opportunities. By promoting innovation and excellence, the Center builds individual capacity and enhances existing systems throughout South Bend.



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Letter from the Manager

Back in 2001, when the RCLC first opened its doors, no one was thinking about Shakespeare. In fact, when the idea of a Robinson Shakespeare Company (RSC) was first proposed in 2008, the overwhelming response was: “There is no way that inner-city kids are going to be interested in Shakespeare!” Ten years, 20 productions, and 11 State Monologue Competition winners later, this statement has been definitively disproven.

The RSC’s greatest adventure occurred last summer, when 14 RSC members, ages 12–18, traveled to England to study, perform, see professional theater, and meet with world-renowned Shakespeare experts. The RSC youth made quite an impression. The Master of Movement for the Globe Theatre led RSC members in a workshop, and ended their time together with the comment: “It’s my joy now to watch you lot because you’re going to keep Shakespeare alive.”

The ensemble that traveled are representative of the hundreds of RSC participants over the past decade who have grown up with Shakespeare. Some had not ventured farther than Chicago; a few had never been on an airplane. To travel internationally and experience firsthand places they had only read about were life-changing moments.

Back in 2001, it probably also seemed unimaginable that the RCLC would outgrow its new building. However, anyone who has recently been at the RCLC during after-school tutoring knows that the current Center is bursting at the seams.

Fortunately, plans for the new RCLC are underway—the pile of dirt on the

corner of Eddy and Howard streets marks its future location. RCLC, the Office of Public Affairs, and Notre Dame representatives have been meeting with Kite Realty and Alliance Architects since late 2017, and we hope plans will be made public soon. However, creating a new learning environment for the RCLC community is a complicated process—it involves not only meeting the needs of existing programs, but also figuring out how to support future programs. Who knows what will capture the imagination of RCLC’s next generation?

Jennifer Knapp Beudert
RCLC Manager

For more about the UK Trip, please check out the following:

- Notre Dame Magazine, Oct. 2017 cover story, “The Brightest Heaven of Invention”
- [Magazine.nd.edu/This-England](https://magazine.nd.edu/This-England)
- “The Little Shakespeare Company That Could” at <https://csa.canon.com/online/portal/>
- “Fighting For” video: <https://fightingfor.nd.edu/2017/fighting-for-shakespeare-for-all/>

GOAL 1: HOSPITALITY

Create a setting that serves as a place of gathering and interaction among neighborhood residents, ND students, faculty and staff, and community partners.



A Gathering Place

Most weekday mornings, when the RCLC opens its doors at 8:00 a.m., one of our neighbors will be waiting to come in, chat about local events, and read the daily newspaper. For more than 17 years, the RCLC has been not only a rich source of educational programs, but also a place where neighborhood and campus residents can come for fellowship and engagement with their community. The RCLC is proud to welcome the hundreds of people who enter its doors each week—a diverse population that includes individuals who range in age from 6 weeks to 94 years, who come from 17 different countries, and who represent different ethnic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, educational, and cultural backgrounds.

Programs for Seniors

*Lu Ella Webster,
Adult Program Coordinator*

The RCLC provides many rich opportunities for senior adults to explore new areas of learning and connect with others in the community. Activities in 2017-2018 included:

- A senior book club that is still reading in its 15th year
- Two weekly computer clubs dedicated to mastering the mysteries of the internet
- A new class for seniors that focuses on breathing and relaxation

- A lively group of retired women that meets monthly for lunch and euchre
- Monthly “Lunch and Learn Lectures” attended by an average of 50 senior adults

The RCLC also provided tax preparation help for seniors through the United Way VITA program. A new partnership with the Notre Dame Tax Clinic provided not only useful information for Lunch and Learn attendees, but also one-on-one consultation for members of the RCLC senior community.

GOAL 2: EDUCATION

Establish educational opportunities to develop technical abilities, build academic and life skills, and provide support/mentoring at all ages.



"I really enjoyed tutoring at the RCLC because I got to leave the bubble of ND. I felt like I was immersing myself in the SB community in one of the best ways possible and making at least a small impact in the lives of the students."

ND student volunteer

Tutoring

*Velshonna Luckey, Youth Development Program Director
Jennifer Wittenbrink Ortega, Literacy Program Director
Kris Arizmendi, Volunteer Coordinator*

DURING 2017-18

172 children tutored
29 schools represented

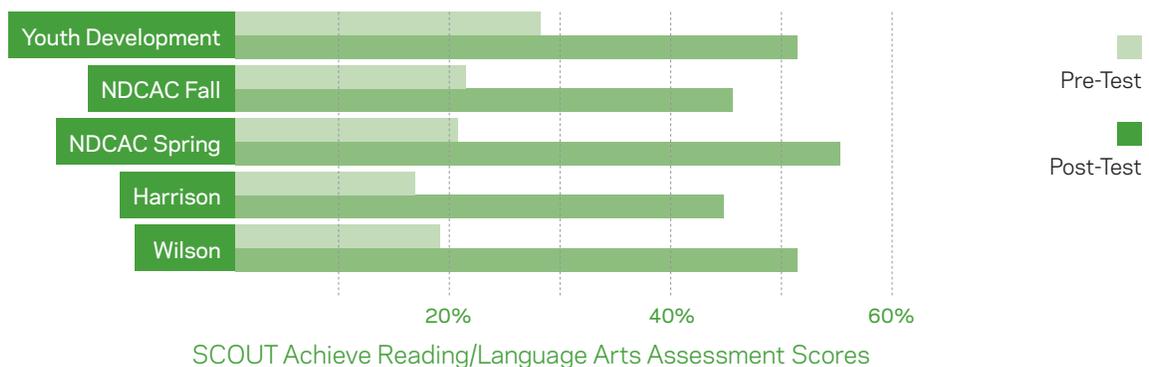
219 volunteers from 8 local colleges
More than 5,000 hours of tutoring provided

After a long day at school, an hour of tutoring may sound a bit exhausting. However, one only has to walk into the RCLC on a weekday afternoon to see the positive energy flowing between tutors and students. Both groups report that they look forward to tutoring because of the strong relationships they develop. During 2017-2018, literacy tutoring was provided four days

per week for youth, K-6, at the RCLC, the Notre Dame Center for Arts and Culture (NDCAC), and the Harrison and Wilson Boys & Girls Clubs. Sessions focused on vocabulary, sight words, reading, writing, and comprehension. A pre-post assessment measured literacy competency and identified individual goals for each child. As illustrated below, participants at all

sites showed growth in goal areas, with an average pre-post gain of 28.4 percentage points. On year-end surveys, tutors reported seeing growth in their students' literacy skills as well as their love of reading! Tutors and children also enjoyed engaging in book-related projects—dissecting owl pellets (inspired by reading *Poppy*, by Avi and Brian Floca) was particularly exciting!

Average Pre-Post Growth on Literacy Goals



Interested in learning some tutoring tips?
Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/literacycorpsrclc](https://www.facebook.com/literacycorpsrclc)

Enrichment Activities for Youth

The RCLC has always been committed to providing its participants with new opportunities and experiences. Through a wide range of campus and community connections, RCLC youth are able to take local field trips, go on college visits, engage in hands-on study, express themselves creatively, and even travel beyond Indiana! Here are some of this year's activities.

Notre Dame Partnerships

Several of the most exciting RCLC enrichment opportunities have come about through partnerships with Notre Dame faculty members. The Biology Club, sponsored by Prof. Michelle Whaley, is in its ninth year of studying genetics and DNA, and the "Brain Health" program, implemented by Prof. Nancy Michael and her neuroscience students, expanded this year to include all age groups. More than 30 RCLC youth met weekly throughout the spring to study climate change, under

the direction of Prof. Phil Sakimoto. This club culminated in a student-led informational presentation that was attended not only by parents and children, but also by local government officials and community leaders.

Notre Dame Center for Arts and Culture

This year marked the fifth anniversary of the Notre Dame Center for Arts and Culture—and there was a lot to celebrate at its two-day anniversary party! Over the past years, NDCAC educational programs have grown to serve more than 150 children annually in programs such as after-school arts enrichment and tutoring, Read Baby Read, Talk With Your Baby, Jump Rope Club, Yoga, Arts Camp, and the BEST science club. The NDCAC also sponsors events such as the Treasure Hunt North Block Party, the Holiday Walk, the Day of the Dead, and "For the Culture Night" (an arts evening specifically for millennials). These events brought more than 1,000 community members to the NDCAC during 2017-2018.



"The Washington trip has given me the opportunity to look beyond where I'm from and what I have learned and actually see history in the flesh. Taking tours and seeing DC at night has really inspired me to do better for not only myself but for my family and my city. I want to represent South Bend, Indiana, well."

RCLC youth

MyAmerica

The purpose of the My America program is to encourage RCLC students to dream big and know that just as the American dream was realized for our Founding Fathers and so many others, their American dream can be achieved! This spring, 16 RCLC youth, accompanied by parents and staff members, traveled to Washington, DC, where they visited the Capitol Building, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the International Spy Museum. They also toured the monuments at night.



“Drama integration gets students to express their creative side and to carry this creativity into their reading and writing. Students act out drama situations that tie into the curriculum or write problem-solving suggestions to characters in the fables they’ve acted out.”

Sixth-grade teacher

Robinson Shakespeare Company

Christy Burgess,
Shakespeare Program Director

Robinson Shakespeare Company Abroad

In what was truly a once-in-a-lifetime trip, 14 members of the Robinson Shakespeare Company traveled to England for nine days during summer 2017. They participated in classes at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, saw performances by the Royal Shakespeare Company, performed *Cymbeline* in the Great Garden of Shakespeare’s New Place, explored treasures from the International

Shakespeare Archives, took a movement class on the stage of the Globe Theatre, and even gave a presentation on “engaging diverse youth with Shakespeare” to the Globe staff! They also did a bit of sight-seeing and it was thrilling to literally walk in the Bard’s footsteps. The RSC *Cymbeline* poster was even placed in the Shakespeare Archives, so the RSC has a permanent place in Shakespeare history! For a fuller account of the RSC’s England adventure, please go to <https://magazine.nd.edu/this-england>.



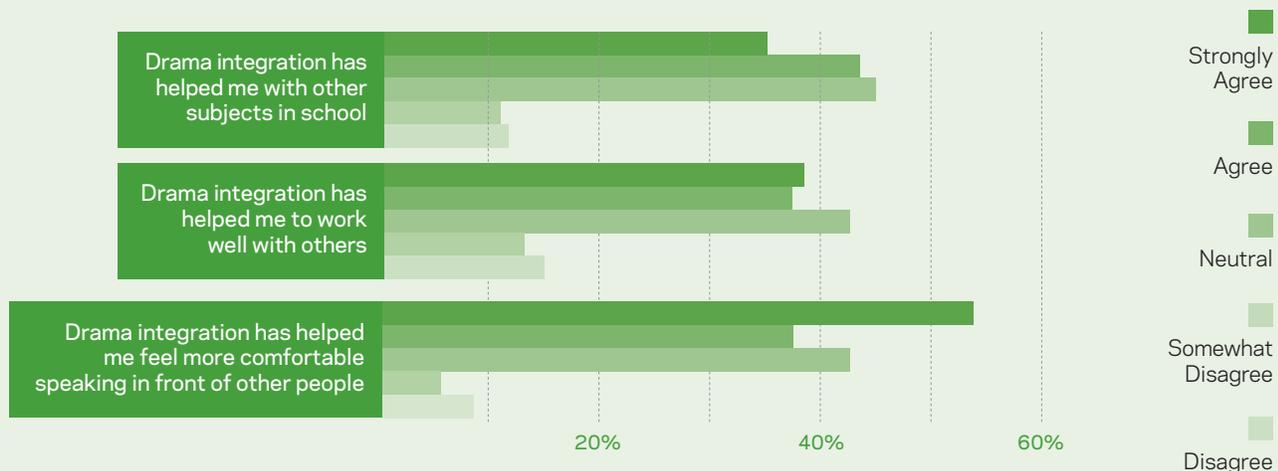
Tiana Mudzimurema, an eight-year RSC member, won the Indiana State English-Speaking Union Shakespeare Monologue Competition, advancing to represent Indiana in the 2018 National Competition at NYC’s Lincoln Center.

Community Outreach

Thanks to support from the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County and the Indiana Arts Commission, the RSC Outreach Initiative is able to provide in-class drama integration instruction and after-school drama clubs at five partner schools, including Muessel Primary, Perley Fine Arts Academy, McKinley Primary, Dickinson Fine Arts Academy, and Jefferson Intermediate Center.

As a result of this initiative, an average of 618 youth have engaged in weekly drama activities each year for the past three academic years!

RSC Outreach Survey Responses



Like us on Facebook at [Robinson Shakespeare Company](#)

Advanced Skills and Youth Entrepreneurship

Michael Boyd
Advanced Skills and Entrepreneurship Program Director

During 2017–2018, more than 200 local youth engaged in the RCLC Advanced Skills and Youth Entrepreneurship Program, which includes a weekly RCLC Entrepreneurship Club, a summer RCLC Entrepreneurship Camp, clubs at Dickinson Fine Arts Academy and Jefferson Intermediate Center, and outreach classes offered in partnership with the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) programs at Adams High School, Rise Up Academy, Mishawaka High School, and the Career Academy. The curriculum focused on developing an idea from an "elevator pitch" to a business plan, learning about local businesses, and honing skills in public speaking, critical thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, and professionalism.



Invention Convention Business Plan Competition

The annual RCLC Invention Convention was one of the events included in the ND IDEA Center's first IDEA Week and was held at Innovation Park. The "Investor's Choice" winner, Adams High School senior Michelle Hughes, was able to present her project, "Next Generation: A Child Care Center for Today's Workforce," at the McCloskey New Venture Competition Startup Showcase for IDEA week attendees and participants.

Innovate WithIN Competition

Seven RCLC youth entrepreneurs entered the first Innovate WithIN Competition. Ball State University, the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, and the Indiana Department of Education sponsored this idea pitch competition for "high school innovators who had an idea for a business, product, service, technology component, or other venture that helps identify Indiana as THE place to start

and grow a business or other venture that helps drive the state forward and sustain economic success."

RCLC youth received individual coaching from ND student mentors as they prepared video presentations for competition. Adams High School senior Tiana Mudzimurema won first prize at the regional competition, and went on to win second place at the state level with her project, "Network," an app for college students to provide or receive tutoring services.

Robinson Enterprises

Despite disruption from construction and inclement weather, the RCLC youth football parking team once again raised more than \$100,000 for the Youth Entrepreneurship Program!

Don't forget to make parking reservations for the upcoming Notre Dame football season online at rclc.nd.edu.

GOAL 3: PARTNERSHIP

Provide space and support for programs through health care, business, school, and community organizations that promote education and enhance the quality of life.



Take Ten

Ellen Kyes, Take Ten Program Director

Take Ten is a violence prevention/ conflict resolution curriculum that focuses on teaching skills to handle conflict in a peaceful way. Take Ten provides participants with the tools to “Talk it Out, Walk it Out, or Wait it Out” as alternatives to violence, and builds their capacity to make better, more positive choices.

Take Ten in the Community

During 2017–2018, 160 volunteers taught the Take Ten curriculum at 25 sites to more than 2,200 children and adults. These volunteers came from the University of Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s College, Holy Cross College, IUSB, and Bethel College, and many received college credit for the service. Take Ten served youth, grades K–12, at 15 local schools and seven agencies, and adults at six agencies, including the Center for the Homeless, Hope Ministries, the Indiana Department of Correction South Bend Re-Entry Center, Women’s Care Center, RCLC, and the YWCA.

Evaluation

The Take Ten Evaluation pre-post assessment survey has been revised to include new measures of assessment that focus on:

- Students’ responses to situations involving conflict
- Students’ beliefs concerning aggression and their agency in handling an aggressor
- Students’ recognition of physical/ non-physical actions and words
- Students’ feelings about bullying and school safety

Results of the 2016–2017 Take Ten Evaluation indicated that:

- Take Ten students demonstrated positive change in their beliefs about their own responses to conflict.

- Take Ten students showed statistically significant improvement in recognizing conflict and engaging in strategies designed to reduce bullying or physical violence.
- Take Ten students demonstrated a statistically significant pre-post gain in recognition of violence in physical as well as non-physical forms.
- Take Ten students demonstrated significant pre-post gain on ability to self-report being bullied.

The full analysis of Take Ten Program Evaluation Data is available at taketen.nd.edu/evaluation.

Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/taketen.nd.edu

Talk With Your Baby

Kris Arizmendi, Talk With Your Baby Coordinator

DURING 2017-18



191

parents and caregivers
participated in TWYB classes

23

new TWYB facilitators were trained

The mission of the Talk With Your Baby (TWYB) program is to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of talking and interacting with children right from birth in order to foster language, literacy, and social development.

This year the Talk With Your Baby program expanded its horizons to include another county as well as the great outdoors! In fall 2017, TWYB trained a new cohort of facilitators who are now spreading the message of TWYB throughout Elkhart County with their Healthy Families Program. That outreach, combined with the St. Joseph County Healthy Families Initiative, reached more than 100 parents! TWYB also piloted its first outdoor class at South Bend's Kelly Park. In addition to the regular TWYB curriculum, this class also included summer safety as well as lots of age-appropriate outdoor activities. TWYB also continues to offer both agency- and neighborhood-based classes throughout the year. This year's partners included the St. Joseph County Library, the Department of Children's Services, the National Youth Advocate Program, the Family Literacy Program, Healthy Families, and the Youth Service Bureau.



Looking for some fun activities to do with your baby or toddler? Check out the Talk With Your Baby Facebook page!

facebook.com/talkwithyourbaby/

English as a New Language Preschool

Jennifer Wittenbrink Ortega, English as a New Language Preschool Director



Shakir and Hussein first came to the English as a New Language (ENL) Preschool three years ago. Recently arrived from Iraq, neither spoke a word of English. They became the fastest of friends, and learned to speak English together. Now they will be off to kindergarten in the fall—fully fluent in English and immersed in their South Bend community (and eager to join the

Fire Department when they grow up). Their mothers have also participated in the adult ENL classes held at the RCLC, which this year included 90 students from 17 countries. These success stories are a result of a 17-year partnership with the South Bend Community School Corporation to provide English language instruction at the RCLC.

GOAL 4: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Foster active citizenship and a commitment to community building among the Center's partners and participants.



Community Events

Every year the RCLC hosts multiple events that bring together hundreds of people—children, families, senior adults, local partners, ND volunteers and staff, and neighbors—to serve and celebrate our community. This year's events included the Northeast Neighborhood Council's Back-To-School Picnic, Turning Over A New Leaf, Back the Bend Day, the Treasure Hunt North Block Party, and Anniversary Celebrations for both the RCLC (17 years) and the NDCAC (five years).



Shakespeare Celebration

A celebration commemorating the Robinson Shakespeare Company's trip to England brought together more than 100 parents, youth, partners, and other RSC supporters for a program that included a performance of a scene from *Cymbeline*, presentations by RSC youth and two videos—an eight-minute documentary about the trip produced by Notre Dame Magazine and the accompanying "What Would You Fight For?" video. Representatives from Canon USA presented a book of trip photos—captured by the youth with cameras loaned to them by the company. Canon also filmed the celebration, creating a video about the RSC that can be viewed at <https://csa.canon.com>.



RCLC Holiday Auction

After eight years, the RCLC Annual Holiday Gift auction has become much more than just a fundraiser—it is a labor of love for the team of RCLC parents, staff members, and community/ND partners who spend the weeks prior securing donations, inviting the community, and dressing the RCLC up in its best holiday attire for the event. RCLC families and neighbors look forward to coming together to eat cookies, listen to music, and enjoy holiday cheer. Thanks to the generosity of the more than 100 people in attendance, proceeds raised funded this year's My America Trip to Washington, DC.



AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps, a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, has engaged 1 million members over the past 20 years in service to communities. Members give a year of their lives, supported by only a modest living

allowance plus an additional award that may be used for future education or to pay off student loans. In fall 2017, the RCLC AmeriCorps program began its third three-year grant period. RCLC AmeriCorps members have been serving our community for seven years!

2017-18 AmeriCorps Members

Kelly Anderson	Brigid Graff	Mary Robertson	Carla Vargas Fuster
Joy Brown	Ashley Hammond	Gabrielle Robinson	Lucia West
Natalia Catanzarite	Abby Johnson	Joe Russo	Shannon Weyer
Maggie Dosch	Angelique Lemrow	Annette Sayre	Josephine Wikelski
Alexis Duffy	Valentina Marquez-Montero	Theresa Trujillo	Lindsay Wilson
Chloe Dukes	Dea Meissner	Arielle Tyus	Dorcas Yamoah
Joseph Everett	Kathleen Reese	Rana Van Voorhis	

"I most enjoyed the opportunity to immerse myself in South Bend and serve young families living here. I learned how connected the RCLC and NDCAC are to the surrounding communities, and I enjoyed the opportunity to learn about many community resources and local initiatives."

AmeriCorps member

169,025

Total AmeriCorps hours served from 2011-2018

192

Education Awards received

216

RCLC AmeriCorps members since 2011

600

Volunteers recruited/ supported annually

2,000+

RCLC participants served annually

33

AmeriCorps members served more than one term

272,650

hours of service provided to the South Bend Community from 2011-2018

Many thanks to our 2017-2018 sponsors!

The Robinson Community Learning Center would like to acknowledge our generous sponsors, without whom our work throughout the community would not be possible:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Arco/Murray National Construction | Jessie Ball DuPont Foundation |
| ArtsEverywhere Initiative of the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County | Key Bank Foundation |
| Better World Books | McMeel Family Foundation |
| Bowsher-Booher Foundation | Notre Dame Alumni Association |
| Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Joseph County | ND Knights of Columbus |
| Canon Solutions America | Notre Dame Center for Social Concerns |
| Clark Memorial Trust Foundation | Serve Indiana/AmeriCorps |
| Dollar General Literacy Foundation | Shakespeare at Notre Dame |
| El Campito Child Development Center | Shakespeare's Birthplace America |
| El-Hibri Foundation | South Bend Community School Corporation |
| Harry Ornest Memorial Fund | University of Notre Dame |
| Holy Cross College | Wells Fargo Bank |
| Indiana Arts Commission/Partnering Arts, Communities and Education | Individual donors and those who wish to remain anonymous |

RCLC History

The RCLC was launched in February 2001 as an off-campus educational initiative of Notre Dame in partnership with Northeast Neighborhood residents of South Bend. While RCLC staff report to the Office of Public Affairs at the University of Notre Dame, programs are overseen by a program advisory board comprising residents, program partners, ND faculty/staff, and students.

The Robinson Community Learning Center is a department in the Office of Public Affairs and Communications, under the direction of Jay Caponigro, director of community engagement; Timothy Sexton, associate vice president; and Paul J. Browne, vice president for public affairs and communications. See more about Notre Dame's local outreach efforts at publicaffairs.nd.edu.

And to our 2017-2018 RCLC Program Advisory Board Members

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Michael Ball | Angela Fitzpatrick | Reem Hassaen | Torrence Moody |
| Annie Cahill Kelly | Rohit Fonseca | Kiana Jackson | G. David Moss |
| Mia Copeland-Palm | Kreece Fuchs | Nicole MacLaughlin | Richard Pierce, co-chair |
| Jamar Dotson | Brenda Hunt | Sarah Martin | Carmen Williams, co-chair |
| Steve Egan | Kathy Reese | Maria McKenna | |