

Megan Ferguson

Miller Arts Scholars Minigrant Proposal

5 October, 2021

The Power of a Picture

Project Summary

I have been pursuing various performance and training opportunities since high school, but I have never gotten professional headshots taken. This was not a significant problem until I auditioned for the Joffrey Ballet School's 4-week Musical Theater Intensive in New York City this past summer. One of the application requirements was a headshot. Because I was not in a position financially to book a headshot photoshoot on such short notice last spring, and since I wanted to submit my audition as soon as possible, I had one of my friends take headshots for me with her camera in our apartment complex's parking lot. While the pictures came out fine, I found it very awkward to be photographed in that context, which I think is reflected in the pictures. Having to use those pictures to apply to the program last summer, and having to present them at other auditions since getting back to school, has left me feeling unprofessional and unprepared.

In order to put my best foot forward at auditions for productions and training programs, and to elevate my confidence and level of professionalism, I need to have professional headshots taken. I was accepted to and participated in the Joffrey Musical Theater Intensive this past summer, and a point that many of my instructors made was that it is essential to make a positive impression upon everyone involved in any audition process, especially when there could be thousands of individuals going out for the same role or opportunity as you. High quality, accurate headshots are vital when it comes to making that positive impression upon casting teams so that they remember who you are as a performer and the work that you did in the audition room.

I am hoping to book a headshot photoshoot for when I return home this term, either over Thanksgiving or winter break. I have been researching headshot photographers and agencies in the Northern Virginia area, and two that stand out to me are Tim Coburn and HeadshotDC, both of which offer varying packages for different prices. I would still like to explore these options further, and to see if any of my peers have additional recommendations for photographers who work particularly well with actors. I have a certain image and brand that I would like to cultivate, so this decision is not one to be taken lightly, especially considering the substantial financial investment that it requires.

I currently have a part-time job where I work about nine hours per week, and net about \$90 weekly. While I do have some money saved up, I do not feel comfortable making large purchases because I have significant weekly expenses. With the assistance of a Miller Arts Minigrant, I would be able to take my personal marketability to the next level, which would increase my opportunities of becoming a memorable, successful performer.

Schedule for Completion

October 2021	Research headshot photographers and agencies located in the DC/Northern Virginia area to determine who I would like to work with
November 2021	Book headshot photoshoot
Nov/Dec 2021	Have headshot photoshoot (either while I am home for Thanksgiving or winter break)

Budget

Expense	Cost
Headshot photoshoot & finalized photos	\$200-400 <i>Example breakdowns:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tim Coburn: \$200-400 depending on package - HeadshotDC: \$200/session, \$100/selected photo
Haircut & styling appointment <i>(A key element of a successful headshot and audition is presentability. Before going to the photoshoot, I would like to get my hair done to enhance this.)</i>	\$140
Total	\$340-540*

*I would cover any additional costs over the \$500 maximum.