

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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MONSANTO FUND GRANT TO METRO THEATER COMPANY ALLOWS THOUSANDS TO EXPERIENCE *BUD, NOT BUDDY*

ST. LOUIS – The Metro Theater Company production of *Bud, Not Buddy* empowered thousands of young people to explore identity, family, and community through theater and jazz this spring, thanks in part, to an \$18,000 grant from the Monsanto Fund.

In fact, during the 2017-18 season, more than 15,000 students from 137 schools experienced a Metro Theater Company play, residency, workshop or camp. More than half of those students were from underserved parts of our community and many were able to attend for free or at a reduced rate thanks in large part to the support of the Monsanto Fund.

“In our 45 seasons, we have created thought-provoking live theater and transformative educational experiences for more than two million young people,” said Metro Theater Company Artistic Director Julia Flood. “Support from the Monsanto Fund allowed us to bring the inspiring story of *Bud, Not Buddy* to 87 schools with more than 5,000 students and adults attending school matinee performances,” Flood said. “in addition, more than 2,000 children and adults attended the public shows.”

Metro Theater Company’s production of *Bud, Not Buddy* was the Midwestern U.S. premier and was the first public performance since it debuted at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. The production played at the Grandel Theatre in Grand Center throughout the month of February, 2018.

Set in 1930s America, *Bud, Not Buddy* tells the story of a young boy who finds his family and a love of Jazz music. Metro Theater Company partnered with Jazz St. Louis to produce this Newbery Medal and Coretta Scott King Award-winning story. *Bud, Not Buddy* combined a group of actors with a 13-piece jazz band performing an original score by five-time Grammy-winning jazz artist Terence Blanchard to tell this inspiring story.

Teachers who brought their students to the show were overwhelmingly positive about experience. “My students are so accustomed to every type of entertainment being relayed on screen. They were surprised to see how much work it took for real people to act out a play...I believe that your exemplary work will stay with them for a lifetime,” said Gloria Haukap, a sixth grade English teacher from Fanning Middle School.

Teacher Laura Grayson from Robinson Elementary talked about the life lessons her students took from *Bud, Not Buddy*. “The Metro Theater Company actors created the story of *Bud, Not Buddy* in a way that transported the audience to a challenging time in our history, and helped us see that with perseverance you can overcome”

ABOUT THE MONSANTO FUND

The Monsanto Fund, the philanthropic arm of Monsanto Company, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where farmers and Monsanto Company employees live and work. Visit the Monsanto Fund at www.monsantofund.org.

About Metro Theater Company: Since 1973, Metro Theater Company has created accessible sensory productions that respect young people’s intelligence, tell compelling stories, stimulate curiosity and provoke thoughtful reflection. The company has a national reputation for excellence in the field of professional theater for young audiences, with a long history of developing new plays that speak to issues faced by children and families. Metro Theater Company has received major honors and awards, both locally and nationally. For more information, visit www.metroplays.org.

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