

## MUKTI FUND

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## MUKTI FUND ANNOUNCES QUEER YOUTH THEATER GRANTS TOTALING \$107,500

Key West, Florida.

The Mukti Fund, a small private foundation based in Key West, Florida announced the awarding of grants totaling \$107,500 to nine queer youth theatres located around the country.

The Mukti Fund was established in 1983, and Dr. Martin Dupuis, a trustee, explained that the philanthropic vision of the Fund was "starting or being engaged with innovative programs that empower queer youth to reach their full potential."

In recent years the Fund has been involved in funding queer youth projects nationally and for several years collaborated with the Queer Youth Fund. In 2008, the Queer Youth Theater Fund was established. "Its purpose is to support existing and new queer youth theaters that work with youth to tell their stories about growing up queer in society," according to Weston Millken, Mukti's vice-president.

Grants are being awarded under the 2009 Queer Youth Theater Fund to:

Dreams of Hope

Pittsburgh, PA; \$12,000

Grant will support production of an educational DVD for health care and educational professionals by combining original youth created and performed pieces with appropriate interviews.

[www.dreamsofhope.org](http://www.dreamsofhope.org), [info@dreamsofhope.org](mailto:info@dreamsofhope.org)

Fringe Benefits

Los Angeles, CA; \$15,000

Grant will allow for the creation of *Mitos, Ritos y Tonterias* (Myths, Rites and Silliness) a Spanish-language DVD to be distributed through hundred of queer youth families in the Los Angeles area this summer.

[www.cootieshots.org](http://www.cootieshots.org), [normabowles@earthlink.net](mailto:normabowles@earthlink.net)

Pride Players (part of Omaha Theater Company)

Omaha, NE; \$15,000

Grant will allow the continuation of their existing work in the Omaha area and expand their ability to tour to community groups in Iowa and Nebraska. (<http://rosetheater.org>, [briang@rosetheater.org](mailto:briang@rosetheater.org))

QSpeak Theatre (part of Phoenix Theatre)

Phoenix, AZ; \$5,000 and a \$5,000 challenge grant

Grant will support QSpeak Theatre to provide play development workshops and the creation and production of scripted and original works.

([www.phoenixtheatre.org](http://www.phoenixtheatre.org), [a.beck@phoenixtheatre.com](mailto:a.beck@phoenixtheatre.com))

Queer and Allied Writing Project (part of Add Verb Productions)

Portland, ME; \$ 10,000

Grant will support their Queer and Allied Writing Project to provide opportunities for youth the create and share original performance pieces.

([www.addverbproductions.com](http://www.addverbproductions.com), [info@addverbproductions.com](mailto:info@addverbproductions.com))

Rainbow Pride Youth Alliance

San Bernadino, CA; \$5,500

Grant will allow for the start up of a theater for queer youth living in San Bernadino area and allow them to create a script and then tour before local educational, social service, and religious organizations. ([www.rpya.org/Qmunity](http://www.rpya.org/Qmunity), [mebertfreire@gmail.com](mailto:mebertfreire@gmail.com))

Theatre Askew

New York, NY; \$15,000

Grant will allow for the commission of an original theatrical piece with clients of Ali Forney Center in New York City, a social service organization for homeless queer youth. The piece will be performed in the spring of 2010 and tour throughout New York City. (<http://theatreaskew.com/taype.htm>, [theatreaskew@yahoo.com](mailto:theatreaskew@yahoo.com), Tim Cusack)

The Theater Offensive

Cambridge, MA; \$10,000

Grant will allow for continuation of the creation and performance of original plays that are toured to schools and community Centers throughout New England.

(<http://www.thetheateroffensive.org/truecolors.html>, [evelyn@thetheateroffensive.org](mailto:evelyn@thetheateroffensive.org))

Youth Aware (a part of New Conservatory Theater Center)

San Francisco, CA; \$15,000

Grant will support the expansion of their Youth Aware Diversity Educational Series into rural and northern California.

(<http://www.nctcsf.org/YouthAware.html>, [meredith@nctcsf.org](mailto:meredith@nctcsf.org))

In announcing these grant, Michael Dively, Chairman of Mukti Fund said, "We believe that queer youth theater presents the youth involved with opportunities to achieve their full potential. In bringing youth's stories to their communities via their performance pieces, voice is given to the challenges and fears that queer youth face today. We believe that the sharing of queer youth stories through theater can both empower young people and transform their audiences."