



Board Vice President Irene and Artistic Director Clay looking good while Board Member Jay takes a break from speaking to the Saturday afternoon crowd at Narragansett Brewery. Red Dress Run organizer Adam opens the event at WaterFire Circle

First Annual Red Dress Run a Success

Spectrum Theater Ensemble and the Rhode Island Hash House Harriers hosted the first annual Rhode Island Red Dress Run (RIRD R) on 27 April 2024 in downtown Providence. A Red Dress Run is a traditional charity run of the Hash House Harriers, a world wide social running club, and occurs in cities throughout the world. For those of you who haven't heard of this running club, it was founded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1938 at the British Officers Mess Hall, commonly known as The Hash House. It's more than a run, it's a game where one to three 'hares' mark a trail using traditional symbols with attempts to confuse the 'pack,' but eventually lead them to the finish, where they tell stories of their adventure and socialize. Participants in this activity are commonly referred to as 'hashers.' All people are welcome, regardless of their speediness. This seemed to be an appropriate organization to partner with to support STE, another organization that works to make the world more inclusive for everyone.

The weekend of fun(draising) started on Friday evening with a Pub Crawl that made friends for STE at [Nick-A-Nees](#), [Askew](#), [Mirabar](#), [Far Shot](#), and [Trinity Brewhouse](#). Far Shot donated two, one hour sessions of coached Axe Throwing for a raffle basket that also included throwing knives, donated by The Giver, a co-planner and hasher from Maine. Many local hashers joined in this short distance tour and immediately started talking about STE with other patrons of these establishments and getting to know the visiting hashers better.

The main event occurred on Saturday, starting at 1400 at WaterFire Circle. The crowd included around 25 local Hashers and several newcomers from Connecticut. Following a 'chalk talk' where the traditional symbols were explained by Scrummie Seconds, a traveling hasher from Texas, an unaffiliated group of Rhode Islanders entertained the crowd by playing the Macarena from their boat in the middle of the circle! The older hashers shook the dust off their muscle memory and did a few rounds of this popular 90s line dance! Once everyone was warmed up, the adventure commenced!

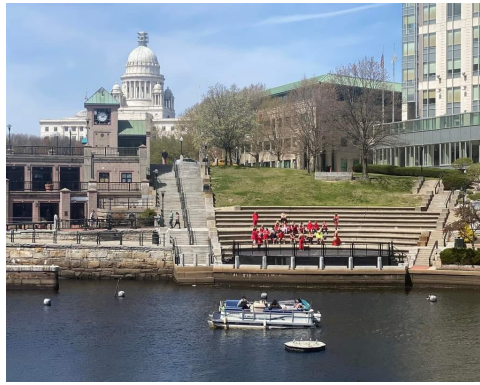


Artistic Director Clay poses with new STE supporters from Connecticut. Participants pose in their dresses around downtown Providence.

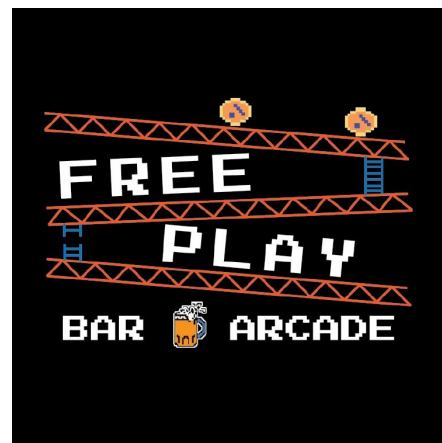
The trail led the pack to their first photo stop in front of the old train station across from Kennedy Plaza. After a few more twists and turns, these intrepid runners found their first "Thespian Check," where STE's own Eric Pjojan entertained the crowd with a monologue from Shakespeare. Scummie's trail then went straight uphill to the top of Brown University, wandering through the classical buildings and finally getting to rest at the Greek quad, where they refreshed themselves with shaved ice that one of the sororities was selling as their own fundraiser to support victims of domestic violence. From here, trail went back downhill, with a short song check at [Mister Sister](#) on Wickenden Rd. Then went all the way to the water for a longer break at [Narragansett Brewery](#) on Indian Point. There, the pack found STE's Artistic Director, Clay Martin, and board members Irene Yibirin and Jay Walker, all decked out in red. While the hashers refreshed themselves, they chatted with the other patrons about STE's mission. But this was only halfway, so the pack had to move on!

The second half of trail was much flatter as the pack followed the river back into downtown. Most of the pack fell for Scummie's false trail across the Point St Bridge, just to recross the river at the VanLeesten Memorial Bridge. After a quick refreshment stop and another Thespian Check, the pack quickly made their way to their final stop, [FreePlay Bar and Arcade](#)! FreePlay very generously donated entry for all the red dress run participants and the use of their karaoke space for our closing circle. Artistic Director Clay Martin stole the show, thanking all the participants for donating and attending, and recognizing the great efforts put in by the hasher planners, The Giver, Just Carla, and Scummie Seconds.

Everyone walked away with an appreciation of what Spectrum Theater Ensemble can bring to the community and anticipation of having another fun time on 26 April 2025 at the second annual RIRDRI!



Special thanks to our sponsors!



Noteworthy News

Play Reading - Make Me a Sandwich



Eric Pjojian, STE Production Manager, debuted his play "Make Me a Sandwich" on April 28th with a reading at SEG, the community workspace where STE's offices are located. Eric's play is very creative and an extremely entertaining story. The actors doing the reading did a great job bringing the characters to life, even without costumes and holding their scripts! The audience was small, as expected on a beautiful Sunday afternoon, but their applause filled the space at the conclusion of the reading. Eric's proud parents were able to attend and made it obvious where Eric gets his genial personality and giving nature. Eric already has requests to bring this play out of state when it is ready as a full production! STE's 2024 season is off to a great start thanks to Eric's talent and willingness to share his imagination with all of us.



Above: Eric and his proud parents. Eric introduces his cast. Eric answering questions after the reading with "Chester".

STE Awarded National Endowment for the Arts Grant

We are thrilled to announce that the National Endowment for the Arts has awarded a \$30,000 grant for the Neurodiversity New Play Festival!

In total, the NEA will award 1,135 Grants for Arts Projects awards totaling more than \$37 million as part of its second round of fiscal year 2024 grants. You can read more in their [press release](#).

We need your **HELP**. All NEA grants require a cost match of at least 1 to 1. That means we have to raise \$30,000 and your generous donations help make that possible.

NICE Program Update

STE's Neurodiverse Inclusive Certified Entertainment (NICE) program is a codified rating system establishing reasonable accommodations that support **neurodiverse communities** and their participation in the theatrical experience.

NICE revolutionizes sensory friendly entertainment by shifting the focus from individual show adjustments to **sustainable** seasonal support. It also raises the consciousness of institutions and audiences through an **adaptive** sensory-friendly program that maintains **artistic integrity**.

The NICE program is picking up speed! This month we are continuing our collaboration with the American Repertory Theatre (ART) in Cambridge, MA to bring sensory relaxed programming to their new musical adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, *Gatsby*.

The sensory relaxed performance will be on July 14th. We are also working with several other theaters to begin implementing NICE in their upcoming seasons. Follow STE on Instagram and Facebook for the latest NICE updates.

How You Can Help

Spectrum Theater Ensemble has won several grants, but the real backbone of this company is the community and their participation with all aspects of the company. Please attend the readings, events, and plays that will continue to entertain you throughout the year.

If you believe in this work and STE's mission please also consider making a donation so we can bring you cutting edge productions, pay our company members for their work and continue to provide guidance to other entertainment venues to allow everyone to enjoy live entertainment. Please click this [link](#) to donate and share this newsletter with your social networks so the STE community can continue to grow.