WASHINGTON, D.C. - Shakespeare Santa Cruz has been awarded a $25,000 grant by the National Endowment for the Arts. The grant, part of NEA's Shakespeare for a New Generation program, is targeted at supporting workshops and performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for students in southern Santa Cruz and northern Monterey counties.

"Promoting arts in our schools and communities is a very important part of education," said Rep. Sam Farr (D-Carmel). "With art programs on the chopping block at schools around the nation, the role that the NEA plays is more important than ever."

Shakespeare Santa Cruz is one of 40 professional theater companies nationwide that has been chosen to participate during the 2008-09 school year.

Since 2003, NEA has awarded 175 Shakespeare in American Communities grants to professional theater companies to provide live performances of Shakespeare to schools and communities around the country. More than 1 million students have attended these productions.

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