

AUTUMN 2018 | VOLUME 103 | ISSUE 4

# Equity

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

# NEWS



## THE ART OF BEING SEEN

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE CASTING PROCESS

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 Chicago, IL 60661

Telephone: (312) 641-0393  
 Audition Hotline: (877) AEA-1913, Ext. 815  
 Rehearsal/performance-related emergencies  
 (for after-hours only): (312) 307-2781

General Office Hours  
 9 am to 5 pm, Monday-Friday  
 Membership Office Hours  
 9 am to 5 pm, Monday-Friday

### EASTERN REGION

165 West 46th St.  
 New York, NY 10036

Membership, 14th Floor  
 Reception, 15th Floor  
 Audition Center, 16th Floor

Telephone: (212) 869-8530  
 Audition Hotline: (877) AEA-1913, Ext. 831  
 Rehearsal/performance-related emergencies  
 (for after-hours only): (866) 270-4232

General Office Hours  
 9:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday-Friday  
 Membership Hours  
 10 to 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday

### THE ACTORS FUND (NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS)

(800) 221-7303

### BROADWAY CARES/EQUITY FIGHTS AIDS

(212) 840-0770

### ACTORS' EQUITY FOUNDATION

(212) 869-1242

### ACTORS' FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

(212) 869-1242

### EQUITY-LEAGUE BENEFIT FUNDS

(800) 344-5220

### WESTERN REGION

5636 Tujunga Avenue  
 North Hollywood, CA 91601

Telephone: (323) 978-8080  
 Audition Hotline: (877) AEA-1913, Ext. 826  
 Rehearsal/performance-related emergencies  
 (for after-hours only): (818) 414-8525

General Office Hours  
 9 am to 5 pm, Monday-Friday  
 Membership Office Hours  
 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday

# EquityNEWS

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#Equity  
STRONG







## FROM THE PRESIDENT IMPROVING ONLINE SIGNUPS

Welcome to winter, everybody! Although it's tempting to slow down during the months of limited sunlight and (for some of us) bone-chilling temperatures, we all know that throughout our industry, the winter months are when things

really heat up.

As our office cities in particular typically have a major uptick in audition frequency, I want to remind everyone about some of the tools we've implemented to give you a chance to get seen by the folks doing the hiring.

Both the staff and elected sides of Equity continue to refine and improve the online EPA and ECC signup process. I should say at the outset that the major hurdle continues to be simple supply and demand; there will always be more actors who want to audition than there are available appointments. That said, we've been very focused on making the user experience more reliable.

Earlier this year, we conducted a full audit of our IT system so that we could understand and mitigate the traffic issues that occur when the signups go live. We've also added more real-time updates about where each user is in the queue and which signups are full. If you're a regular user, hopefully you've seen those improvements.

When I was elected in 2015, online audition signups were a big priority. I campaigned on this issue, because it's always seemed a bit absurd to me that I can sign up online for yoga classes and doctor's appointments, but not Equity auditions. Shortly after the election, I got an email from a member who lived about an hour outside New York City. He asked whether we could create an online ECC list because he simply couldn't afford to come into the city to write his name on a wall, and that was costing him job access in a very real way.

That email fueled my fire in a big way, as did the possibility of opening up our auditions to members who might live within commuting distance of the office cities, but found it impractical or cost-prohibitive to show up on a line at 5 am without knowing whether they would be seen. To me, this has always been an issue of offering the same dignity to actors without representation as is afforded to those who have agents: real appointments, made in advance without having to stand on the street in the freezing cold and freedom from the reality of structuring your whole day around sitting in a waiting room and hoping to be seen.

I was fortunate to have partners in Linda Cameron (then the chair of the EPA committee) and Kim Jordan (who was 2nd VP and chaired the Advisory Committee on Chorus Affairs), as well as a Council and an Executive Director willing to take this leap. Our staff has worked extremely hard to make this a reality, as has the Online Signups Working Group. We vigorously debated every element of this process, from what was the fairest time of day for the signups

to go live (12 noon in the time zone of the audition location), to penalties for lateness (those went away), to how much notice is necessary for a member to cancel a scheduled EPA appointment (one hour), to how many no-show EPA "strikes" were allowed before a member lost access to online signups, and for how long (two strikes became three strikes; EPA access is restored after six months), and beyond. Pro tip: there is still no cancellation penalty for ECCs...just sign up in advance and come if you can.

Also, while cruising the listings one day, I noticed that stage manager submission instructions were more present than I've ever seen, but were buried in the body of the listings instead of being broken out as separate jobs. So although the information was there, those positions weren't coming up in SM job searches. I was really excited to learn this, since stage manager job access is a big priority of mine and is deeply important to those of you who do that work. I picked up the Equity Bat Phone (okay, I probably texted) and asked that our staff start reformatting those listings so that our SMS – who otherwise have no real reason to dig through actor notices – wouldn't miss out on opportunities.

Since the online signup system was implemented in 2016 we have certainly had some hiccups and some learning experiences. But we have also had 134,247 EPA audition appointments booked through this tool. It's a particularly wonderful thing, in my humble opinion, to report that 25,000 of those have been booked by members who live outside an office city. In New York, EPAs have been booked from all 28 liaison areas; LA and Chicago aren't far behind, with 25/28 and 26/28, respectively.

Finally, I want to remind you that only two-thirds of EPA audition appointments are available online. The working group decided early on that we didn't want to exclude those who may not be as tech-savvy, or who were unable to get an EPA appointment for a particular day. So please remember that you can still just show up. In fact, because the system allows EPA appointments to be cancelled up to an hour in advance, it's likely that you can get seen, at least most of the year, in the "analog" way.

I hope you enjoy this issue and find it helpful. Special note: please check out the notice on page 26 about the new hotline that will allow our members all over the country to anonymously report harassment in the workplace. We continue to take this issue very seriously, and strive together toward the day when nobody is ever victimized in the workplace. Keep us posted.

See you when we thaw out!

Kate Shindle

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## PROTECTING YOUR RETIREMENT



You may not realize it, but your pension was in danger briefly this year.

As your executive director, I wear many hats. One of those hats is as a trustee of your pension fund. By law, the pension fund is overseen by trustees, a group comprised equally of your employers and of Equity members and staff.

The problem, like too many problems these days, began in Washington, D.C. The Equity-League Pension Plan is fully funded – thanks to careful stewardship, it has been for more than a decade. The problem was that Congress was considering changes to the rules governing pension funds.

A detailed explanation would no doubt take up more space than a single *Equity News* column, but the background is that some pension funds are in trouble. There is no doubt that Congress should help those troubled pension funds, but there is also no reason the cure should kill the patient.

Unfortunately, that is exactly what Congress was poised to do this fall. I heard about it first from several of the staff who oversee the pension fund. From that point, we sprang into action. When Congress created the aptly named Joint Select Committee on the Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans, they gave the committee a deadline of November 30 to accomplish something.

As fall approached, some of the proposals that were circulating would have required substantially higher contributions from employers and reduced benefits for participants. Some proposals we saw would have required as much as a 45 percent higher pension contribution.

No matter how you look at it, that is hardly fair. Your pension is a critical benefit of your membership in the Union, and that benefit is supported by professional staff and dedicated volunteer trustees who oversee the fund. The proposals we heard about certainly weren't fair for Equity members who have earned their retirements one week at a time.

Equity's pension fund is a model for the industry – it is 104-percent funded and there are nearly 2,000 employers contributing to the fund. We've not only played by the rules, but the pension fund is and has been consistently graded as a "green zone" plan, the strongest category used to measure the health and strength of pension funds.

Over the last year since Equity 2020 we have begun building a modern organizing program, one of the promises we made during the campaign. We tapped our new organizing capacity to help mobilize members to make their voices heard. During the month of November as Congress rushed to their self-imposed deadline, we focused on activating members in the key states represented

by the Joint Select Committee.

Our organizers and volunteers made calls and sent text messages to Equity members. And as members, you responded, contacting key members of the Joint Select Committee.

From Florida to Tennessee, you made visits to your member of Congress. Nearly 300 members sent a letter, called their member of Congress or made a personal office visit, telling your local members of Congress to do no harm to our pension plan.

This was an all hands-on deck moment for us. Everyone from Madeline Fallon, who serves as Co-Chair of the Equity-League Pension Fund Trustees, to rank and file members were involved. We didn't just work from the bottom up. We also worked from the top down. We built partnerships with your key employers – from the Broadway League to LORT – who agreed with us that the proposals in Congress were simply unacceptable.

As employers and workers, we spoke in one voice to Congress and reminded them that whatever changes they might be considering, the first principle of "Do No Harm" must apply to pension funds like Equity League. We sent joint letters to the committee chairs. And Equity President Kate Shindle joined with staff from the Broadway League to make a personal appeal on Capitol Hill.

For now, at least, common sense has prevailed. The Joint Committee released a statement near the end of November. What it did say is that Congress would continue to consider the issue of pensions. What it didn't say was that they were ready to announce a solution.

When the new Congress convenes in January, we will be monitoring the situation. And we will continue to use all the tools at our disposal to make the case that you have earned your pension and that it should be protected.

Mary McColl



## DIVERSITY MATTERS TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

The work of the Diversity and Inclusion department isn't just about opening minds. It's also about opening hearts and tapping into your sense of self to fully embrace the power of diversity in American theatre.

That is why I am so proud of the recent events our department has hosted in conjunction with the Equal Employment Opportunity committee. Earlier this summer, the "Crossing the Sea" panel discussion celebrated Caribbean American Heritage in addition to examining conscious and unconscious biases and microaggressions that occur against the Caribbean community, and ways the arts might be able to help eliminate systematic barriers among them. We are planning a talkback to continue the exchange that was created during this event – so stay tuned to find out more.

Additionally, *Shane Boy Darling* was a one-man musical that raises awareness about prostate cancer and how to cope with such a diagnosis that can impact one's ability to work. Equity member Kenny Ingram performed the musical and reflected on his career, family history and how his diagnosis has inspired faith and gratitude. We plan to continue presenting more events like this, since this opens doors of communicating and understanding to share experiences about visible and invisible disabilities that may affect us in the workplace.

These events represent one avenue through which this department can raise greater awareness about issues affecting various demographics within our membership. But another avenue involves something I know all of you have access to. Perhaps the most constructive thing that I can ask our members to do is to voluntarily self-identify through the enhanced features in the Member Portal. For the first time, Equity has expanded its demographic features in the Portal to include specific classifications for gender/gender identity, race, sexual orientation, veteran status, and a new format in which members with a disability can self-identify. Members can access this feature at [ActorsEquity.org/selfID](http://ActorsEquity.org/selfID).

We view this as a call to action. Self-identification isn't really about just checking a box for general business purposes and loading up more data. Rather, what this will do is enable Actors' Equity to humanize the needs of you, our members. This can lead to increased and equal work opportunities, as we can use this information to demonstrate to employers the diverse array of valued members that they can hire. Equity's historic study

on hiring bias has generated dozens of conversations with LORT artistic directors as well as with casting agents, directors, producers and members in such cities as Chicago, New York, San Francisco and Boston.

Voluntary self-identification gives the union leverage to persuade employers to be responsive to the systematic challenges and barriers faced by our membership when presented with the data. We also want to ensure that we are equipped to shine a light on hiring practices in our industry; measurable data that puts the spotlight on gaps in hiring practices cannot be refuted. The data will further amplify the issues confirmed in our 2017 empirical study, and will give us a comprehensive view of the demographics of our membership.

This is a compelling call to action and we ask that you help us lead the charge for fostering equal employment opportunities in our industry. It is equally important that you know all of the information provided through self-identification remains strictly confidential. We do not share any personal identifying information with employers. Still, even knowing that, I understand that disclosure is a personal decision and is extremely important to you. Before you decide on whether you choose to self-identify or not, please consider, for example, that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities. The data will help us advocate for greater access, representation and services for members with disabilities.

Our organization has always led by example, and by taking the time to self-identify, we will move toward the very important step of creating a more authentic, equitable and fair representation of our membership in professional live theatre. I ask all of you to work in solidarity with us to foster inclusion both on and off the stage. We value you and want to ensure that we have the right resources in place to better serve you.

And don't forget that you can reach this department at any time using our email address, [Diversity@ActorsEquity.org](mailto:Diversity@ActorsEquity.org).

Nicole Smart

# PROPOSITION E: MAJOR VICTORY FOR ARTS ACTIVISM



Actors' Equity President Kate Shindle and Western Regional Director Gail E. Gabler were joined by member volunteers to help spread the word to vote "Yes on E."

When Proposition E passed in San Francisco this past Election Day, it wasn't just a victory for arts in the city. It was also a major victory for Actors' Equity members who campaigned to raise awareness about the importance of this ballot measure as part of the Acting Locally initiative.

"Prop E," as it was affectionately referred to, sought to improve the arts and culture in San Francisco by dedicating 1.5 percent of the base hotel tax, a fourteen percent tax charged for hotel stays in the city, to arts programs. (The city created a link between hotel tax and funding for the arts in 1961, with the reason being that a vibrant arts scene could increase tourism). In just the next two years, this could add more than fifteen million dollars in funding to the Bay Area.

"Many artist friends have had to leave the city," Western Region member and San Francisco resident Susan Shay said, "and some, the Bay Area as a whole, because they cannot afford it. What is a city without artists? Not a place I want to be and certainly not where I want my children and their classmates to grow up."

Just two years earlier, a similar measure attempted to dedicate money from the local hotel tax to aid arts organizations but came up just shy of the two-thirds majority required for it to pass. To ensure that history did not repeat itself, Equity joined the fight for stabilized and increased arts funding in San Francisco over the summer.

"I got involved in the Prop E campaign because I don't want to live in a place that doesn't value arts and culture," Shay said, "not just in word, but a community that puts its money behind it. Prop E made a statement that supporting arts and local culture is a value we hold as San Franciscans."

Member leaders from all across the Bay Area spoke out at board meetings at San Francisco's City Hall, and many others

**"PROP E MADE A STATEMENT THAT SUPPORTING ARTS AND LOCAL CULTURE IS A VALUE WE HOLD AS SAN FRANCISCANS."**

— SUSAN SHAY

volunteered to call and email fellow members as well as EMCs in the area to get involved, attend endorsement meetings across the city and continuously lend their time to the "Yes on E" campaign.

This activity culminated in a Day of Action in October in which Equity President Kate Shindle joined volunteers to encourage residents to vote in favor of the ballot measure. "Altogether, this was an amazing team effort by our amazing members in the Bay Area," Organizer Stefanie Frey said. "We took cast photos, we wore buttons and T-shirts, we made curtain speeches, we shared on social media, we organized a group of children to paint a 'Yes on E' mural, we canvassed and hung up posters everywhere we could."

Everyone's efforts paid off mightily. Proposition E passed with almost 75 percent of the vote. "I was on pins and needles on Election Day," Shay said. Still, amid the celebrating, she cautions that work remains to be done. "Prop E passing was a highlight – but in looking at the map of precinct voting I see we still have much work to do educating all our citizens why funding arts and culture is not just the right thing to do but essential to our well-being as a local community and as a greater society. Without art, we have no heart."





## LABOR DAY OF LOVE

Actors' Equity members take a special kind of pride in their union, which they put on great display on Labor Day – a day that trade unionists requested be set aside to celebrate labor. Members from Detroit, Los Angeles, Minneapolis/St. Paul and New York gathered, signs in tow, to march in solidarity with the brother and sister union members. (Additionally, Equity President Kate Shindle sang the national anthem at the parade in New York City.)





# #EQUITYWORKS

## EQUITY LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN IN ATLANTA



As part of Equity 2020, a campaign to build a more aggressive, inclusive and responsive union and to grow the number of paid work opportunities for professional actors and stage managers by the year 2020, Equity has set its sights on the Atlanta area as a place to raise awareness about the value of professional theatre.

"I was delighted that Atlanta was chosen as the first city as a focus for national organizing and targeting efforts, and I believe interesting and important seeds were planted for the community at large," said Karen D. Howell, the volunteer chair of Equity's Atlanta Liaison Committee, said.

The theaters Actor's Express Theatre Company, Alliance Theatre, Atlanta Lyric, Atlanta Shakespeare, Aurora (Main Stage), Theater Emory

at Emory University, Horizon Theatre Company, Savannah Repertory Theatre, Theatrical Outfit and True Colors Theatre all use full Equity agreements.

Actors' Equity bestowed these theaters with special commemorative plaques at ceremonies taking place earlier this year to recognize their continued employment of Equity members.

The hope is that the recognition of these stalwart theatres will lead audiences to take note of the great work being done by local Equity theaters as they make plans to purchase tickets – and that this will, in turn, help increase long-term employment opportunities throughout the Atlanta area over time.

"When you see a theatre with an Equity plaque in the lobby," Howell said, "that's a place that is committed to

fair compensation and workplace safety rules that allow the members to give their all for the audience, night after night."

This campaign included a video campaign and targeted

advertising that highlighted Atlanta's potent theatre scene. Dozens of Equity members in the Atlanta area have also committed to adding #Askifit-sEquity to their bios on social media and in their Playbills.

Above, members pose onstage at Horizon Theatre Company. Right, Business Representative Kathleen Munroe bestows a plaque upon Tom Key, Artistic Director of Theatrical Outfit.





# THE ART OF BEING SEEN: PERSPECTIVES ON THE CASTING PROCESS

BY DOUG STRASSLER



Photo by Matthew Murphy

Above, Zachary Zwelling, Justin Collette, Rachel Katzke and Walden Sullivan in *School of Rock – The Musical*. On the cover, Saint Aubyn, Ephraim Sykes, Jeremy Pope and Derrick Baskin from the touring production of *Ain't Too Proud*. Both shows include cast members who were first seen at a required Equity call.

“Access. Access. Access.”

That one word, in a nutshell, is what every auditioning performer longs for: the chance to be seen, at their best, in the hope of landing a role and providing for themselves. In this instance, it was uttered by Stephanie Gould, a performer with a mild form of cerebral palsy, who discussed her own path in navigating the casting process.

But this quest applies to all members who have ever walked into an audition space. Anyone who has ever been in an elevator with or walked in a hallway past someone rehearsing sides knows just how fraught and nerve-wracking the process can be. From getting an audition to getting to the audition to feeling that a casting director (CD) may not have seen enough of what someone can do, it's a frustrating journey. Like college admissions, there can be many disappointments, as casting directors must choose from far too many performers for far too few opportunities. (For a glimpse at advice for Stage Managers, see sidebar on p. 25)

“One time I went in for a required call for a new Broadway show,” Actors' Equity 1st Vice President Melissa Robinette said. “I had worked for weeks before this EPA [Equity Principal Audition] for this gig. I got up at 6am; I knew I was right for it.”

Anyone who has been to an EPA probably knows what happened next. Not only did Robinette not get the job, while in the audition room she felt that the person on the other side of the table wasn't giving her full and open consideration for the job.

“I was so angry, I went home and cried,” she remembered. But that's not where the story ends.

“And the next day I got a callback from that audition for another Broadway show.”

This anecdote just goes to show amid all the nerves and adrenaline, it's hard to know for sure just what the CDs across the table are seeing. A series of conversations with those on both sides of the audition room helped to shed light on the overall process.



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

The casting experience doesn't have to be an adversarial one. Many of the CDs interviewed for this article sang a similar tune, emphasizing that they really are on the side of those across the table from them.

"We do want the actor to be good so we can get behind everyone we show to our team," Merri Sugarman, a casting director with Tara Rubin, said. "The truth is that it's about wanting to be good at our jobs, so the creative teams are happy with our work."

The art of creating work in the arts is actually a very delicate science, replete with scheduling logistics and keeping stakeholders happy and informed. "I'm always hopeful that performers trust our understanding of our project's needs," New York casting director Michael Cassara said, "and that we're there seriously considering them with a number of variables in play. There are a lot of people who do excellent work but don't get called back that time around due to oversaturation. I may only see six people for one role [at an invited audition], and the challenge is how can I fit everyone in? There are a lot of people who are truly brilliant who might feel rejected – but being the seventh out of thousands is not a bad place to be."

CDs have producers, directors, sometimes choreographers and musical directors to please, meaning the invited audition space is the only time a casting director fully holds the reins. Sugarman said she will do everything she can to see performers at their best. "I work really hard on prep for the auditions," she said. "I try to make sure there is natural light in the room, and that everyone has coffee and water. If an actor hasn't had a chance to put his bag down, sign in and take a breath, I'll bring someone else in, so they have time to get ready. But no matter how much you try to tell people that we are rooting for them, they don't believe it."

Empowering performers in the room is vital. "If I could wave a magic wand, I would make all of the performer's fear and nerves disappear," Eric Woodall, Producing Artistic Director at North Carolina Theatre, said. "We want actors to be their best, and that usually comes from them feeling confident and 'in the moment.'"



Zakiya Young, center (seen with Wilkie Ferguson III and Dedrick A. Bonner), seen in the West Coast premiere of *Spamilton* at Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre, was cast out of an Equity open call.

Kyle Atkins, Associate Producer for Riverside Theatre, revealed that his biggest pet peeve is when performers who have scheduled an audition time do not show up. Or show up at a different time. "I get it, lives are crazy, but commitment and respect are integral," he said. "Someone canceled twice on me and then just walked in. I was like, 'Are you kidding me right now?' Or if you have a 3:30 appointment but you show up at 11:10am, you have to ask the casting person is this okay."

## THE ROOM WHERE IT HAPPENS

Casting directors are quick to discuss their overall role in the puzzle and what

they do on their end to secure a safe and positive audition environment. But what exactly are they looking for from the actors who come in?

"That they would be familiar with the entirety of the piece they are auditioning for," Justin Bohon, a casting director at Binder Casting, said, "and that they take as much time as possible to be sufficiently prepared, make strong choices about the character and that the material that they choose to sing in the room is appropriate to the piece."

Center Theatre Group Casting Associate Andrew Lynford does his best to assuage those who audition for him. "I know people get nervous, so I do my best to chat



**"IT'S VERY EASY FOR ACTORS TO SAY, 'I WAIT TWO HOURS FOR THREE MINUTES IN THE ROOM.' BUT I DON'T WANT THEM TO THINK IT ISN'T A WORTHWHILE EXPERIENCE."**

— ANDREW LYNFORD

with them and make them less nervous," he said. "Be polite and confident, but don't try to be funny or over-talk. We want to stay focused on you – there's no need to shake hands with everyone."

Honesty and punctuality are of supreme importance, but so is preparation – yet perfect practice with the wrong material can hinder a performer's chances. "I don't feel actors spend enough time taking apart their audition material, making intelligent, bold choices and putting it back together again," said Mark Brandon, another casting director at Binder.

Christopher Pazdernik, Casting Associate at Chicago's Porchlight Music Theatre, echoed Brandon's sentiment. "When we audition for classic theatre, and they come in with the latest pop hit, which won't help me evaluate you in terms of the world of the play. That's not to say they aren't talented, but they are missing the mark in terms of coming in with something that will help you get cast. One season we produced shows from no later than 1964, and one actress came in and slayed, quite honestly, 'I Know the Truth' [from *Aida*]. But I didn't know what to do with that."

## WAITING FOR THE LIGHT TO SHINE

All CDs interviewed contend that it is indeed worth the performer putting themselves out there at EPAs and at Equity Chorus Calls (ECCs). (For more information about upgrades to the EPA system, see sidebar at the right.) But do those people who put themselves on the line agree?

"Of course it is a bit more challenging and you deal with quite a bit of volume, but it is worth the investment of time," said Western Region member Bets Malone. "I have a friend whose agent tried and tried to get her an appointment for a show, and the casting director wouldn't give her a time because she was 'wrong for the project.' She went to the open call and booked the show. Perseverance is the key!"

Western Region member John San Nicolas lives in Portland and sees a different side of EPAs in the smaller cities. "EPAs seem like they are more of a perfunctory requirement sometimes begrudgingly complied with by the small number of Equity houses in town, and I think that it is a relatively rare occurrence that local actors book jobs as a result of

EPAs," he said. "Most companies have a core of people they trust that they hire over and over again, and it can feel like a real uphill battle for those on the outside looking in. EPAs can feel a little bit like a shot in the dark as a result."

Casting directors are certainly sympathetic to the cattle call-like atmosphere of auditioning. "I appreciate that coming to open calls is a bit of a ball-ache, as we would say," Lynford said. "It's very easy for actors to say, 'When I

get there, it will be a bit of a scrum; I wait two hours for three minutes in the room.' But I don't want them to think it isn't a worthwhile experience. One actress who had just moved from New York to Los Angeles came to a season EPA and got a role in a show at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. 'I'm so glad I didn't think I was above the opens,' she said. And she is getting great work here because she came to the open and did that show."

In New York, Cassara says that it is

# UPGRADES TO EPA SIGNUPS

Actors' Equity has implemented some enhancements to Casting Call to improve the system performance and provide more insight into the online EPA signup process. These enhancements will allow for a more consistent queueing experience and provide live user counts to let you know how many other members are using Casting Call and viewing that day's signups.

During peak signup times (i.e., noon to 1pm in the Eastern time zone each day), the queue will be turned to an "Always-on" mode, ensuring each user must go through the queue, even if the number of users

on the portal has not yet surpassed the "busy" threshold.

You can also expect a post-signup email at the end of the rush period if you attempted to sign up for any EPA. This email will contain information and metrics on that day's active signups and how busy it was during the noon rush period in the region where your EPA was located. If you attempt to sign up for EPA appointments in more than one region in one day, you will receive multiple emails, one for each region. You can opt out of these post-signup updates at any time.

## WHAT IS THE "QUEUE-MODE" DISPLAYED ON THE CASTING CALL SECTION OF THE SITE?

The queue-mode is there to let you know what behavior to expect from the queue when you attempt to sign up online for an EPA. There are two different modes:

**SAFETYNET:** Members will be added to the queue only if the number of members attempting to signup passes a certain threshold. SafetyNet mode is the default mode for the queue.

**ALWAYSON:** Every user that attempts to sign up for an EPA online will be put through the queue – even if it's a slow day. AlwaysOn mode is used every day during peak signup times to ensure a consistent experience for every user on the site.

## WHEN I GOT INTO THE QUEUE, THERE WERE MANY MEMBERS ALREADY IN LINE EVEN THOUGH I CLICKED RIGHT AT NOON. HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

With many members waiting to click on a signup button at noon, entrance into the queue is often separated by milliseconds. To have better insight into how busy the queue will be before you attempt to sign up at noon, we've added live user counts throughout the Casting Call section of the site, as well as a count on the "Today's EPA Signups" page that includes just those users viewing that page or any of today's notices.



rare for him not to call many performers back out of an ECC or EPA. "I would say half of the shows we work on potentially have someone, or many people, who were cast when the initial audition was the EPA. Perhaps between 25 and 50 percent."

## REVIEWING THE SITUATION

Technology has certainly provided options for the casting process. Self-taping auditions has allowed increased visibility for performers regardless of where they live. "This provides me a chance to see those outside the New York community," Chad Murnane of Binder Casting said. "Self-taping also offers a convenience for both actors and creative teams with last-minute emergencies or busy schedules."

Performers themselves offer a mixed take. Western Region member Idella Johnson felt that "self-tape auditions rob casting directors and directors of really getting to know an actor, and it robs actors of re-direction which gives insight on what the director may be looking for." However, Robinette said that "auditions and callbacks via video have saved me a lot of money and stress."

Self-tape certainly worked for San Nicolas. "A friend knew folks at Fusion Theatre in New Mexico who were looking for an actor for their production of *Disgraced*," he said. "She suggested me to them and passed on my contact information. I learned a couple of scenes, sent my videos, was given adjustments and sent again. That worked out great, and we repeated the process when I returned to be in their production of *Old Times*."

Lynford cautions that those who self-tape should make sure the size of their work reads as though it is for the theatre and not for film or television. "Treat it like you're filming a theater show," he said. "I would encourage not to do a cinematic version, or do two versions – the intimate camera version, then show me you can be a good theatre actor and be more expressive than you would be in a close-up shot."

## MAKE THEM HEAR YOU

As both a performer with a disability (she has been diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis and epilepsy) and as the Development and Media Relations Manager at Addison, Texas's WaterTower Theatre, Debbie Ruegsegger has seen the casting process from both sides

"I HAVE HAD SOME AWESOME WINS OF GETTING CALLED IN FOR OTHER THINGS FROM THOSE AUDITIONS OR EVEN BEING CAST IN OTHER PROJECTS JUST BECAUSE I WAS ALLOWED TO GO IN AND REMIND THEM I'M ALIVE."

— MELISSA ROBINETTE

firsthand. She says the most important step to remove barriers to casting of actors with disabilities is to create a dialogue, transforming the audition room into as safe a space as possible.

"Just by asking simple questions, you can learn a lot about what certain actors have to navigate," she said, adding that invisible disabilities such as chronic fatigue syndrome and multiple sclerosis fall under that rubric as well. "Casting directors have no idea what is going on in someone else's body – sometimes fluorescent lights made me forget everything, and they might think they I am unprepared.

"If I don't know someone who I am auditioning for, it's difficult to feel safe to disclose," she continued. "We have to feel safe to ask for those accommodations. Adding that to audition notices could be a big step for theaters of letting certain communities know that they are confidential and not a deal-breaker. Many theaters are in the first steps of creating that, though we have a ways to go. Progress comes through a listening ear."

Gould agrees that more transparency between actors with disabilities who audition and casting directors would be beneficial. "Consideration for non-disabled roles is probably the biggest challenge. We can play the girlfriend, lawyer, protagonist — anything, really. Theaters say they are looking for performers with disabilities, and then end up going with a non-disabled actor.

"But if you specifically seek out disabled talent, cast disabled talent," she said. "I don't think people realize the amount of preparation that goes into auditioning for a disabled actor. Not just preparing sides or a monologue, but travel time – it can take us double the amount of

time to get to an audition that might only last a few minutes." (Gould credited her manager, Brandon Cohen of BAC Talent, and agent, Gail Williamson in Kazarian Measures Ruskin & Associates Diversity Department, for helping her get seen for both disabled and non-disabled roles.)

Still, times have changed. Anita Hollander, an amputee actress and National Chair of SAG-AFTRA Performers With Disabilities Committee, remembers, years ago, a Broadway casting director who "watched my monologue at an EPA, sighed aloud, and said, 'It's a shame that you're so talented...'. The unspoken end of that sentence was 'because I'll never be able to cast you, because you're disabled,'" she remembered. That kind of language would be shockingly out of place nowadays.

## AT THE END OF THE DAY

Many theaters have also increased their efforts to be more diverse and inclusive in casting, although there remains room for growth there as well. "I do feel that there aren't many opportunities and roles for people of color," African-American performer Idella Johnson said, while Manu Narayan, an American actor of Indian descent, said "I feel very, very fortunate that the jobs and the wonderful career that I've had have been against type," and credits his persistence in attending EPAs with helping to open that door.

Equal Employment Opportunity Committee Chair Christine Toy Johnson believes that performers of color most often get hired through open calls when casting directors pursue a specific type. "Many people of color I know have actually gotten

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# THEATRE

## SPOTLIGHT

### FORWARD THEATER

You'd be hard-pressed to find a theater more firmly woven into the fabric of its community than the Forward Theater. For a decade now, the Madison, Wisconsin venue has fulfilled its mission of providing a steady, sturdy place of employment for actors and stage managers between Milwaukee and Spring Green.

And it all started around a dining room table.

Several Madison area actors had met at the home of Central Region Member Celia Klehr, an actress who had worked extensively with local stalwart theater Madison Repertory Theatre before it shuttered in 2009.

"When it closed, that angered me," Klehr, a founding member and current Company Manager of Forward Theater, said. "I was keenly aware that it was a lynchpin for those actors who'd made a life working there. It was the only Equity theater in the area, and now they had no place to work."

Klehr gathered ten local professionals – including four Equity actors, as well as playwrights, directors and scenic designers – to discuss the possibility of forming a new theater.

"After the loss of Madison Rep, we gathered in Celia's home," founding member and Central Region member Sarah Day said. "Celia had been pacing in her house saying, 'What are we going to do about this?' Madison has a thriving community theatre scene, but it also deserved to have a professional theater. And that night, the founding of the theater happened there at the dining room table of her home."

The name itself refers to the "Wisconsin Idea," a term borne out of the Progressive Era, in which business, education and government all work in concert with one another to help move society, well, forward. That notion pervades throughout Madison,

so the name also synergizes with the Forward Statue, designed by Jean Pond Miner from the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago, which stands in front of the Wisconsin Capitol.

Forward Theater, the resident theater at the Overture Center in downtown Madison, is predicated on two fundamental principles. The first is to ensure a reliable home base for both Wisconsin theatre professionals and audiences. "We want people to feel an ownership in the theater," Day said. "If our artists can put together a season for themselves here, then they can maintain a life in Wisconsin."

Day said that it was also important that Forward Theater be an Equity house. "It was essential that the union be represented," she said. "We wanted people of the highest caliber in our productions, and Equity sets a bar for the level of commitment and talent that we wanted as the local professional theatre company."

The governing principle is to perform plays that will resonate best with the Madison community. "We want to be part of our community in an active way so that theatre remains relevant," Klehr said. "Once we have chosen a play, there is also a community outreach arm, where our audience is part of the story."

"For example, for *44 Plays for 44 Presidents*, we involved visual artists in the community to do a portrait of each president," she added. "American Players Theatre's Jim Devita adapted *Learning to Stay* from the book by Erin Celello, who is a local author. And since that is a play about post-traumatic stress disorder, we did a private performance for veterans with psychologists on hand."

As a means of continuous audience engagement, Forward Theater has a talkback following every single performance. "This

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From left to right, Nicholas Harazin, Marques Causey, Daniel Torres-Rangel, Lachrissa Grandberry, Rana Roman and Jim Buske in *Exit Strategy*. Table of contents: Mitch Bultman and Susan Sweeney in *4000 Miles* (photo by Zane Williams).



Photo by Ross Zentner



## MILWAUKEE/MADISON

Thanks to Madison/Milwaukee members Kelley Faulkner and Claire Arena Haden for their contributions!

Madison and Milwaukee are fantastic areas in which to raise a family, with strong senses of community engagement and a rich cultural playground. The food is great, the people are great and the opportunities are plentiful. Below, Madison resident Claire Arena Haden and Milwaukee resident (and Central Regional Councillor) Kelley Faulkner provide insight on their respective cities!

### WORKING IN THE REGION WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE AN EQUITY MEMBER IN THE REGION

**Faulkner:** On the positive side, there is a true sense of community as we are a smaller market. We don't have to get up at dawn and wait in line to audition. But the flip side of that is that there is just not enough work to keep us all employed.

**Haden:** Being an Equity actor in smaller cities has its challenges. There are not as many opportunities to work full-time, but the professional theaters that do exist are stellar. Forward Theater (see p. 14) is dedicated to hiring local artists across the board: actors, directors, designers and technicians. Theater LILA also hires Equity; Children's Theater of Madison and Four Seasons Theatre do too, occasionally. However, because I also work as a teaching artist and voice and speech coach, I am able to piece together quality work all year round with artists and companies I enjoy. What I like about working in a smaller community is that you really get the chance to know the other artists in town personally. It really does feel like a family.

### WHAT IT'S LIKE WORKING IN THE REGION

**Faulkner:** While there may be fewer professional opportunities, the cost of living is much lower and the quality of life is much higher for my family. I love having artistic homes that know me well and trust me with their projects.

**Haden:** I live in Madison, but Milwaukee is just one-and-a-half hours away and also offers a lot of work opportunities. I find myself commuting to at least two gigs a season there. Expanding who I know regionally has created a more diverse community for me and my family and has provided me with a more well-rounded, full-time career as an artist.

### AROUND TOWN

#### BEST PLACES TO EAT FOR FOODIES

**Faulkner:** So many. Short list: Crazy Water (eclectic and adorable), Odd Duck (incredible tapas), Rare Steakhouse (old-fashioned tableside Bananas Foster!), Sanford (cozy, classic and upscale) and Red Light Ramen (because DUH). Foundation Tiki Bar is consistently rated one of the top tiki bars in the country.

**Haden:** There are too many to mention. My personal favorites are Heritage Tavern, Forequarter, Cento and Salvatore's Pizza.

#### WHAT YOU WON'T FIND ANYWHERE ELSE

**Faulkner:** Bloody Marys with actual whole meals as the garnish. I'm not kidding -- one place does it with a small rotisserie chicken. And the way locals say the word "bag:" BAYG. It's delightful.



Photo by Michael Brosilow

Above, Yousof Sultani and Owa'Ais Azeem in *Guards At the Taj* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Pictured on the Table of Contents, Emily Madigan, Nicolas Garza, Alexander Gil Cruz, Courtney Arango, Ryan Alvarado, Eric A. Lewis, Rana Roman and Eddie Martin Morales in *In the Heights* at Milwaukee Rep's Quadracci Powerhouse.

**Haden:** Grabbing a beer on the Terrace by the Lake and listening to amazing music. Walking down State St as the sun sets and sitting by the Capitol. Marching in the pride Parade to a New Orleans-style jazz band and hugging strangers. Going to the Overture Center and experiencing quality theatre, music, art and dancing. Badger football games.

#### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

**Haden:** If you want to get involved, it's easy to do here. Because the theatre community is small but mighty, there are lots of ways to engage. There is the Goodman Community Center, which offers support to kids in need as well as wonderful community outreach programs. You can volunteer with DAIS to help people in domestic abuse situations. You can run, bike, swim and walk for any cause that is close to your heart. You can volunteer at shelters, offer workshops for great organizations like Fresh Start, and also march with droves to speak out about gun control.

#### BEST WAYS TO EXPERIENCE LOCAL COLOR

**Faulkner:** Attend a Friday night fish fry. Kayak down the Milwaukee River. See bands during Summerfest. And there is a different cultural festival almost every week of the summer down by our beautiful lakefront.

**Haden:** Concerts, festivals, football and State Street. You'll see it all.

# MEMBERS FLOCK FOR **FREE FLU SHOTS**

Actors' Equity sponsored its annual Broadway and Off-Broadway Free Flu Shot program this fall. For over twenty years, Dr. Barry Kohn, the medical director of Physician Volunteers for the Arts, has administered flu shots in all Broadway theaters. The service also provides flu shots on a walk-in basis for all members of the theatre community. Broadway Cares/ Equity Fights AIDS funds the services.

Dr. Kohn received degrees in pediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and allergy/immunology at Boston Children's Hospital at Harvard University. After serving in the Air Force for five years as an allergist/immunologist, he opened a practice in Sacramento, California, where he worked for sixteen years. In 1998, he gave the practice away and moved to Los Angeles and New York, where he founded Physician Volunteers for the Arts, a non-profit that provides free medical care for professionals in the performing arts, regardless of their insurance status.

Equity offered the free flu shot program over several days throughout the fall. Dr. Kohn provided them in Los Angeles and New York. For the first time, UIC Health in the Arts Program administered flu shots in Chicago. In addition to members, EMCs, staff and other members of the entertainment industry were also welcome to receive the free flu shots.

"I've always loved the theatre," Dr. Kohn said. "I wanted to be an actor in high school; in college it became clear that I couldn't do that. I don't have the ego and couldn't put myself in the position of being judged by other people. So this is my way of giving back. Our government doesn't support the arts, and I think that you're not a society without the arts. I think that group gathering and the exchange of ideas is vital to our civilization."



Photo courtesy of Barry Kohn

Dr. Barry Kohn, right, provides a flu shot to *Hamilton* star Michael Luwoye.

## **MEET JOE BARNES:** NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF ORGANIZING

Joe Barnes has joined Actors' Equity as the National Director of Organizing. This role will align with the Equity 2020 campaign goals of creating a modern and strategic organizing program that will help create more paid work opportunities for Equity members. Barnes, who is based in the Los Angeles office, will lead the union's internal and external organizing programs.

"Joe's experience working with labor unions and Actors will take our organizing campaigns to the next level," said Executive Director Mary McColl. "He will add value to our organizing work all across the country."

Barnes has more than fifteen years of strategic organizing, public policy and political advocacy campaign experience. He served for three years as national Representative for SAG-AFTRA. Before joining Equity, he worked as the Western Regional Campaign Manager for the grassroots advocacy organization Compassion and Choices.

"I'm thrilled to be joining Actors' Equity and I look forward to using my experience working in the labor movement to help organize new paid work opportunities for Equity's talented actors and stage managers," said Barnes.



Joe Barnes, the latest addition to the Actors' Equity team.



# HOW I GOT MY EQUITY CARD

## LAURA D. GLENN MEMBER SINCE 1990



I earned my Equity card in 1990 with Steppenwolf Theatre's production of *Love Letters*. When I came to Steppenwolf, the company was in a period of transition, working towards moving into their new home, as well as expanding the size of their production schedule. I was in the right place at the right time. I had been working as an intern, non-Equity assistant stage manager and general backstage support for Steppenwolf when they asked me to step up and become one of their Equity

stage managers. In the following years I was fortunate enough to work with and be mentored by many great stage managers, including my hero, Malcolm Ewen. I have been a part of world premieres, great revivals, taken shows to international festivals and Broadway – both with Steppenwolf and my other creative home, Northlight Theatre.

I am the child of proud Equity actors and though I fell backwards into stage management in college at SUNY New Paltz, I feel it was a job I always meant to do. With the support of our union I am able to create a safe, collaborative and dynamic environment in my rehearsal room. Thank you, Actors' Equity, for the ticket that got me on this incredible ride and for allowing me to share the 'secret handshake' with all of those actors who join our union at first rehearsals.

## TOMMAR WILSON MEMBER SINCE 1998



During my junior year at Carnegie Mellon University, a classmate convinced me to fly to New York to audition for a new show that was opening on Broadway in a few months and was currently casting for its first national tour.

I had never been to a New York audition. My only trips to New York City had been the previous two spring breaks with friends from school. But I decided I might as well see what the experience was like.

My friend was already an Equity member so he just had to show up in the morning and get a time to sing later that day. There was no audition scheduled for non-union members, which meant we had to show up, line up and hope that they had time at some point during the day to see us.

I arrived at the Equity building sometime between 5 and

6am and was the fourth non-union actor in line. It turned out to be a popular audition, so we waited patiently all day as Equity members strolled by us in the hallway and flashed their union card to enter the members-only lounge. They were the cool kids while we had to take turns going to McDonald's for bathroom breaks and food. Maybe I was a little jealous.

At 5:45pm, 15 minutes before the end of the audition day, the monitor came out and took the first five non-union members back to audition for the casting director. Once we got into the Equity lounge, he told us they only had time to see the five of us, and everyone else would be sent home. I was number four of the five people!

I sang for the casting director, was invited back to dance for the choreographer the next day and then spent my rent money to travel back to New York from Pittsburgh later that week for another callback. I couldn't pay my rent for two months, but I got the job!!! I was cast in the First National Tour of *Ragtime* on a Production Contract and have been a proud union member since 1998.

And that's how I got my Equity card!

## THEATRE NEWS & NOTES

Cincinnati, Ohio — Cincinnati Shakespeare Company achieved a **7% salary increase across the board** as well as adding incremental free-standing ASMs over the course of the next three seasons. They are also at no less than 60% Equity ratio but are actually **hiring 80% Equity this season**. Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati. Equity achieved a **3% salary increase across the board with about 200 additional workweeks** from new programming.

Coachella, California — Coachella Valley Repertory Theatre has finished remodeling a movie theatre into a theatre and will begin producing in it half-way through their current season.

Columbus, Ohio — Evolution Theatre Company will become the fourth Equity theatre in Ohio's capital city. Short North Stage achieved a **4% salary increase across the board** and has negotiated required Equity stage managers in Phase 2 of the SPT transition, which is **one phase earlier than required**.

Indianapolis, Indiana — Equity negotiated an LOA with New Harmony Project.

Dayton, Ohio — Equity achieved a **3% salary increase across the board** at Human Race Theatre.

Kansas City, Missouri — Equity negotiated an **8% salary increase** over 2 years for the actors and **5% over 2 years for stage managers and ASMs** at Heart of America Shakespeare. Coterie Theater negotiated a **3% salary increase for the coming year** in addition to required ASM triggers, which will **add 2 ASM contracts** just this year, a **total of 18 additional work weeks**. Musical Theatre Heritage, struck a two year deal in which **salaries will increase 12% in Year 1 and 3% in Year 2**. In Year 1, a floating SM contract will add 6 work weeks. In Year 2, the theatre will move to Phase 3 with a 2+1 ratio, **adding approximately 30 workweeks for Kansas City members in 2020**.

Los Angeles, California — Greenway Arts Alliance and Overtone Industries have **signed a seasonal 99-Seat Agreement**.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin — At First Stage, Equity negotiated **ratio increases from 60% to 65%**. At Renaissance TheatreWorks, a SPT 6+, Equity negotiated an **increase in actor salaries by 4% and Stage Manager and ASM salaries by 3%**. At Skylight Music Theatre, Equity negotiated **salary increases by 12% for actors, 33% for Stage Managers and 18% for Assistant Stage Managers**.

New Orleans, Louisiana — LaFon Performing Arts Center is in the process of finalizing a TYA agreement. They will be using **six contracts for their inaugural show**.

New York, New York — MCC's **actor minimums increased 6% from \$677 to \$715 and 15% from \$677 to \$783** for multiple spaces. At the Public Theater, actor minimum salaries at the Martinson space have **increased 48% from \$690 to \$1,020**. Primary Stages' actor minimum salary **increased 11% from \$587 to \$652**. At the Signature Theater, actor minimum salaries at the Linney have **increased 17% from \$669 to \$783** and at the Diamond space, actor minimum salaries **have increased 48% from \$690 to \$1,020**.

Palm Springs, California — DezArt Performs has signed on to a **transitional use of SPT-1**.

Wakefield, Rhode Island — Wilbury Theatre Group has started their transitional SPT agreement, which will span two seasons. This season, they will present six mainstage shows, and possibly two second stage shows. This **new theatre will provide an additional 7 contracts and 52 work weeks**.

Richard Donnelly (left) and Joe Short (right) in The Wilbury Theatre Group's production of *The Caretaker*.





## TRACKING WHAT YOU'RE OWED



Photo by Jim Cox

Patrick Zeller and Angela Sauer in the Coachella Valley Rep production of *Venus In Fur*.

Central Region staff reported that Equity is in the process of resolving significant claims with a theater in Tulsa, Oklahoma. So far, we have **recovered over \$20,000 in monies owed** to Equity, Pension and Health, and to members.

Central Region staff **recovered over \$1,800 to the SM and ASM** at a LOA-CORST theatre due to the new SM Tech week payment, which was added to the CORST Rulebook this last negotiation.

Eastern Region staff secured a penalty payment in the **amount of two weeks salary and benefits (\$2,324.24)** for use of the recorded voice of a non-member in a production at a LORT theater that did not have allowances for use of performances by non-professionals.

Eastern Region staff **recovered unpaid vacation accrual** for the work of six members at two LORT theaters **totaling \$1,462.82**.

Eastern Region staff discovered a recording beyond the standard allowances of the Production Contract. The **21-member cast received a total payment of \$6,804.00**

plus pension and 401k. **Each Member's gross payment was \$324.00.**

Western Region staff reported that Equity negotiated rights of first refusal for a handful of stage managers, and also **recovered approximately \$10,200 in vacation payouts** collected during various clearances.

Western Region staff reported on a couple of **vacation payouts with a total of \$400**, and also achieved a **10% "longevity" increase for the cast of a production** under one of our newer SPTs.

Western Region staff reported that Equity achieved a settlement agreement on behalf of one member who was discriminated against at a theater in the Bay Area, **for nine weeks of salary and contributions of \$9,657.**

Western Region staff reported that a member was wrongfully terminated. Equity was able to achieve a settlement of four weeks of salary including sick pay, vacation pay, health insurance and pension **totaling over \$6,500 for the member.**

# ADVICE FOR NEW TAX BILL: UPDATE YOUR WITHHOLDINGS

BY SANDRA KARAS

Performing arts workers have historically submitted their employee W-4 forms (tax withholding forms) claiming more "dependents" or withholding allowances than they actually have. Most of the time, things evened out when they filed their tax returns because their employee business expenses and their personal exemptions reduced their income sufficiently enough to break even or yield a refund.

This year, however, performing artists and many others who relied on claiming expenses and exemptions will find that their taxable income is not as low as they had hoped. The reason

for this is the elimination of employee business expenses and other miscellaneous itemized deductions in the new Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) law. This new law has also eliminated personal and dependent exemptions, which means that workers not only cannot claim themselves or a spouse, but that they cannot claim any dependents on a tax return, either. (There will be some credits for taxpayers who have minor children, but that will be driven by income and other factors.)

So, what's an actor to do when he or she gets a job and is handed that pile of papers by management? Our advice is to complete the W-4 form

with your status and zero exemptions or withholding allowances. If you are single, that means you check "Single" and put a zero on line 5, sign and date the form and turn it in. If you are married, we recommend that you check "Married but Withhold at Higher Single Rate" and also put a zero on line 5, sign and date the form and turn it in.

What this will do is treat your earnings as though you do not have itemized deductions or personal and dependent exemptions. We recommend this approach because so many of our members work multiple jobs each year and they should withhold tax as though they have no deductions to claim.

But what about the higher standard deduction, you may ask? It's true that the standard deduction will be higher starting this year: \$12,000 for singles and \$24,000 for those who are married. Between the increased deductions and the eliminated exemptions, there will be a slightly lower taxable income amount for some of you, but that may not compensate for the elimination of the business expenses that most of you have taken off your returns for many years now.

If you have more withholding than you need, you'll get a refund! We think that's a good trade-off. 🙌

## IN MEMORIAM

Reported August 1, 2018 to October 31, 2018

*What we call the beginning is often the end.  
And to make an end is to make a beginning.  
The end is where we start from.*

— T.S. Eliot's *Little Gidding*

MANFORD ABRAHAMSON  
NATHAN ADLER  
LEE ALLEN  
MICHAEL AMBER  
STANLEY A. ANDERSON  
MARK BAKER  
GARY BEACH  
MAXWELL BEAVER  
BEVERLY BENTLEY  
COLLETTE BLACK  
GARRY ALLAN BREUL  
HELEN BURNS  
JOSEPH A. CAMPANELLA  
JONATHAN CANTOR  
SHAUN CARTER  
DAN CAWTHON  
GRACE CHAPMAN  
JAMES CLARKE  
LYNN MARIE CLAYTON  
ELIZABETH COLE  
GEOFFREY CORBIS  
DANIEL CURRIE

BILL DAILY  
HUGH DANE  
MARY ELLEN DAVID  
PETER DONAT  
DOUGLAS EASLEY  
CHARLES FATONE  
JAMES FAUCETT  
JOYCE ROBISON GEIER  
XENIA GRATSOS  
SCOTT L. HAMMAR  
BARBARA HARRIS  
ALAN JOHNSON  
WAYNE G. JORDAN  
JANE JUDGE  
EDWARD KEARNEY  
DOREEN KENT  
KURT KNUDSON  
KRIS KOOP  
SUZANNE LACROIX  
JOHN LANKSTON  
LARRY H. LAYTON  
GLORIA LEROY

JERRY ALAN LOTT  
KENNETH F. LUNDIE  
GEORGE J. MARCY  
J B MARTIN  
MARIN MAZZIE  
ALLYN MC LERIE  
SVEN MILLER  
LEE MOORE  
BRIAN MURRAY  
WILLIAM A. NEBELTHAU  
CHARLES W NOEL  
ANNE NUNNALLY  
RUSSELL H. NYPE  
MYRON ODEGAARD  
PATRICIA O'GRADY  
LYNNE O'NEILL  
VASHEK PAZDERA  
ROBIN ANN PELUSO  
ROGER PERRY  
FLORA PLUMB  
CHARLOTTE RAE  
BURT REYNOLDS

ROGER ROBINSON  
VIRGINIA ROBINSON  
CHARLES RODEN  
RENO ROOP  
PEGGY MORAN ROSADO  
ALTON RUFF  
BARBARA RUSSELL  
FRANCES SCERBO  
CAROLE SHELLEY  
TOM SHEROHMAN  
J W SMITH  
JUDITH SOSTEK  
JOHN STERCHI  
FREDRIC STONE  
MAIRIE SYMS  
SAL VACCARINO  
DEE DEE VAN ZYL  
FIDDLE VIRACOLA  
JEANNE WECHSLER  
JAMES YOHAM  
EDDIE ZAMMIT



## ADA LYNN A CHARACTER MISSED

Dear Equity News,

In the word cloud that surrounds Ada Lynn's life, "character" appears most often. She was a character, and she had character. Ada was a long-time Equity member and served on the Dallas/Fort Worth Area Liaison Committee for many years. She was often "one of the first to speak out" on behalf of regional actors, remembers fellow committee member and former Western Councillor, Pam Dougherty.

Ada was born Adalyn Schloss, on September 7, 1926. At age seven, she won a talent contest at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, which led to a childhood career in Hollywood, performing with Shirley Temple in the films *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* and *Heidi*. She was part of the "Our

Gang Comedies." At seventeen, Ada toured the Loew's Vaudeville Circuit as the "Curvaceous Clown," also performing in Broadway shows, nightclubs, USO shows and national musicals.

In 1950, while performing in *Desert Song* at the Dallas Summer Musicals, Ada met and married Sidney Lynn. They raised four children together. Ada Lynn appeared in films such as Oliver Stone's *JFK*, on television in shows that included *Walker, Texas Ranger*, and in numerous musicals and plays throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth area, which included performances at many Equity theaters, including Theatre Three and the Dallas Children's Theatre. Equity member Artie Olaisen, a staff member at The Dallas Children's Theatre,

said it was a "privilege" to work and serve with her.

Ada's motto later in life was "Keep dancing, keep moving and keep social security." This became the theme of her one-woman show. She also tap danced through her early 80's with a senior dance tap troupe called "Steps in Time," which was featured at a Dallas Mavericks halftime show.

She was devoted to the community, volunteering for such organizations as the Jewish Community Center, Women In Film Dallas, Lighthouse for the Blind and North Texas Reading for the Blind. For those who knew her or worked with her during her decades-long career, "beloved" is another major contender in the word cloud.

—Kim Titus

## MARIN MAZZIE EQUITABLE BY DEFINITION

Dear Equity News,

Marin Mazzie was a Broadway star of the highest order. A singing actress, an actress who sings, beautiful, charming, talented, funny, bawdy, irreverent, passionate, caring, she had a great desire to entertain and a huge passion for making people feel – deeply. But she knew that she couldn't do it alone – nor did she want to.

Marin began her stage career at the age of eight as a member of the Thimble Theatre Players at Camp Sunshine in Rockford, Illinois. It wasn't a professional theater but a stepping-stone, as theatre in any form is for those who aspire to make a living doing it. And it set up the cornerstone of Marin's philosophy that this is not only a community but also a family. In her own words, from her speech last year as she was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame, "the sense of artistry, storytelling, community, acceptance, dedication, and hard work has been deeply rooted in me from early on."

She could have done all that was required of her as a leading lady and called it a day, cashing the check and focusing on her next career move but she was a Leader (yes, with a capital L). She wasn't a mother in the traditional sense but so many



Marin Mazzie

companies that she led were the recipients of her nurturing and loving nature. She was that perfect mom and best friend combination. She didn't look down from a perch but was right in there with you, in the mix as a co-worker, collaborator and compatriot. She had your back and in turn she engendered a reciprocal feeling of fidelity.

From the "star" to the rest of the cast, to the orchestra, to the crew, to wardrobe, to hair, to front of house, everyone made up the family that she was proud to be a part of. No one part was greater or lesser in making the entire family a functioning and happy place to work and if she could help in any way, mainly by positive and loving example, she did.

"I am beyond lucky, as in almost every project I have worked on," Marin said in her Theatre Hall of Fame address, "that I have been surrounded by the most brave, smart, generous, passionate, loving, funny, supportive, mind-blowingly talented artists at the top of their game who have and continue to inspire me to learn and grow and not only be a better artist but a better human being and know that what we do can actually change people's lives. I have to say that my greatest triumph has been my marriage to my husband, Jason Danieley, who is my perpetual rock. But over the last two and a half years, in my continuing journey with ovarian cancer, this community, this family, has enveloped us with so much love and support that I truly believe it is the reason I am standing here tonight and I am so grateful and I thank you and, love really does win!"

Marin lived a difficult last three and a half years of her life buoyed by the love and support of this incredible community, her theatre family. Thank you, from both of us. Please remember her not only in thought but also in action. Lead with a capital L when you are fortunate to have the chance, and love one another.

—Jason Danieley

# HAVING A BALL: EQUITY SOFTBALL TEAM WINS BROADWAY SHOW LEAGUE TITLE

Actors' Equity went undefeated throughout the regular season & playoffs to win the Koehler Division Championship in this year's Broadway Show League. The League is comprised of those who work on Broadway and Off-Broadway in any capacity; in addition to cast, crew and orchestra teams, theatrical organizations and unions play as well. Their victory came as they beat Jujamcyn Theatres, 5-4. Andy Breving and Esther Suh were named Koehler Division League MVPs.

The League began in the 1950s as casts and crews of Broadway shows would head up to Central Park for informal picnics and softball games between performances on Wednesdays. Now, the official league plays all day Thursdays on Central Parks' Hecksher Fields.

Team members Jenn Dumas-Wiggin, Kimberley Travis and Tom Wiggin are also the executive producers of "Thursday in the Park with the Broadway Show League," a six-episode show about the League that can be found on STAGE Network, the first streaming network devoted to the entire world of theatre featuring original series, films, live theatre, documentaries, reality shows, variety shows, talk shows, live concerts and more.



## ACCESS MORE

Members can watch more for \$4.99 a month at

[WatchStage.com](http://WatchStage.com)

Members of the winning team. Back Row: Dick Connors, Tom Wiggin, Richard Cohen, Billy Magnussen, Peter Vanderhurst, Stuart Schnitzer, Andy Breving with son Mateo on his shoulders, Greg Salata, Jimmy Burke, Larry Edwards, Greg Perri; Middle Row: Fran Levitt, Jenn Wiggin, Jenny Hochberg, Esther Suh, Tony LaLonde, Mike Gong, Dominick LaRuffa, Jen Clark, Kitty Crowley; Kneeling: Don Burroughs, Andraya Hall, Justine Salata, Kerry Ipema, Markus Potter, Josh Sassanella; On the Ground: Alex McDermott, Kimberley Travis, Bear, Brooke Martino.



Photo courtesy of Kim Titus



# INDEPENDENT SHAKESPEARE CO. RECEIVES 2018 ROBESON AWARD



Members of Independent Shakespeare Co. accept the 2018 Robeson Award.

Independent Shakespeare Co. (ISC), the dynamic, inclusive Los Angeles-based theatre company that presents engaging productions of classical plays and new works alike, received the 2018 Paul Robeson Citation Award presented by the Actors' Equity Foundation. Co-artistic directors Melissa Chalsma and David Melville accepted the award during the Fall Western Membership Meeting of Actors' Equity Association on Monday, October 15 in the Los Angeles office.

ISC was founded in 1998 by a group of actors who shared a passion for classical works. They stripped back the conventions of contemporary theatre, discovering efficient, entertaining ways to bring great works to a modern audience. Their inaugural production, *Henry V*, was produced with a budget of \$800 at The Present Company Theatorium on New York's Lower East Side. In 2001, ISC relocated to Los Angeles and subsequently partnered with the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles to produce Free Shakespeare in Barnsdall Park. This endeavor has grown significantly – while the first performance of the free outdoor festival was attended by 14 people and a dog, by 2009, the summer festival performed for nearly 12,000 patrons.

Created in 1971, the Paul Robeson Award honors individuals or organizations that best exemplify and practice the principles to which Mr. Robeson devoted his life: dedication to the universal brotherhood of all humankind, commitment to the freedom of conscience and of expression, belief in the artist's responsibility to society, respect for the dignity of the individual and concerns for and service to all humans of any race or nationality. The award was voted on by members of the Actors' Equity Paul Robeson Committee, chaired by Allyson Tucker.

"If you have ever been to any Independent Shake summer shows in Griffith Park, you know they're something special," Western Stage Manager Councilor Pat Loeb said upon presenting this year's Robeson Award. "It's not just that their shows make Shakespeare accessible, meaningful and a lot of fun. They made a commitment to casting talented performers from underrepresented communities – wonderful union performers – who look like the world around them. Their audiences feel included. And because the people on stage look like their audience, those watching find out they love, and can understand, Shakespeare and its relevance to our modern world.

"And it isn't just the show itself that involves their audiences," she said. "ISC produces preshow programs that feature music and musicians from many cultures, creates Get Out The Vote booths, educational discussions for all ages about theatre (often including theatre games), audience potlucks, costume nights and talkbacks teaching specific topics related to the venue or the play – for example, this past summer, a salon series included a discussion led by curators from the local museum discussing their current exhibit of Roman art and its influence on the Renaissance just before a performance of *Titus*. ISC makes sure everyone – everyone – feels welcome, regardless of age, language, experience, affinity and background. And they work miracles in a challenging environment."

Other recipients of the Paul Robeson Award include Robeson himself, as well as Maya Angelou, Alice Childress, Jacques d'Amboise, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, Harry Belafonte, Athol Fugard, James Earl Jones, Joe Papp, Sidney Poitier and George C. Wolfe. 🇺🇸

# NEW MEMBERS GATHER AROUND THE STATES

Members gathered in Liaison Areas around the country to watch this fall's new member orientation as a team. In addition to the meeting held in the Los Angeles and New York City offices, both new members and committee members alike gathered in such cities as Dallas, Kansas City and Philadelphia.

Now that's a great way to show solidarity.

The next new member orientation will take place on January 14, 2019 in Los Angeles and New York, as well as another set of Liaison Areas still being finalized. These orientations will occur during the evening, so as to allow for maximum accessibility.



## SAVE THE DATE! UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Winter Regional Membership Meeting**  
**Monday, January 28, 2019**  
**2 pm ET / 12 pm CT / 12 pm PT**

All meetings will be held in the Regional Offices. Please visit the Member Portal for further information and any changes.

Members with disabilities who would like to request accommodations to participate in the Membership Meetings: please contact National Director of Governance Allison Bodwell at 212-869-8530, ext. 310, two weeks prior to the meeting to make arrangements.

**If you would like to present a resolution at an upcoming**

**membership meeting**, please note that the resolution must be submitted in writing to Equity at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. All motions that will be discussed during the Membership Discussion Period will be posted in the Member Portal one business day prior to the Membership Meeting.

Resolutions for the Winter Regional Membership Meetings must be submitted to [abodwell@actorsequity.org](mailto:abodwell@actorsequity.org) by January 14, 2019.



# STAGE MANAGERS OFFER ADVICE: NETWORK!

Actors hope that through auditioning, they can create positive relationships with casting directors. Stage managers also recommend building up a stable cadre of friends in the industry:



"SHADOW STAGE MANAGERS AND HAVE COFFEE WITH PSMS ON BIG SHOWS. TALK ABOUT HOW THEY GOT WHERE THEY ARE AND WHAT THEIR CAREER TRAJECTORY WAS."

— ERIN MAUREEN KOSTER



"NEVER LET FEAR STAND BETWEEN YOU AND SEEKING PROFESSIONAL STAGE MANAGERS FOR ADVICE. OBSERVING THE WORK OF OUR COLLEAGUES ENRICHES A FORMAL EDUCATION."

— AMANDA SPOONER

## CASTING PERSPECTIVE – Continued from page 13

jobs through open calls, and I think this is especially true when a production is looking specifically for a certain type of actor," she said, "but I do think that people lose faith in the system, and stop going because they feel that when a show is not looking for their specific cultural background, they will not be given full consideration. Then it becomes a sort of vicious circle. They can't be considered if they don't go, but they get tired of going and feeling it's a waste of their time because they're not really being considered."

Eastern Chorus Councillor Lauren Villegas also advises that casting directors can't shoulder the full burden of representation. "The real root of the problem is the work getting produced," she said. "The solution is less about the casting process and more about making sure the work being done in the industry is fully representative of the population."

Idella Johnson agrees. "I do believe that there's been progress, but there's room for improvement, and that starts with screenwriters, playwrights and directors

abandoning stereotypes and seeing us in roles that are normally cast or written for white people," she said.

For their part, the casting directors interviewed here have amped up deliberate plans for greater inclusivity. "There is not a single project that we cast in our office in which one of the first conversations with the team doesn't involve a serious and determined plan to cast as many ethnically diverse performers as possible," Bohon said, and Murnane agreed that he, too encourages creative ethnic casting. "Our commitment to diverse casting, in every sense, is unwavering," Woodall said. "We encourage our creative teams to cast in progressive and contemporary ways and encourage *all* actors to be submitted."

"Our programming strives to be diverse and inclusive, but then, with each production we strive to make sure that directors are presented an inclusive group of potential hires at both the idea and audition phases of each process," Adam Belcuore, Managing Producer at Chicago's Goodman Theatre, said. "In

an effort to invest in the Chicago casting community we have hosted the Casting Society of America open call for actors with disabilities, as well as other local casting calls that specifically provide opportunities to under-represented talent."

While steps have been taken to create greater accessibility and inclusiveness in the casting process, work remains to be done. Robinette cautions those with the power to cast to make sure they embrace inclusion, not tokenism. Still, both sides agree that the more performers get seen, the likelier they are to get cast.

"Even for required calls where I have heard they 'aren't looking,'" Robinette said, "I have had some awesome wins of getting called in for other things from those auditions or even being cast in other projects just because I was allowed to go in and remind them I'm alive."

From the other side of the table, Lynford agrees. "It really is worth it and people have had great results doing EPAs," he said. "Please keep bringing your talent to my door." 🍷

## THEATRE SPOTLIGHT – Continued from page 14

way the audience can tell us how it affected them," founding member and Central Region member Michael Herold said. "Every talkback includes people from the production, with someone from the artistic staff there to facilitate them. It's a way for audiences to talk directly to us, and we've had some really incredible discussions."

The founding members also agreed that they wanted full transparency when it came to the business end of things. "We've created what we call a 'three-legged stool,'" Klehr said. "There is a staff, a board and an advisory company made up of local artists, and all three have equal power."

"None of us knew why theaters failed," Herold said. "It was necessary to structure our theater in such a way that everyone would know as much as they could about

the complete working of the theatre. The advisory company is made up of a variety of theatre professionals – designers, stage managers, actors, dramaturgs, people who have worked in several theatrical capacities – so that everyone could bring their expertise into the decision-making process, including, casting, cast size, technical aspects of a show and its appeal to our audience."

According to Klehr, the company's business acumen takes equal importance to their artistic merit. "We've taken chances but have been fiscally sound and have stayed in the black for all ten years," she said. We've gone from being an SPT-4 theater to being an SPT-8 theater, and brought up the salaries of everyone around us. I'm very proud of that."

As part of its growth, Forward Theater's tenth anniversary season has expanded from three shows to four, including its first musical: *Fun Home*, whose cast includes Tony Award-winner Karen Olivo. "We're so lucky to have Karen here," Day said. "We all have a really strong sense of what we've been through, what it is like to work in theatre, and she, too is just this gracious, giving person. Things like that make me proud to do what we do."

Herold agrees: Taking care of the company and engaging the community has been a really rewarding ride," he said. And the structure should sustain itself; Forward Theater should last for a long time. "When we're no longer part of the theater, the integrity of what we set up will continue." 🍷

# ELECTION RECAP: EQUITY ENDORSEMENTS, VICTORIES ON LOCAL ARTS FUNDING

Many eyes were glued to the results of last month's mid-term election results, as the outcome could drastically affect the lives and livelihoods of many members.

For the first time, Equity's National Council endorsed two candidates for Governor. In California, Equity endorsed Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom on behalf of the more than 10,000 Equity members living and working in the state. "As Mayor of San Francisco and as Lieutenant Governor, Gavin Newsom has been a vocal supporter of the arts as both a cultural benefit and a major economic force. I'm confident that he will be a pro-union, pro-arts Governor, which will both benefit California directly and make a strong national statement that the arts are essential to a thriving economy,"

Actors' Equity President Kate Shindle said.

Equity also endorsed the gubernatorial candidate J.B. Pritzker on behalf of the nearly two thousand members who live and work in Illinois. "We applaud him for supporting a \$15-an-hour minimum wage, advocating for health care as a fundamental human right, and recognizing that robust arts funding is both a cultural investment and a major economic driver," Shindle said.

Equity wasn't alone in those endorsements. Both were also endorsed by numerous unions, including their state AFL-CIO chapters.

And both candidates won. The endorsements may have occurred in October, during peak campaign season, but they were the results of months of work by Equity's National

Public Policy Committee, which believed that endorsements can support Equity's mission to defend workers and organize more paid work opportunities for members. Governors often play a key role in the debate on issues like state and local arts funding and the minimum wage.

"I'm thrilled by what happened with our endorsements," Marjorie Horne, Co-Chair of Equity's National Public Policy Committee. "This was one of the big reasons we restarted the National Public Policy Committee, and I hope that we can take that and build relationships with Governor[elects] Newsom and Pritzker."

Members also volunteered to increase arts funding and provide more opportunities for work to members in their local communities. In San Francisco, Proposition E passed,

dedicating a percentage of the city's base hotel tax to fund local arts and culture programs – just two years after a similar ballot measure just barely missed the two-thirds vote required to pass. (For more about this victory, see "Prop E: Major Victory For Arts Activism" on p.7)

Similarly, members in the Austin, Texas, area also rallied to make sure that local residents voted to approve the ballot measure Proposition B at the election. This proposition aims to provide \$128 million in tax-supported bonds for the city's libraries, museums and cultural arts facilities.

More than 73 percent approved the bond measure, which will help local theaters stay in business, and continue to create opportunities for Equity members.

## RED BUCKET FOLLIES DEBUT NEW NAME

Following Actors' Equity's decision earlier this year to rename the "Gypsy Robe" tradition the "Legacy Robe," Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS has similarly rechristened its "Gypsy of the Year" competition. It has been renamed the "Red Bucket Follies."

Like Equity, Broadway Cares said it opted for the name change out of sensitivity to the

use of the term "Gypsy," which can be used as a pejorative term for the Roma people.

"Bravo to Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS! I'm so glad to see that the tradition of the red bucket will continue, helping to raise money for lifesaving medication, healthy meals and emergency financial aid for those living with HIV/AIDS," Mary McColl, Executive Director of Actors' Equity, said.

The "Red Bucket Follies," a 29-year-old event, is the culmination of six weeks of fundraising for the non-profit organization, which provides needed services for people living with AIDS and other critical illnesses. During those six weeks, company members pass around red buckets in theaters Broadway, off-Broadway and on the road in order to collect funding.

Ensemble members and others perform skits, songs and dances. At the end, awards are given out to the best performance and for the top fundraiser across the previous six weeks. The show itself has raised \$76 million since 1989, on top of the money raised each year through the fundraising at shows. This year, the benefit brought in more than \$6 million.

## COMING SOON!

Actors' Equity is giving you a new option to report discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in addition to calling your union business representative. This anonymous hotline is a result of a recommendation from the President's Committee to Prevent Harassment. Stay tuned for more information on the way!



# SELF-IDENTIFICATION HELPS EQUITY PUSH FOR MORE INCLUSIVE HIRING

Working together with the National Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, the Diversity & Inclusion Department has updated demographic fields so that members of Actors' Equity can self-identify.

This marks the first time that Equity has expanded its features in the member portal to update specific classifications for gender and gender identity, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation and veteran status. This personal information, all of which remains strictly confidential from employers, will be used to reduce hiring bias and discrimination within the industry, in accordance with the Equity 2020 goals.

Obtaining this information creates a more comprehensive profile, which will not only serve to humanize the needs of individual members but will

also benefit employers, as it will enable Equity to provide greater insight into the specifics of who this membership represents as it fights to create opportunities for all of those groups.

"It is important to collect information and show the importance of increasing diversity and inclusion in the industry by using this data," Eastern Regional Principal Councillor John C. McGinty said. McGinty is the first known deaf member to become a Councillor.

Last year, Equity released its first-ever study on diversity and inclusion. Among the takeaway from this data was the fact that within the industry, women and members of color are often under-represented and that when they do get hired, they often report lower salaries.

But that data helped

allow Equity to identify an area to work toward. Equity hopes that more members feel inclined to self-identify and provide useful data about their status.

"This data lets employers know that we do exist," McGinty said. "The more we talk to our Union, the more the Union can advocate for us." He hopes that his election helps motivate other members to self-report across all classifications in the Member Portal.

"I hope that everyone will self-identify in Equity's member portal so that we can work together to eliminate bias and discrimination," he said, "not just for the Deaf community, but all Equity members who have a disability."

## UPDATE YOUR MEMBER INFO!

Members can update their demographic information at [ActorsEquity.org/selfID](http://ActorsEquity.org/selfID)

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Steve DiPaola, Assistant Executive Director for Finance and Administration

## BROADWAY SALUTES HONORS SEVERAL OF EQUITY'S OWN

While many theatre accolades honor those who perform a specific function within the industry, Broadway Salutes celebrates a wide array of guild and union members who have provided between 25 and 50 years of service to the Broadway community.

Those celebrating their 25th, 35th and 50th anniversaries were honored at the tenth annual Broadway Salutes ceremony, held in November at Sardi's Restaurant and hosted by Danny Burstein. It was sponsored by The Broadway League and Coalition of Broadway Unions and Guilds (COBUG).

Business Representatives Russell Lehrer and Kathleen Mercado were recognized

for 25 years of service, as was Equity Chorus Councillor Jonathan Brody for 35 years. Former Eastern Councillor Joe Zaloom was honored with a pin for 50 years of service.

Since the first ceremony in 2008, Broadway Salutes has honored more than 5,000 members of the theatre community.

This year's Broadway Salutes committee was comprised of Laura Penn (SDC), Hal Goldberg (Jujamcyn), Chris Brockmeyer (Broadway League), Mary McColl (Actors' Equity), Deborah Murad (Dramatist Guild), Lawrence Paone (IATSE), Paige Price (Member, Actors' Equity/SDC), Danielle Saks (Bespoke Theatricals), Mark

Schweppe (Shubert), and Patricia White (TWU Local 764, IATSE).

"Being part of a theatrical community that honors the years many of us have put in, often in multiple capacities, is just a thrill!" Lehrer said. "And it's a rare chance to see all at one time friends who work backstage, or in the box offices, the people you worked alongside all these years, get their own deserved recognition."

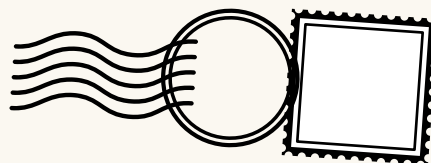
Brody agreed. "It was such a lovely event and after 35 years in the industry as a journeyman Equity actor, it was such an honor to be equally recognized along with big luminaries and "names of note". We're all part of this great community and longevity in this biz is indeed something to be lauded for all!"

# EquityNEWS

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## POSTCARDS FROM LIAISON AREAS



### DC/BALTIMORE

Stage Managers from across the DC/Baltimore Liaison Area met for the first area Stage Management Roundtable. According to SM sub-committee chair Becky Reed, "we've all been having the same conversations separately and we think it's time we had the discussion as a group."

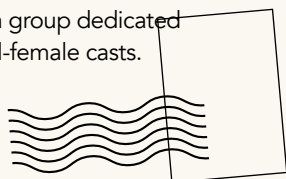
DC/Baltimore Liaison Chair Roy A. Gross said that "this is a great addition to our regional calendar. Stage Managers keep us safe every day in rehearsal and performance and these events will be a great way to keep the Liaison and Business Reps informed of the working conditions in the room."

The Liaison Committee plans to host these events quarterly.



### SEATTLE

Two productions are to be applauded for their extraordinary work in diverse casting. Showtunes theatre Company recently produced *Legally Blonde: The Musical* at Cornish Playhouse at Seattle Center, with Alexandria J. Henderson, an African American actress, playing the lead role of Elle Woods. Additionally, Seattle Shakespeare Company produced an all-female production of *Richard III* in collaboration with Upstart Crow, a group dedicated to producing Shakespeare with all-female casts.



### TWIN CITIES

On October 29, members from the Minneapolis/St. Paul Equity community convened at the Jungle Theater in Minneapolis for a meeting. Present at the meeting were Christian Hains, Central Regional Director from the Chicago office and David Kolen, business rep from Chicago. The conversation was informative and lively and, after hearing reports of union activity across the country, local members left the meeting feeling better connected to their fellow union members coast-to-coast.

