Shakespeare: NJ
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Shakespeare: NJ Festival is an important educational program of the Folger Shakespeare Library, The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and Rider University. These three institutions share a commitment to provide a range of resources and opportunities to both students and teachers that will assist and inspire them to both study and enjoy Shakespeare’s plays.

One of the best ways for students to enjoy Shakespeare—to learn something about the characters, to make the language leap—is to perform the plays. The Festival provides a structure to promote learning through performance.

The Festival days are designed so that the students are each other’s audience. Watching several other scenes is as educational as performing one’s own. Scenes from different plays are scheduled each day, so the students come away with an idea of the range and texture of Shakespeare’s work, and the manifold ways in which it can be interpreted.

It is also the intent of all three institutions that students from different geographical areas and different kinds of schools share the Festival experience. The world is an exciting and diverse place. We need to meet each other.

The Festival is fun. In the attempt to keep it that way and in the spirit of the playwright who provided a good time to every theater-goer, the commentators will award prizes for excellence of every kind, and each student will go home with a tangible token of the day they trod the boards, backstage or onstage. We want the students to have a good time, a great time, and maybe the time of their lives.

The Festival is not a competition. We are all educators who share with you the goal of learning more about Shakespeare and celebrating the spirit of human creativity as we enjoy the students’ accomplishments.