



## Martha Mendenhall | Shakespeare's Spokesperson

Her love affair with the Bard started in the 9th grade, and she's been devoted to him ever since.

Now Martha, as outreach education artistic associate for the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, has the opportunity to reach a new generation of fans through programs that bring his words out of the past and off of the page. "A play, if you just pick up the text of it, is already missing a huge part of it, which is the action," she says. So the trained actress, freelance director and former teacher leads Shakespeare to Go, a 60-minute classroom version of a famous work, and Hands-On Shakespeare, which helps teachers make the plays more relevant to today's teens. *The Taming of the Shrew* with a *Beach Blanket Bingo* vibe? Sure. "I want students especially to not think of it as 'old-timey,'" Martha says.

"We've brought them Shakespeare without all of the old-timeyness and baggage."

Photo by Scott Crowder