

SUMMER 2017 | VOLUME 102 | ISSUE 3

Equity

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

NEWS

MAKING

#Equity

STRONG

WHAT YOU CAN DO

GET SOCIAL WITH US

/ACTORSEQUITY



/ACTORSEQUITY100



@ACTORSEQUITY



@ASKIFITSEQUITY

@ACTORSEQUITY



JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

EQUITY'S SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS BRING OUR UNION TOGETHER ONLINE WITH DISCUSSIONS OF THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT OUR INDUSTRY, INVITATIONS TO EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS OF GREAT WORK HAPPENING AROUND THE COUNTRY.

AREA LIAISON HOTLINE SYSTEM

Call 877-AEA-1913

Equity has a national toll-free hotline system for members who live in area liaison and office cities.

Each area liaison area has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913.

(2) Dial your area extension:

- 810 Albany
- 811 Atlanta
- 812 Austin/San Antonio
- 813 Boston
- 814 Buffalo/Rochester
- 815 Chicago
- 816 Cincinnati/Louisville
- 817 Cleveland
- 818 Dallas/Fort Worth
- 819 Denver
- 820 Detroit
- 821 Florida – Central
- 822 Florida – South
- 823 Houston
- 824 Kansas City
- 825 Las Vegas
- 826 Los Angeles
- 827 Milwaukee/Madison
- 828 Minneapolis/St. Paul
- 829 Nashville
- 830 New Orleans
- 831 New York
- 832 Philadelphia
- 833 Phoenix/Tucson
- 834 Pittsburgh
- 876 Portland
- 835 San Diego
- 836 San Francisco
- 837 Seattle
- 838 St. Louis
- 839 Washington D.C./Baltimore

EquityNews

Advisory Committee

Christine Toy Johnson (Chair)
Diane Dorsey
Nicole Flender
Bruce Alan Johnson
Heather Lee
Kevin McMahon
Liz Pazik
Barbara Roberts
Melissa Robinette
Buzz Roddy
Kate Shindle
Joann Yeoman

Got a question or comment? Email us at equitynews@actorsequity.org

EquityNews CONTENTS

SUMMER 2017 | VOLUME 102 | ISSUE 3

7

NEW & IMPROVED CASTING CALL

Equity improves the
EPA sign-up process



10

#EQUITYUNITED

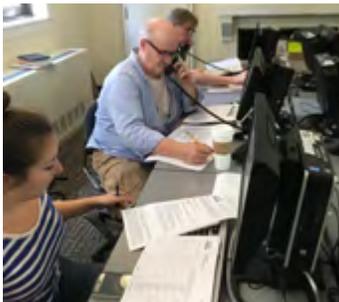
Equity Liaison chairs from
around the U.S. come
together in Atlanta



12

NEW DUES STRUCTURE EXPLAINED

Learn more about the
proposed dues structure and
vote by September 1



14

THEATRE SPOTLIGHT

Meet Portland's
Artists Repertory Theatre



8

HISTORIC LORT CONTRACT RATIFIED

Equity members
overwhelmingly support
changes to new 5-year
agreement



11

#EQUITYSTRONG

Meet the Trailblazers
of Equity



13

HOW I GOT MY EQUITY CARD

Two members tell us
how they joined the union



15

ACROSS THE NATION

Meet your new fave
Liaison Area: Portland



**#Equity
STRONG**





FROM THE PRESIDENT VIEW FROM THE ROAD: WHY I WANT #EQUITYSTRONG

One of the great advantages of being on a national tour is that I have the opportunity to meet with Equity Members all around the country. Since I started touring with *Fun Home*, I've been able to sit down with the leadership of Equity Liaison Committees in 13 cities – from Pittsburgh to St. Louis to Seattle. Before the year is over, I will also hit Dallas, Nashville, Boston and Rochester, among others. One of the things I've heard repeatedly is that the Liaisons value the chance to get together with each other, and so we created and executed a Liaison Conference at the end of July. Leaders from 28 Equity Liaison Committees met in Atlanta for two days of discussion about how we can move Equity forward.

I always walk away from these meetings feeling energized. They're a great opportunity to listen to Members about the unique challenges of their local markets, as well as what they need from Equity. We've been spending a lot of time considering what kind of union we want to be by 2020, so big-picture ideas (Kansas City asked: "Why don't we have a National March for the Arts?"), enforcement suggestions ("actors and stage managers are being asked to show up for a week or two of pre-contract rehearsal") and governance suggestions ("why don't the liaison cities have dedicated Council seats?") are all really interesting to me.

And whether it was in Atlanta or when I was on the road in places like Detroit or Las Vegas, I heard a lot of common threads: our Members want more from their Union. They want to see Equity more often. They want access to the programming that is happening in Equity's office cities. And they want to help us to get more Equity contracts into more theaters all across the country.

Ultimately, that's where our Equity 2020 vision comes from – you. During the past twelve months, we've been hyper-focused on listening to Members all over America. As you probably know by now, an overwhelming majority of the National Council supported the new dues structure at a Council meeting in July.

Here's why I think the time is right: it's been 15 years since Council asked you to invest in your future with a dues increase. And right now, we are under threat like never before – both as artists and as a labor union. Earlier this

year, President Trump proposed eliminating the National Endowment for the Arts. Equity fought back, and while we won the first battle, the war is far from over. Right-to-Work legislation, which aims to gut labor unions, is being moved forward on both the state and federal levels. If we are to defend our right to negotiate fair wages and safe working conditions, we need to be prepared to respond. There's only so much that can be accomplished by a press release if we don't have the personnel to back it up.

You might have seen some changes already taking shape. We've built a team of more than 100 Trailblazers – these are Members talking to Members about how we can strengthen the Union. Volunteer teams like the Trailblazers will be important for Equity. But neither our volunteers nor our staff will ultimately be successful organizing in 2017 if they are working with a budget that hasn't been increased since 2002. For instance, while our business reps also help, there is currently only one full-time staff person who is dedicated to organizing. That needs to change.

We need the resources and the strength to be able to fight back the next time funding for the arts is threatened. But that's just one example. We need more staff, more communications tools, more outreach to actors and stage managers and more enforcement at theaters. That's why, if the dues referendum is approved, we will create a stronger, modern and strategic organizing department with the research capacity to add more work weeks and organize more theaters so they are using Equity contracts.

There are a lot of exciting changes happening right now at Equity, and we want to keep this positive momentum going. If you haven't already voted, I hope you will join me and vote yes to make #EquityStrong.

Kate Shindle

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RUNNING A UNION ON A 2002 BUDGET



Fifteen years ago, when Equity's National Council last asked the Members for a dues increase, I was the vice president and general manager at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in my hometown of St. Paul, Minnesota.

In the time since, my career has changed, our industry has changed, and the world around us has changed too. Those changes have driven our Members' need for change within the Union.

Equity's last dues increase was intended to provide enough revenue for five years. After that time had passed, Council decided not to seek another dues increase because of the Great Recession of 2007/2008. Despite that, we have been able to grow services slightly and keep the Union running. We have now reached the point where we are not able to maintain the status quo, much less provide the upgrade of services our Members are demanding.

We have spent the last year listening to Members in focus groups all around the country talk about what improvements in services they need from Equity. That feedback became our Equity 2020 plan – a three-year vision to expand our services across the country. Members, especially the many Members who don't live in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, have asked for more. More opportunities to work, more in-person interaction between staff and elected officials, more in-person staff interaction with producers and the ability to participate in the many and varied educational services that are available to Members who live in office cities.

Members have asked for more communication with their Union, so Equity 2020 is also a program to expand when and how we communicate. Social media is important. *Equity News* is important. The Member Portal on our website is important. We will start to use more videos and convene different types of membership meetings including large telephone town hall meetings. And we intend to broaden our in-person reach.

When we say we can't run a 2017 Union on 2002 dollars, we mean that. Our membership has expanded significantly since 2002. As the needs of the membership have changed the existing staff has been required to do more with less.

Since the Members last voted on our dues structure we have taken a variety of steps to hold down costs. To name just a couple examples: taking *Equity News* to a quarterly magazine has saved the Union \$235,000 per year. Taking the administration of our database and website in house has saved the Union \$400,000 per year. We can't, however, fix the current problem through budget cutting alone. We

need to increase revenue.

One way to make up for falling work weeks, and therefore falling revenue, is to organize more contracts at existing Equity theaters and to organize new employers. In other words, organizing is good for Members and good for the Union. Organizing is how we can get more work and better paying work.

With this new dues structure we intend to create a modern and strategic organizing department devoted to getting more theaters on Equity contracts, grow the number of work weeks in cities across the country and help us move more theaters onto better contracts.

We will also tailor the way we work to meet the needs of a national Union with Members all across the country. Business Reps in all regions are tasked with helping to organize more work, but their first responsibility is administering contracts. Equity has begun to restructure how our business reps are assigned to focus geographically instead of by contract. This will ensure that staff can build an ongoing relationship with Members and employers in a particular area.

I am excited about these changes because they will transform the business of the Union. They will make it easier for our Business Reps to expand our reach and make it easier for Members to know who to go to when they have a problem.

Equity 2020 isn't a means to an end. It's about building a modern Union from the inside out. That's why your Council has strongly recommended that you invest in your future and support this dues increase. If you haven't already voted, you can read more about the new dues structure on page 12.

We are stronger as a Union when more Members get involved. However you feel about this new dues structure, I hope you take that first step to make your voice heard and vote. If you have any questions or comments, you can email us 2020@actorsequity.org.

Mary McColl



DIVERSITY MATTERS WHY I'M COMMITTED TO #CHANGESTHESTAGE

Many of you have already read about the study on hiring bias Equity released in the last issue of *Equity News*.

If you missed it, the study in its entirety is worth a read. What we found is that there are stark and pervasive barriers when it comes to employment for women and people of color. Not only that, women and Members of color often draw lower salaries when they do find work.

I don't say that because I want to place blame or find fault, but instead to start a conversation that needs to go beyond Equity and encompass the entire theatre industry. We can only move forward and #ChangeTheStage when we are honest, open and transparent about the current state of the industry.

Personally, while I did not grow up in the theatre world, I believe deeply in this mission. In fact, where I was born, there was very little access to theatre at all. I was born in an underdeveloped community without running water or paved roads that was struggling to develop a progressive infrastructure. When I immigrated to the United States from the Caribbean in the 1980s, my family and I began our journey living in an impoverished neighborhood in Brooklyn.

My father began his career in the United States as the driver of a wealthy businessman, and my Mom as the family's maid. At a young age, they both taught me the benefits of humility and sacrifice. As my parents worked odd jobs here and there, they were encouraged to join unions; my Dad later became an MTA bus driver and my Mom a geriatric assistant nurse. It was through my parents and their careers that I learned the value of union membership. It was through their memberships in unions that they were able to purchase a home in a middle-class neighborhood, giving us a shot at a better education and the American Dream. Today, they continue to keep me grounded in my roots through their early experiences as immigrants.

Because of my parents, and because they were able to work family-supporting union jobs, I was able to become the first in my family to obtain a college degree from NYU and then went on to earn a graduate degree from Cornell University in Industrial and Labor Relations.

In addition to my previous roles in advocacy for those who are underrepresented, those experiences make me passionate about the work that lies ahead here at Equity. Now that we have the data from our diversity study, it is time to move forward.

In my first few months, some Members have asked me tough questions about why we are doing this work. When these questions come up, here is what I have said: Workers' rights are human rights. We know from our study that Members of color and women are underrepresented on the stage and get lower paying contracts when they do find work. Diversity and inclusion is a long-term problem that impacts us all. In fact, it's systematic. If people of color and women don't see characters and stories that reflect them or speak to their experiences on stage, then what does that mean for the future of our industry?

Now that I've had a chance to share my personal story with some of you, I hope you will also share your own stories about why this work matters to you. Our work to ensure that our entire industry represents the full diversity of our nation will help insure the sustainability of live theatre. Stay tuned as we move forward to #ChangeTheStage!

Nicole Smart



THE **NEW & IMPROVED** ONLINE EPA SIGNUPS MORE THAN 23,000 AUDITIONS BOOKED

BY JOYCE VINZANI

Introducing online EPA sign-ups into Equity's Casting Call this winter was a huge step in improving the audition process for Members. Members have already attended approximately 23,317 EPA auditions booked through online appointments since the system was launched, according to Director of Information Technology Doug Beebe.

Since its launch, Members have shared their experiences – the good and the bad – every step of the way. Responsiveness is one of the top priorities of our Equity 2020 campaign, so when you tell us there is a problem, we don't just listen, we take action. Members identified two very important issues they wanted us to address: our policy regarding lateness/no-shows to EPA appointments as well as an easier process to sign-up for EPAs online. It was very clear that we needed to make meaningful improvements in these areas.

To help alleviate the stress of being late to an audition – especially when the lateness is beyond your control - the Working Group and Staff made the following changes in effort to make our EPA sign-ups even better:

- **On Lateness:** It can be devastating missing an audition due to lateness. But don't sweat it! Now, you will no longer receive additional penalties for arriving late. Under our old policy, you would earn a penalty for being late and, after two late arrivals, would be denied access to signing up for EPA appointments online for six months.
- **On No-Shows:** Out of respect to other Members who may not have been able to secure an EPA appointment, we are keeping no-show Members accountable for missing appointments that they scheduled online. Missing an online appointment will still count as a penalty, but it will now take three penalties over a period of six months before you can lose the ability to sign-up online for an EPA for a six-month period. Our old policy took away the privilege of online sign-ups if you accrued two penalties for being late over the course of one year.



With these new policy improvements, we decided to wipe the slate clean and eliminate the penalties that Members have already incurred due to lateness. If you lost the ability to book EPAs online because you were late, you should now be able to access the system again.

Keep in mind, skipping an EPA will still count as a penalty unless you cancel at least one hour prior to your scheduled appointment time. If you lost access to online sign-ups due to accruing two penalties for missing an audition, you should have already regained access to the system – but with those two penalties still in place.

To read more about online EPA signups, go to <https://Members.ActorsEquity.org/CastingCall>.



RISING TIDE: NEW LORT CONTRACT BRINGS HIGHER WAGES, MORE CONTRACTS

BY JOYCE VINZANI

If one thing was clear when Jeff Williams gathered with the rest of the negotiating team last fall to tackle the upcoming League of Resident Theatres (LORT) contract, it was the enormity of the challenge before the team.

The 72 different producers who are part of LORT represent Equity's second-largest contract. But the LORT contract is just as diverse as it is large – covering producers in cities as small as Little Rock, Ark. all the way to New York City.

As Chair, Williams led the negotiating team that successfully achieved the recently ratified LORT contract. More than 90 percent of members who voted supported the new contract. Achieving that kind of success meant finding a deal that worked for a range of different Equity Members.

"We were determined as a team to come out of the negotiations, not just with the best deal possible, but a contract that works for all of our different Members working in theaters all across the country," said Williams.

When Equity and LORT sat down for the first round of negotiations in February, the two sides were miles apart. LORT was seeking fewer contracts for Assistant Stage Managers, more non-pros. And that wasn't all. LORT was seeking to reduce compensation in special circumstances like touring or rehearsing away from the Resident Theatre and cut back on comforts in Theatre housing.

Equity walked away from the table in February.

"The biggest changes with this negotiation were Equity's commitment and the team's willingness to consider the unthinkable in order to get something on all of its priorities," said Senior Business Representative Beverly Sloan, who has participated in eight LORT Contract negotiations.

When Equity went back to the table in late May, the negotiating team was armed with data compiled from two rounds of surveys sent to Members. The team also had recommendations from cross-contractual committees – including the National Stage Managers Committee, the

Advisory Committee on Chorus Affairs (ACCA) and the EPA Committee.

When the team reentered negotiations it was given three major priorities by Council: higher salaries, more contracts and more Assistant Stage Managers across all categories. When Equity went back to the table in May, the charge was clear.

"This particular negotiation is the beginning of structural changes to the contract that will give us better leverage during the next round of negotiations," said Williams. "By setting this contract on a new path, LORT will know to expect different things from Equity in the future; there are fundamental things we're going to fight for now. Equity's presence will be more strongly felt on the stages of LORT Theatres."

The agreement delivered on all three of the Union's main priorities. Substantial gains in salaries – resulting in increases from 16% to 81.7% over the five year term – were obtained across all categories from LORT on Broadway to LORT "D."

"The new contract has made life more livable and work more gettable. I have always found incredible artistic satisfaction working in the historic LORT Theatres. The regional theatre movement was meant to combine both art and steady work, and this new contract moves to improve the 'steady work' part of that equation. These agreements must have been hard-fought, and I find the outcome impressive," said Daniel Robert Sullivan, an Equity Member since 1999 who frequently works under Chorus contracts in the Eastern Region.

Equity was also able to achieve improvements in the Stage Management provisions; theatres that do not already require Assistant Stage Managers will now have to add them by the end of the contract term, and significant improvements were made to the stage management tech week.

Left, Michael James Leslie and E. Faye Butler in Asolo Rep's production of *Show Boat*. Right, Hannah Ingram, Sarah Laughland, Ryan Featherstone, Hope Quinn, Josh Levinson and Katherine Lyle in Barter Theatre's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Pictured on page 2 are Ashley Park and Nick Bailey in the Dallas Theater Center's production of *HOOD - The Robin Hood Musical Adventure* (photo by Karen Almond).

Photo by Frank Atura



- Cumulative salary increases in LORT categories "A" to "D" over the 5-year term:

"A"	21.7%	"B"	17.0%	"D"	15.9%
"B+"	17.0%	"C"	15.9%		
- Members working in LORT on Broadway Theatres will receive a 28.4% cumulative increase in salary over the life of the agreement, including an additional \$31.00 effective the last six months of the agreement. This is a cumulative increase of \$393 per week.
- Dance Captain increments in all categories will now be 20% for musicals and 12% for plays, matching the increments in the Production Contract.
- Every Theatre entity will have one to three additional Assistant Stage Manager contracts per season by the end of the agreement.
- The stage management tech week increment will double from 1/6th to 2/6ths.
- All Actor housing under the Theatre's control will now provide high-speed, consumer-grade broadband internet access.
- Theatres will be required to hold EPAs in their regional Equity office city at least three times – rather than only once – over the term of the agreement.
- Members will have access to preventative physical therapy for musicals and work on an inclined playing surface for productions running longer than 8 weeks.
- \$1.7 million will be added to Equity's Health Fund thanks to an improvement in LORT's health contribution rate.
- Closed circuit broadcast will be allowed with a guarantee that tickets sold will be included in gross box office reports to Equity.
- Theatres must disclose "As Cast" assignments when making a job offer.

"I've seen incredible Stage Managers burn out or leave the field because of the demands that shows require of us," said Nikki Blue, who joined the Union in 2016 and built her career working as a Stage Manager in the Central Region. "This new contract gives me hope and lessens the fear, for our Union has listened to our needs and made great strides to support us and the joyous work that we do."

Because the ratios are back in Equity's favor, LORT Theatres will now have to hire more Equity Actors before they get to use non-pros. The number of Chorus contracts in LORT "C" and "D" Theatres has been increased.

"In a town where local theaters compete with Hollywood for talent, LORT contracts bring equal value to the actor and their craft by paying them a livable wage," said Angela Lin, a Principal Actor in the West Coast. "I always rest easy on LORT contracts, as I know the theater is being held to our union's standard of wages, safety and professionalism. There is a vibrant and innovative

theater community out here in Los Angeles, and I am grateful AEA is working with the community to create more contracts that will only elevate the standard of living for all actors."

Finally, the new contract means Members in the regional office cities will now have greater access to auditions. And in its quest to Change the Stage, Equity's Negotiating Team achieved all of its EEO proposals, and LORT committed to join the Union in its important mission to expand diversity and inclusion throughout the industry. After decades of negotiations that included salary freezes and fewer contracts for Members, this is truly one of the strongest LORT Contracts Equity has ever negotiated.

"We have been making steady improvements in all our agreements over the past bargaining cycles but we have made the broadest and deepest achievements yet in this contract," said Mary McColl, Executive Director and Lead Negotiator. "This contract may have taken months of work, but it will make a difference for Equity members on day one."

CHANGES FOR GOOD

Jeff Williams, Chair

General Members

Bill Bateman
 Stephen Bogardus
 Wydetta Carter
 Ariane Dolan
 Michael Dotson
 Wally Dunn
 Malcolm Ewen
 Mary-Pat Green
 Morgan R. Holbrook
 Francis Jue
 Dev Kennedy
 Ruth E. Kramer
 Heather Lee
 Ben Liebert
 James T. McDermott
 Kevin McMahan
 Bernita Robinson
 Richard P. Strimer
 Brit Whittle
 Vernon Willet

Mary McColl, Executive Director

Thomas Carpenter, General Counsel

Senior Business Representatives

Beverly A. Sloan
 Alison Harma

Business Representatives

Jeffrey Bateman
 Gary Dimon
 Kathy Mercado
 Raymond Morales
 Nathan Wilkinson

Contract Associates

Paul Henri Doble
 Jeremy Bohmstein



MEET YOUR LORT NEGOTIATING TEAM

#EQUITYUNITED

EQUITY LIAISON CHAIRS CONFERENCE



Photo by Karen Howell

Thousands of Equity Members live outside the office cities – New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Orlando.

And while those Members might live in dozens of different cities all across the country, they have been speaking in a unified voice for years – and sometimes longer: they want to see and hear from Equity more often.

With that in mind, Equity staff gathered the leadership of Equity's 28 Liaison Cities for a two-day retreat during the last week of July. It's the first time in four years that Equity has been able to bring the group together.

This time, Equity chose Atlanta to host the conference, marking the first time the conference has taken place in a Liaison City.

"I think it's always fun for those of us outside of New York to go there, but I think it's more important for people to experience what it's like to be in one of our regional cities," said Karen Howell, chair of the Atlanta Liaison Committee.

Much of the time was spent listening to the chairs of Equity's Liaison Committees from each city describe what they needed in order to get their local Members more engaged. The chairs worked in small groups paired with a senior member of Equity's staff listening and taking notes – from Executive Director Mary McColl to Equity's three Regional Directors. Each cohort then reported out their key findings for everyone to hear.

"This was an important opportunity for the staff to hear from the volunteers who are on the front lines in cities all around the country, working on behalf of Equity Members," said Western Regional Director Gail Gabler, who leads the Liaison program. "Our Members might be spread out in different cities all across the country, but they face a lot of

common challenges. And that's something we want to help them tackle."

Several attendees said they were surprised to hear how much they had in common.

"It's encouraging and affirming to know that across the country people are experiencing the same concerns and wishes and desires that we do here in Atlanta," said Howell.

Staff also heard a common refrain on a variety of topics – the chairs and their committees are ready to do more to get Members involved and to help find ways to get more theaters using Equity contracts.

"I am amazed at the level of ownership I see among the Liaisons," said Gil Berry, member of the Phoenix Liaison Committee. "We are the Union. This is our Union. There is a real sense of ownership. That was surprising, and a little overwhelming."

Tanika Baptiste, member of the San Diego Liaison Committee, agreed.

"I feel like we are all leaving here empowered and cherishing what we do have and focusing on what we can do to attract more work and focusing on what we can do to grow even more," said Baptiste.

Equity President Kate Shindle addressed the conference on Monday. Following her remarks, she spent the afternoon listening to the committee chairs, many of whom she had met over the last year while traveling the country with the national tour of *Fun Home*.

"I have pages of notes of things that I want to bring back to my committee that will affect my region," said Chris Sapienza, Chair of the Philadelphia Liaison Committee. "I'm energized and excited about the possibilities."

THE TRAILBLAZERS: MAKING #EQUITYSTRONG

For much of the last year, Equity has been listening to Members about what kind of union they want to see Equity become by the year 2020. Whether that has been in focus groups around the country, surveys, or in small conversations between Members and Equity's leaders, one common thread has stood out: Equity Members – especially those outside the office cities – want to see more.

“Our way of life as artists is under attack like never before,” said Executive Director Mary McColl. “Whether it is a hostile President or a problem producer, a strong Union can protect you. But a Union can only be strong when its members are activated and engaged in the work of the Union.”

Enter the Trailblazers.

In the last few months, Equity has recruited a team of more than 100 Members across the country to start reaching out and having personal conversations with fellow Equity Members. They are talking – and listening – to rank-and-file Members about what and how we can move the entire organization forward.

In keeping with the feedback Equity has received, the Trailblazer team represents a cross-section of the Union's membership. Spread across the country, the Trailblazer team includes Members of Equity's National Council, leaders from Equity's Liaison Committees and rank-and-file Members who simply want to be more involved.

“I said it on day one of the Trailblazing campaign: the fact that I am on a call with 20 other fellow Members from all over the country discussing how we can make our Union

“WHETHER IT IS A HOSTILE
PRESIDENT OR A PROBLEM
PRODUCER, A STRONG UNION
CAN PROTECT YOU. BUT A
UNION CAN ONLY BE STRONG
WHEN ITS MEMBERS ARE
ACTIVATED AND ENGAGED IN
THE WORK OF THE UNION.”

-MARY MCCOLL

As part of the trailblazer program, Morgan Paige Fluss, Wally Dunn, Nick Wyman, Jennifer Van Dyck and Sandra Karas phone bank Equity members on the first day of balloting.

WHERE ARE THE TRAILBLAZERS?

The first group of trailblazers represent 23 areas: Albany, Atlanta, Austin/San Antonio, Baltimore/DC, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati/Louisville, Central Florida, South Florida, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Milwaukee/Madison, Nashville, New Orleans, NYC, Orlando, Philly, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, San Diego, Seattle and St. Louis.

To join or find out more, email 2020@actorsequity.org.

better is in itself a success of the Equity2020 campaign,” said Michael Newcomer, who is part of the Trailblazer team and based in New Orleans. “For the first time in my nearly 20-year membership, I feel like my voice is being heard.”

What's important about the Trailblazer program is that the connections being forged run both ways. It's not just the volunteers who feel like they are being heard, but rank and file members are now hearing from their Union.

“Every call I have made has strengthened my commitment to the Union, and it has strengthened the other person's commitment as well!” said Lee Osorio, an Atlanta-based Trailblazer. “These calls have meant so much to people – just the chance to be heard is invaluable.”

Since the program launched in mid-June, the Trailblazers have had more than 3,000 conversations with Equity Members about what they want their Union to look like by 2020.

“The best part of the Trailblazer program is that we are actually teaching Members how to organize so we can move from listening to taking action,” said Stefanie Frey, Organizer for the 2020 initiative.

Getting the volunteers trained was easy – Members who wanted to join attended an orientation session with Frey, either in person or via videoconference. In that meeting, the volunteers learned about common questions

(Continued on page 19)



EQUITY'S NEW DUES STRUCTURE **EXPLAINED**

On July 17, Equity's National Council overwhelmingly recommended that Members approve a new dues structure for the Union – the first time Council has asked Members to change the dues structure in 15 years.

Simply put, Council felt that Equity cannot run the kind of Member-focused organization we envision for 2020 based on 2002 dollars.

As you can see below, basic dues will increase in the first year by \$50 – just over \$4 a month. For most Members, working dues would increase less than \$19 in the first year – less than \$1.60 a month. This is less than what most of us pay for

a cup of coffee or a soft drink. The changes in basic and working dues would go into effect on Nov. 1, 2017. The initiation fee will not change until Jan. 1, 2018.

The new dues structure isn't occurring in a vacuum. Over the last few months Equity has taken major steps forward to become a more aggressive, inclusive and responsive union as part of Equity 2020. The historic LORT Agreement will mean more contracts for Equity Members in every category and raised wages from 16 to more than 80 percent. That comes less than a year after Equity's Off-Broadway agreement also delivered wage increases. And

Equity has led the charge this year to defend funding for the National Endowment for the Arts.

This small investment from Members now will allow Equity to take big steps forward and deliver on the Equity 2020 vision. With this investment Equity will be able to create a more modern organizing department to organize more Equity theaters and work weeks. Equity will be able to improve resources and build stronger connections with Members outside our office cities. And Equity will be able to improve education and outreach with more video and modern communications tools.

BEHIND THE NEW DUES STRUCTURE

PROPOSED BASIC DUES

Dues are payable in two installments in May and November. The proposed changes below amount to just over \$4 per month in the first year compared to the current structure.

- Year 1: \$168
- Year 2: \$170
- Year 3: \$172
- Year 4: \$174
- Year 5: \$176

PROPOSED INITIATION FEE

Paid in full within two years of beginning the joining process. Members who started the initiation process prior to Jan. 1, 2018 will pay the previous rate.

- Year 1: \$1,600
- Year 3: \$1,700
- Year 5: \$1,800

PROPOSED WORKING DUES

Payable weekly through automatic check-off deductions when Members are working in our jurisdiction. In year one, the changes below amount to less than \$19 per year for most Members – that's \$1.60 per month.

- Year 1: 2.375% of the first \$300,000 of gross income
- Year 3: 2.5% of the first \$300,000 of gross income

HOW TO VOTE

Look in your inbox and junk/spam folders for an email ballot that includes a PIN from Actors' Equity ElectionAdmin (MailGun@TrueBallot.com) with the subject line "Vote Today in the Actors' Equity Dues Referendum 2017."

Visit ActorsEquity.org/Vote to cast your vote.

A few reminders:

- You will need to use the PIN in the email ballot to vote.
- If you don't have an email on file, you will be mailed information on how to vote.
- Only active Members in good standing are eligible to vote.
- Ballots are due Friday, September 1 at 5 p.m. ET.
- If you have not received your ballot, email 2020@actorsequity.org or call Equity at 888-802-5307.

HOW I GOT MY EQUITY CARD

PENNY WILDMAN

MEMBER SINCE 2015

I got my Equity Card two years ago while working on the new 99-Seat Agreement in Los Angeles. Becoming an Equity Member was something I was always working towards and was on my mind from a very young age. I started attending a competition dance studio at the age of five and furthered my dance training at a performing arts high school in New Jersey, where I officially fell in love with theatre when I got cast in the role of Anybodys in *West Side Story* as a freshman. Following graduation, I split my time between studying at the Boston Conservatory (and later Pace University) and working in non-union theatre.

Since I'm predominantly a dancer, I know the struggle of waking up at 5:00 in the morning to attend an ECC, spending the entire day at the New York Equity building just hoping for the chance to be seen as a non-union actor. I hoped for the day when I could walk into an audition and sign up like many of my peers. As a student attending a BFA Musical Theatre program in New York at the time, I never would have expected to get my card working under an Equity contract for a small theatre in Los Angeles.

After several years of only working on different non-union productions of *West Side Story*, I was offered a jukebox-type musical comedy called *Prairie-Oke*, a parody of the television show *Little House on the Prairie*. When I found out I officially booked the gig, I was hesitant to work

on a project that was completely different than anything I had done before. But, when I found out I would be getting my Equity card if I accepted the job, I immediately decided to take it. I really felt like I deserved my card; I put in the time through years of working non-union. Though part of me wanted to scream it from the rooftops, it was such a personal victory that I felt like I wanted to keep it to myself.

I am very grateful to be in the Union because I understand the many different aspects of protection. Now, I get to audition through invited calls for Equity Members, and I feel like my time is valuable because I no longer have to wait around all day to be seen. Plus, if it wasn't for Equity, I wouldn't have had the experiences I've had here in Los Angeles.



TOM HAGGLUND

MEMBER SINCE 1976

I earned my Actors' Equity card more than 40 years ago, December 1976, as the Assistant Stage Manager for a musical at the Forum Theatre in Summit, Illinois. It was an African-American retelling of a fairy tale called *Cinderella Brown*. I had been building and painting sets at the University of Chicago's Court Theatre – back when that was still outdoors in Hutchinson Court, with a stage built every summer on top of the fountain. The designer at Court was doing the sets for *Cinderella Brown* and put out a distress call to all of us on Court's crew to help finish painting the sets, on the afternoon of opening. Things were that bad.

The scenery was still all wet paint as the show opened. I watched from the wings, as the untrained but well-meaning stagehands stumbled from set change to set change. None had flashlights, there was no "choreography" for the changes, nobody knew exactly what the other was doing or what they had to accomplish at each scene change. Sets would fly in then have to fly out again because they had trapped sofas and tables inside walls before the furniture had been struck. I could

hear them frantically whisper "Who's gonna strike that sofa?" Some set changes lasted a full 20 minutes. The show ran almost four hours, a good portion of it spent behind closed curtains in set changes.

After the show, I went up to the distraught producer and gave him a list of things he needed to do to fix things backstage. He looked at me for a moment, then said, "You're hired, please fix it." I signed my first Equity contract the next morning as the show's Assistant Stage Manager. I then went out and bought a dozen new flashlights and held set change rehearsals with the crew all that afternoon. We were ready to open that evening.

I've been an Accidental Stage Manager ever since.



THEATRE

SPOTLIGHT

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE



Photo by Russell J. Young

Equity Members Darius Pierce, Agatha Olson and Sara Hennessy in the company's production of *Feathers and Teeth*. Pictured on page 2 are Member Khanh Doan and Heath Koerschgen in *The Talented One* (photo by Brud Giles).

As we welcome Portland as Equity's newest Liaison City, it's only right to spotlight the city's longest-running professional theatre – Artists Repertory Theatre – which is celebrating its 35th anniversary this season.

Artists Rep was formed in 1982 by six artists on a mission to present the work of contemporary playwrights in an intimate space. Originating as part of the regional theatre movement, Artists Rep began as a cooperative in the local YWCA's 110-seat Wilson Center for the Performing Arts. Fast forward to present day – it's obvious that Artists Rep has enjoyed significant growth over the last few decades, as it now boasts two intimate performance spaces, a resident company of 26 artists, and has become a collaborative hub for 12 diverse arts organizations across the city.

Under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez since 2013, Artists Rep reached its long-term goal of becoming a LORT theatre last year.

"It was always our intention to join the League of Resident Theatres and push the organization, funders, donors and audiences to recognize

the importance of supporting artists, which includes paying them," said Rodríguez. As an Equity theatre, Artists Rep is able to attract the best talent and create a home for local, professionally-trained artists. Equity's EMC program has helped establish Artists Rep as a true entry point for professional theatre in the city.

Despite its continued growth, one aspect of the theatre that will not be expanded anytime soon is the intimacy of its performance spaces. Although in 2004 they acquired a 29,000 square-foot building that literally covers an entire city block, Artists Rep stays true to its identity of creating intimate theatre. Rather than opting for a larger performance space in its spacious new building, they specifically chose to create two small stages so that audiences can still enjoy a theatrical experience that feels personal. Audience members are never more than six rows away from the stage.

"It's an interpersonal experience: breathing in the same energy, in the same story, in the same room with people you don't know," said Director of Communications & Community Engagement Nicole A. Lane.

With Portland being dubbed the "Whitest City in America," Lane said that Rodríguez has made a concerted effort to share stories that reflect what is going on in the world by creating exciting theatre experiences that don't shy away from controversy or difficult subjects. "In response to the anxiety of the times, theaters can either provide an escape for audiences to ignore what's happening in the world or they can take the approach we have, which is to take more risks and ensure that the plays have real meaning and power," said Rodríguez.

Artists Rep is using its platform to create a dialogue about the tough

[\(Continued on page 19\)](#)

EQUITY ACROSS THE NATION

KEEP PORTLAND WEIRD

Special thanks to Portland Liaison Committee Chair Gretchen Corbett and Vice Chair David Meyers for their contributions.

Considered one of the hippest (and hipster-est) cities in the U.S. with its nationally renowned coffee culture and bike-friendly reputation, Portland is also known for its inspiring theatre community. Because of its thriving theatre scene and enthusiastically proud Equity Members, Oregon's City of Roses recently became Equity's newest Liaison City! Learn more about why you should book your next Equity gig here from members of Portland's very own Liaison Committee.

WORKING IN THE REGION

ON BEING A MEMBER IN THE CITY

The opportunity to work on new pieces is a great experience that isn't always available elsewhere. Theaters are driven to develop interesting and thought-provoking work. The scene is as eclectic and diverse as the city itself! You can see anything from Broadway tours, dance, experimental shows to theatre for young audiences, bilingual productions and more.

WHAT IT'S LIKE WORKING IN THE REGION

There are many native Oregonians, of course, but in our culture of performance and theatre, there are seasoned and gifted professionals from everywhere who chose to make their living here. It's truly special to live and work in a place like this.

WHERE YOU MIGHT BE WORKING

Portland Center Stage; Portland Playhouse; Artists Repertory Theatre; Third Rail Repertory Theatre; CoHo Theater; Profile Theatre; Broadway Rose Theatre Company; Corrib Theatre; Imago Theatre; Shaking The Tree Theatre.

AROUND TOWN

BEST PLACES TO EAT FOR FOODIES

Voodoo Doughnuts, make-your-own pancakes at Slappy Cakes, Pacific Pie Co, Pine State Biscuits, traditional Southern cooking at Screen Door, Tasty n Sons, or Le Pigeon.

WHAT YOU WON'T FIND ANYWHERE ELSE

Powells Books, the world's largest independent bookstore; Portland Japanese Garden; The Pearl District, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry; Portland Art Museum.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

You can find your tribe in Portland! 30,000 people showed up for the Women's March this past January. Thousands joined Portland's World Naked Bike Ride this summer. Sports lovers can catch a Trail Blazers or Timbers game.

BEST WAYS TO EXPERIENCE LOCAL COLOR

Check out the Portland Saturday Market – the nation's largest open-air arts and crafts market; Hoyt Arboretum – one of the city's best playgrounds; Oregon Farm Loop – self-guided tours that let you choose a unique farm-to-table adventure.

Left, Lauren Weedman in her newest show *Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore* at Portland Center Stage. Right, Victor Mack in *Blue Door* by Tanya Barfield at Profile Theatre.



Photo by Patrick Weishampel



Photo by David Kinder

#EQUITYWORKS

IN LOS ANGELES

NEW AGREEMENT CREATES MORE THAN \$260,000 IN WAGES FOR MEMBERS

It's been just over two years since the new 99-Seat Agreement in Los Angeles, introducing Los Angeles intimate theatre to Equity contracts. Since the Agreement became available in the summer of 2015, 225 contracts have been issued spanning more than 30 productions, generating \$263,426 in wages, an average of \$1,170 per person.

The story can't just be told in numbers, so we checked in with some of our Members who have worked on the Agreement to find out how it's changed their experience of working in Los Angeles.

For Andy Umberger, working on the 99-Seat Agreement was his first step into the world of LA Intimate Theatre after several Broadway credits and twenty years in LA acting in television and film. "One of the reasons was because I wasn't going to work for free before," he said. "I'm a staunch union guy."

Matt Herrmann, a Member who also produces, was in the perfect position to be the first to use the Agreement – on both sides of the table. Herrmann found that the new agreement upped the professionalism of his productions, for both himself and the other performers. "With having to pay people for rehearsals and performance, I'm more cognizant of people's time," he said. "You don't need to have a three-month rehearsal process.

Umberger had a similar experience.

"I thought the contract worked very well," he said. "Theater Planners [the producing entity] was responsible, did their job. We had a sign in and sign out for rehearsal and performance, which is how they kept track of the hours, and I thought it worked very well."

David Melville, a Member who is also Managing Director of Independent Shakespeare Co., concurred. "You're employing people by the hour, so you're not locked into a fixed rate," he said, noting that if someone only rehearses five hours, they only have to be paid for those hours. While his company pays actors a fixed rate regardless, a number of artists observed that the new contract has led to more thoughtful scheduling of rehearsal time.

Melville noted that paying actors has a ripple effect in other areas of running his theater. "Moving to paying salaries is one of the things that made it solid and fundable," he said, "because people don't want to give donation dollars to something that doesn't seem stable. When you're paying the artists, that's a sign of stability and it attracts philanthropy."

Herrmann agrees. "It's just a matter of reworking your business model," he said. "I don't want to sound crass, but if you're not spending so much on your sets and you can put it back into your actors, performances tend to be a bigger draw than other technical stuff."

Two years after the change, the theatre scene in Los Angeles remains

strong and vibrant. In 2016, the number of new Members joining Equity in Los Angeles surged 50 percent. More than 500 new Members (and counting) have joined Equity in Los Angeles since the new contract was put in place.

Just as important, Los Angeles Members have more options than ever for working. Alongside the 99-Seat Theatre Agreement, the SPT contract – introduced to Los Angeles in 2015 – has led to new work weeks. Also new is the Los Angeles Showcase code, for venues up to 50 seats. Additionally, in more than 60 small theaters designated as Equity Membership Companies, Members can participate in a production without the benefit of an Equity contract. Finally, Members can self-produce under the L.A. Self-Produced Project Code. New 99-seat contracts have been used not just by well-established producers like the Theatre @ Boston Court and the Fountain Theatre but also featured in several shows at the Hollywood Fringe Fest.

After dancing in several non-Union tours of *West Side Story*, Penny Wildman got her Equity card performing in Herrmann's first 99-seat show. (See story on page 13.) "I was a little hesitant to work on a project that was completely different than anything I had done before," she said. "But, when I found out I would be getting my Equity card if I accepted the job, I immediately decided to take it."



KEY PROVISIONS OF THE 99-SEAT AGREEMENT

- Salary based on minimum wage for all rehearsals and performances
- Safe and sanitary protections
- Producers must provide workers' compensation coverage in case of injury as well as unemployment insurance
- 2-hour minimum call requirement
- For a cast of four, at least two must be on Equity contract
- A cast of five to 10 must have at least four Equity contracts
- A cast of more than 10 must have at least five Equity contracts
- Absences shall be allowed for industry auditions, other Union work and personal emergencies

IN MEMORIAM

*The play is done; the curtain drops
Slow falling to the prompter's bell
A moment yet the actor stops
And looks around, to say farewell.*

— William Shakespeare, *The End of the Play*

SHAMSUDDIN ABDUL-HAMID
BYRON ABREU
BOB AUDY
JEANNE L. AUSTIN
GARY BAYER
ALEX BOND
POWERS BOOTHE
DAVID CAMPAGNA
PAMELA CECIL
CAROLE CHAZIN
DENISE COLE
DENNIS COLE
MIRIAM COLON
BARBARA SMITH CONRAD
KAY DAPHNE
GLORIA DEHAVEN
EMILIO DEL POZO
RHETT DENNIS
OLIVE DUNBAR
DAN FRICK *

WARREN FROST
CATHERINE GAFFIGAN
ALAN GARDNER
RONALD E. GILES
SUSAN M. GROZIER
DRAN HAMILTON
DAVID HANNEGAN
GEORGE HANSEN
PETER HANSEN
JAMES HIGGINS
LAWRENCE HOLOFCENER
LINDA HOPKINS
ERIK M. HOWELL
RICHARD S. IGLEWSKI
CLIFTON JAMES
STEPHEN JOYCE
RICHARD KARRON
SALLY KEMP
ARLENE MARIE KIETA
JOE KONICKI

GARRET LAMBERT
WILLIAM LANDIS
MARTHA A. LAVEY
GUY S. LITTLE
FRANK LOVERDE
NORA MAE LYNG
ELLIOT MARTIN
ALEC MCCOWEN
RICHARD MCMILLAN
STEPHEN MEIGS
DINA MERRILL
DONALD MEYERS
RENE MORENO
CHRISTOPHER NELSON
ROBERT OSBORNE
JOHN PERKINS
TIM PIGOTT-SMITH
CLIFF RAKERD
MARIANA RENCE
DON RICKLES

SAMUEL G. ROBERSON
CHARLES D. RODEN
DAVID ROSE
TONY RUSSEL
MICHAEL M. RYAN
SHIRLEY SARLIN
JOHN SHEARIN
H. WILLIAM SIMINGTON
DEANNA SORENSON
CHARLES SPOERRI
PETER STERN
MARY TAHMIN
BARTON TINAPP
DAVID TITUS
GLENN D. TURNER
GUY WAGNER
ARTHUR WALSH
KENNETH WICKES
KE'O WOOLFORD

*Denotes Actors' Equity Association Councillor

Reported between March 1, 2017 and May 31, 2017

FORMER COUNCILLOR DAN FRICK

Dan Frick, a Member since 1978, passed away on March 24, 2017. A true Union guy through and through, Frick was heavily involved in many performing arts unions and served as President of the AFTRA Local in Chicago, a board member of SAG, and was a member of AGMA. He was elected to Equity's National Council in 1994 as a Central Regional Principal Councillor and served until 2007. Frick played a major role within Equity's governance, holding the position of Chair

for both the Central Codes Committee and the Midsize Theatres Committee. He was the Vice Chair for the Dinner Theatre/Cabaret Committee, Guest Artist/URTA Committee, Central Stock Committee, and Co-Chair of the Central Stock Committee. Frick chaired the 2004 Central Regional Nominating Committee and was First Vice Chair of the 2005 MSUA Negotiating Team.

As a performer, Frick appeared as Herr Fahrenkopt in *Night of the Iguana* on two well-known stages: the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and the Roundabout in New York City.

REMEMBERING JACK GOLODNER

Equity mourns the passing of AFL-CIO DPE President Emeritus Jack Golodner. On May 13, 2017, Golodner passed away after a brief illness at the age of 85.

Golodner had been DPE's president emeritus since his retirement in 2001. He served as the president of DPE at the organization's founding in 1977. Golodner also led the organization that preceded DPE, the Council of the AFL-CIO Unions for Scientific, Professional and Cultural Employees (SPACE) from 1967 until 1977.

Golodner was also a fervent advocate for the arts. As described by Livingston Biddle in his book, *Our Government and the Arts: A Perspective from the Inside*, Golodner was at the table for the founding of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Golodner went on to help draft language for a number of amendments to the bill that eventually became law.

"I'm so sad to hear of Jack's passing," said Equity President Kate Shindle. "I was honored to spend a few

(Continued on page 19)



THEATRE NEWS & NOTES

Bangor, ME – **Penobscot Theatre Company** is beginning its first year of a three-year transitional SPT agreement. Following years of Guest Artist and Special Appearance agreements, this season will offer at least 13 contracts to Members.

West Springfield, MA – **Theater Project/Majestic Theater** has moved up to an SPT 6, resulting in 22 contracts with benefits.

Eastern region staff negotiated a contract for a Staged Reading that did not fit under the terms of the 29 Hour Reading Code. Members received a high salary, pension, and health benefits for the under-two-week reading, which allowed for a number of Members to obtain Health coverage for the full year!

Cincinnati, OH – **Cincinnati Shakespeare Company** renewed their SPT agreement which included a 9% salary increase and 10% ratio increase over last season.

New Orleans, LA – **Le Petit Theatre du View Carre** and **Southern Rep** are both moving from the NOLA contract to SPT for their 2017-18 seasons. This marks the first time in over a decade that theaters in New Orleans will operate as SPTs.

Madison, WI – **Capital City Theatre**, which has produced on the Guest Artist agreement for several years, is transitioning onto an SPT Agreement augmented by an LOA-LORT for productions in larger spaces. This agreement creates approximately 55 work weeks in its first year.

Houston, TX – **A. D. Players** completed their first season on an LOA-LORT and 244 work weeks.

Long Beach, CA – After their First Season on a COST Agreement from an LOA, **Musical Theatre West** had an additional 60 work weeks and nine additional Chorus Contracts.

Carousel at Musical Theatre West.

Photo by Caught in the Moment Photography



Los Angeles, CA – **Lythgoe Family Panto** aka **Magic Pictures International** agreed to a two year Special Agreement with a 7% Salary Increase and increased pension contribution by an additional 2% over the term of the agreement.

Los Angeles, CA – Five new productions have been organized under the **Los Angeles 99-Seat Agreement**.

Mill Valley, CA – **Marin Theatre Company** is celebrating its 50th year.

Oregon City, OR – **Clackmas Repertory Theatre** has begun to transition to an SPT Agreement.

San Antonio, TX – **Playhouse San Antonio** will be transitioning to an SPT Agreement – the first seasonal agreement in San Antonio!

San Francisco, CA – **Magic Theatre** is celebrating its 50th year.

San Francisco, CA – **San Francisco Shakespeare** is celebrating its 35th anniversary.

Santa Rose, CA – **LeftEdge Theatre** was put on its first MBAT.

TRACKING WHAT YOU'RE OWED

Eastern Region staff discovered a total of \$1,511.93 in unpaid wages for 12 Members on a SETA tour during a standard clearance salary check.

Staff was able to recover \$3,016.88 in vacation payments in the Western Region.

Staff in the Eastern Region recovered vacation pay for a Member that had previously been unpaid, which totaled \$635, plus pension.

In reviewing weekly reports for a TYA Company, staff in the Eastern Region discovered that the first week for two separate productions had been incorrectly pro-rated. Staff recovered a total of \$1,067.00 for five Members.

Eastern Region Staff recovered unpaid Chorus/set move increments from a family tour totaling \$878.75.

An Actor recently experienced a loss of a shipped package of his personal belongings back to his home. Because the Theatre did not add insurance, he only received \$150 from a UPS claim. The Actor contacted the Business Rep and Equity Staff in the Eastern Region immediately filed a claim under LORT rule 49. The Actor received reimbursement for his lost items a total of \$2,500.33.

Cast members in a TYA company advised Staff in the Eastern Region that the props and set pieces were loaded in the company vehicle in a manner that presented a potential hazard to cast members. Once the producer became aware of the violation, the situation was remedied by providing the cast with a vehicle that allowed for the safe transportation of both the cast and the set/props.

Equity became a member of the Entertainment Services and Technology Association (ESTA) this year after years of participation in their Technical Standards Program (TSP). Recently, Equity has become a principal voting member on the Floors Working Group, developing a safety standard for raked stages, and on the new Event Safety Working Group, which is developing standards related to all aspects of the daily operations of a venue, including the safety of its performers.



Organizer Stefanie Frey puts up signs in the New York audition center.

TRAILBLAZERS - (Continued from page 11) and best practices for how to organize fellow Members.

"Working on Equity 2020 is a communal experience. It's afforded me the opportunity of sharing ideas and engaging in many meaningful conversations with Members around the country in support of a mission that paves the way for our Union to become more robust and vibrant moving forward," said Jeff Wax, a Houston-based Trailblazer. "Playing an integral role in this initiative is a joy and an honor."

Matthew Kacergis, Seattle Trailblazer, agreed. "It's been unbelievably inspiring getting to team up with fellow Members to help usher in this new era for our Union. This has been the perfect opportunity for Members to reach out and speak with other Members about issues that matter to all of us."

Now that Equity has built a foundation of volunteers, the goal is to train even more Equity Members to organize and together, to take on Member priorities, whether that is defending funding for the National Endowment for the Arts or helping to get more theaters all around the country using Equity contracts.

"The Trailblazers have helped us forge a stronger connection between Members and their Union," said Executive Director Mary McColl, "We want to do even more to get Members involved in Equity between now and the year 2020. The Trailblazers will be an important part of that work."

SPOTLIGHT - (Continued from page 14) social issues that exist, not only in the city, but across the country. Its upcoming season is an obvious reflection of its strong stance on the socio-economic climate and consists of provocative work that was carefully chosen to serve as commentary on current events.

Giving a voice to unheard playwrights – particularly people of color, women and transgender people – is one of the top initiatives of the Theatre. Two years ago, they launched the TableRoomStage program to help develop the work of playwrights who may have less of a voice or be less visible within the industry.

Recognizing the importance of diversity not just on stage, but throughout the entire industry, Rodriguez said, "Changing the audience in American theatre is a long game and it's a huge challenge. Just changing the work on stage won't change the audience. You really have to change the values of your organization and acknowledge all the obstacles that are standing in the way of diversity in order to have a chance to change the audience."

Even after 35 years, Artists Rep has stayed true to its mission of producing intimate, thought-provoking theatre. It has become a home and a voice for diverse artists and audiences. "Where you stand as an artist and an arts organization is becoming really relevant, and it's obvious if you are silent or if you speak up."

JACK GOLODNER - (Continued from page 17) minutes with Jack at the opening night of *Fun Home* in Washington, D.C."

Jack was part of our Equity family and he was instrumental in the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts.

FLU SHOTS - (Continued from page 20) to anyone who would like one. Los Angeles area Members will also have the opportunity to receive a shot when Kohn travels to the LA Equity Office this fall – date to be determined.

Last year, 5,238 total flu shots were provided to the Broadway and Off-Broadway community. Of those, 1,400 shots were given out at Equity Offices.

COUNCIL SETS MEMBERSHIP MEETING DATES, PASSES RESOLUTION ON MEETING PROCEDURES

The following dates have been set for the Regional Equity Membership Meetings: September 25, 2017 & January 29, 2018. The start times for these meetings are: 2 p.m. ET/ 12 p.m. CT/ 12 p.m. PT

The National Membership meeting will be held on April 23, 2018. The start times for this meeting are: 2 p.m. ET/ 1 p.m. CT/ 11 a.m. PT. All meetings will be held in the Regional Offices.

Council recently passed a resolution aimed to improve the process for Member to submit resolutions during Membership Meetings. If you would like to make a motion, you will now be required to submit your motion in writing to Equity at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. This new procedure will help staff better understand the intent behind the motion and with that, allow staff to be more responsive to the issues that are brought forward, including helping Members who might want the opportunity for advanced clarity and assistance with their motions.

This will also allow Equity to share more information with Members in advance of the meeting. All motions that will be discussed during the Membership Discussion Period will be posted on the Member Portal one business day prior to the Membership Meeting. Membership Discussion Periods are an important way for the Union to hear from its Members, and this new change will make sure that Members feel that they are being heard.

Resolutions for the Fall 2017 Membership Meeting must be submitted to Allison Bodwell, National Director of Governance (abodwell@actorsequity.org), by Monday, September 11, 2017.

EquityNews

165 WEST 46TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10036

Address Services Requested
Second Class Postage
Paid in New York, NY

2017 AWARDS FOR ACHIEVEMENTS ON AND OFF STAGE

Actors' Equity Association and the Equity Foundation have given out seven awards honoring a wide range of contributions to theatre – on and off the stage.

The Clarence Derwent Award – honoring the most promising female and male on the New York metropolitan scene – was presented to Katrina Lenk for her performances in *Indecent* and *The Band's Visit*, and to Will Pullen for his work in *Sweat*. "I've been extremely fortunate thus far to be able to pursue a craft that scares the hell out of me, challenges me, teaches me, depresses me, makes me question everything, and then sometimes – when all of the work and all of the coincidences line up just so – gives me so much joy I think I might perish from it," Lenk said when accepting the award.

Acknowledging the work of a veteran male and female in a supporting role, this year's Richard Seff Awards went to Anthony Chisholm for *Jitney* and Barbara Barrie for *Significant Other*.

Longtime New York Equity staffer Anne Fortuno received the 2017 Patrick Quinn Award for Distinguished Service to Actors upon her retirement in May after 26 years of dedicated service.

Jay C. Sarno – past President and current Vice President of North Coast

Repertory Theatre – was presented the Lucy Jordan Award, which is a humanitarian award exclusive to the Western Region celebrating people who go above and beyond to help Equity Members be their best.

The 11th annual Alan Eisenberg Award Scholarship was awarded to University of Michigan Musical Theatre graduate Leighton Samuels. Established in 2007 in recognition of Alan Eisenberg's 25 years of service as Equity's Executive Director, the \$5,000 scholarship is given out annually to a graduating senior from the university's Musical Theatre Department.

The Chorus of *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* received the 9th annual ACCA Award for Outstanding Broadway Chorus. It is the only accolade of its kind in the industry that acknowledges contributions made by the original Chorus members of a Broadway musical. The 27 individual recipients included Sumayya Ali, Courtney Bassett, Josh Canfield, Kennedy Caughell, Ken Clark, Erica Dorfler, Lulu Fall, Ashley Pérez Flanagan, Paloma Garcia-Lee, Nick Gaswirth, Alex Gibson, Billy Joe Kiessling, Mary Spencer Knapp, Blaine Alden Krauss, Reed Luplau, Brandt Martinez, Andrew Mayer, Mary Page Nance, Shoba Narayan, Azudi Onyejekwe,



Equity Staff presents the Chorus of *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* the 9th Annual ACCA Award.

Pearl Rhein, Celia Mei Rubin, Heath Saunders, Ani Taj, Cathryn Wake, Katrina Yaukey and Lauren Zakrin. "I applaud the ACCA for choosing this wonderful, deserving, and beautifully diverse group of multi-talented performers," said President Kate Shindle in a statement read during the ceremony.

Three productions – *The Great Comet*, *Come From Away*, and *A Doll's House, Part 2* – were co-recipients of Equity's 2017 Extraordinary Excellence in Diversity on Broadway Award. The Award honors shows that exemplify and promote the Union's founding principles of diversity, inclusion, non-traditional casting and equal opportunity for all.

FREE FLU SHOT PROGRAM BEGINS 20TH YEAR IN SEPTEMBER

The flu season is almost upon us, and Equity is planning ahead to keep its Members healthy by once again sponsoring its Annual Broadway and Off-Broadway Free Flu Shot Program this fall. In its 20th year now, the free flu shot program is offered through Physician Volunteers for the Arts, which is funded by a generous grant from Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

Because the best time to get a flu shot is between September and December, we

will be offering free flu shots on the 14th floor of the New York City Equity Building on the following dates: Thursday, Sept. 28 (tentative), Thursday, Oct. 19, Thursday, Nov. 16 and Tuesday, Dec. 5.

Several strains of respiratory flu circulate around the world every winter from late December through March. Being highly contagious, these viruses can quickly spread through theatres and offices, unfortunately leading to many lost workdays. It is highly recommended that

people who work in close quarters – like backstage areas – or are exposed to large groups of people receive flu vaccinations.

Medical Director of Physician Volunteers for the Arts Dr. Barry Kohn will be giving flu shots on a walk-in basis for all members of the theatre community. Kohn will also be visiting Broadway and Off-Broadway casts, non-profit theatre companies and theatrical union offices to provide shots

(Continued on page 19)