

Rise Above Performing Arts Inc.
Rising Above Expectations to Provide the Ultimate Theatre Environment

Rise Above Performing Arts Inc. (Rise Above) offers unique, no-cost experiences for area youth which include high-quality theatrical productions, show choirs, and summer camps. Aligned with its mission of providing area students with advanced opportunities and instruction in the performing arts, the ***Rising Above Expectations to Provide the Ultimate Theatre Environment*** initiative will continue to enhance and broaden theater experiences by up-grading lighting and sound systems, adding livestreaming equipment, replacing the current stage, and adding seating.

The initiative budget of \$124,088 will fund \$56,596 for sound/lighting technology, \$21,700 for stage construction, \$34,316 for seating, mirrors/stands, \$7,151 for performers' lockers, and \$4,325 for signage/permits. The Board has committed the \$14,588 beyond the Impact100 SRQ grant. These purchases will permit Rise Above to deliver a more professional theater experience, which it estimates will increase its participants by 25% and its donor base by 15-20%.

Rise Above's 300 students, from kindergarten through college-age, and 14,000 audience members each season will benefit from the higher quality, more professional performances. The performers will be able to work in a more professional environment, fueling their feeling of belonging and importance and addressing their social-emotional needs to help them thrive as performers. The audience members will benefit from upgraded lighting and sound systems and a new stage and seating, amplifying and enhancing their theater experience. Livestreaming capabilities will bring new patrons to Rise Above who otherwise may not be able to attend. And the greater Sarasota and Manatee community will benefit from the added art and culture.

This initiative and its effects will endure through the use and enjoyment of the spaces and updates by the patrons and the performers. To sustain the initiative, the equipment will be regularly maintained and updated as needed, using funds from increased revenue due to the improved audience experience. While it is possible that its current location may close for redevelopment, Rise Above expects to be in the current space for another three years. The improvements are all portable, and can be moved and reinstalled within one week if necessary.

Rise Above puts on 6 full-scale productions of 8 to 9 shows each, each year. The theater experience will be enhanced with a new stage, seating, lighting and sound systems. The students who participate in the productions as well as the audience who attend the performances will benefit. Rise Above's history of consistently filling theater seats demonstrates the community's ongoing support.