

## January Membership Meetings Set

*Start off 2016 by attending an Equity Membership Meeting*

The **Eastern Regional Membership Meeting** will convene on Friday, January 8, 2016, at 2 p.m. EST in the Council Room on the 14th floor of the Equity building at 165 West 46th Street, New York, New York.

### The agenda will include:

- Presentation of the St. Clair Bayfield Award and the Joe A. Callaway Award
- Report of the Eastern Regional Director
- Report of the Eastern Regional Vice President
- Membership discussion period in accordance with the by-laws

The **Central Regional Membership Meeting** will convene on Monday, January 11, 2016, at 6 p.m. CST in the Member Center (1st floor) of the Equity building at 557 West Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois.

### The agenda will include:

- Report of the Central Regional Director
- Report of the Central Regional Vice President
- Membership discussion period in accordance with the by-laws

The **Western Regional Membership Meeting** will convene on Monday, January 11, 2016, at 11 a.m. PST at I.A.T.S.E. Local 80 Meeting Hall (Ground Floor) at 2520 West Olive Ave, Burbank, CA 91505. *Free All Day Street Parking.*

### The agenda will include:

- Report of the Western Regional Director
- Report of the Western Regional Vice President
- Membership discussion period in accordance with the by-laws

**Note: The Annual Membership Meeting is Friday, April 8, 2016, in all regions.** The regions will be connected so that all members may hear the statements of the candidates running for election to Council. Please check the Member Portal for any additional information or changes about all Membership Meetings.

For members with disabilities who would like to request an accommodation to participate in the Membership Meeting, please contact Governance Associate Allison Bodwell at 212-869-8530 ext. 318 two weeks prior to the meeting.

## Equity's New Production Contract Ratified Changes to Eligibility Requirements for Health Care Help All Members

The new Production Contract has been ratified by a 97.04% "yes" vote and is in effect immediately. The compensation increases of the new four-year contract are retroactive to September 28, 2015. The contract will expire in 2019.

In an historic move, a change to the eligibility requirements to access health insurance will benefit all members for the life of this current Production Contract. Now, a member may work 11 weeks under any Equity contract to achieve health coverage for six months and 19 weeks to gain a full year of health coverage. This is the first time a negotiation with one

bargaining partner will help the full Equity membership.

"Because of these negotiations, the trustees of the Equity-League Health Fund have approved a change to the eligibility requirements that will benefit all of our members who work under contract, and this change is guaranteed for the four years of the new contract," said Executive Director Mary McColl. "Put simply: It's easier for our members, everywhere, to access health coverage. And that's fantastic."

Monetary gains within the new contract increase in each year of the contract. Important quality of life issues are also addressed in the new

agreement, including improvements that make sick leave available for more members, access to physical therapy, stronger language regarding schedule changes and housing for tours.

For the first time, the Production Contract ratification vote was conducted exclusively online, saving the union tens of thousands of dollars to be put toward member services.

"I'm proud of the work we've accomplished at the bargaining table this year," said McColl. "I'm honored to have sat alongside Councillors, members and staff who worked effectively to achieve gains in areas that are most important to our members."

## Equity Takes a "Break"

### Union opens new fourth floor waiting space in Equity's NYC headquarters

Just in time to escape the brisk early morning low temps in New York City, Equity's new fourth floor waiting space opened on Monday, Nov. 9, for members waiting for auditions, audition signups and VITA appointments. No longer will anyone have to brave rain, frigid temps or hot, muggy weather. Complete with free Wi-Fi access, this dedicated respite for use by members, EMCs and non-members who are auditioning, is located in the sky lobby of the NYC Equity building and is open from 6 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The new space, which will alleviate waiting lines outside the building, and serve as an overflow room for the official audition center, will be staffed daily by a receptionist, who will be on-hand to answer questions



and help facilitate the audition process.

The area features free Wi-Fi and iPad stations, allowing members and guests the opportunity to visit the public Equity website, peruse the official Equity Casting Call page or pay dues online in the Member Portal. Also, food and

beverages are welcome inside the room, which will occasionally double as a meeting space for union business. Additionally, three digital screens will keep members and guests informed about pertinent Equity news, information and key announcements.

## Successful COST Negotiation includes Salary Increases and a New Tier

With the recent conclusion of the Council of Stock Theatres, or COST, negotiations on October 7, 2015, which Council approved on November 17, 2015, the new four-year agreement will introduce a brand new COST tier, 2+. Tier 2+ is meant to aid those employers functioning in the sphere between tiers two and three to get from one tier to the next.

"Tier 2+ will fill the substantial gap between Tiers 2 and 3 and help enable producers to adhere

to the basic COST Agreement more closely rather than negotiate individually," said Chief Negotiator Beverly A. Sloan. "It will also give members greater security in knowing basic terms as they move from one COST theater to another."

The negotiations, which spanned three days, provided benefits on both sides, as Sloan noted that the union achieved all of its proposals in some form. An additional assistant stage manager is now required for chorus musicals and large cast productions in the top two tiers.

ASMs will receive a minimum of two days of paid pre-production. And, stage managers and ASMs will now receive tech week compensation of 1/6th of contractual salary for each production.

Minimum salaries will increase 2% in each of the first two years of the agreement and 2.5% in years three and four in all categories.

Actors will be able to submit their own recorded audition if a producer requests to see them but they are unavailable for a scheduled audition. If a theater

changes its season after Equity Principal Auditions have been held, and will be scheduling auditions for the new production, producers shall

*(continued on page 3)*

## Index

Year in Review .....	2
From the President .....	3
#EquityWorks .....	3
Annual Report .....	7
In Memoriam .....	16

## 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. The number is 877-AEA-1913 (honoring the year of Equity's founding). Each Area Liaison city has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

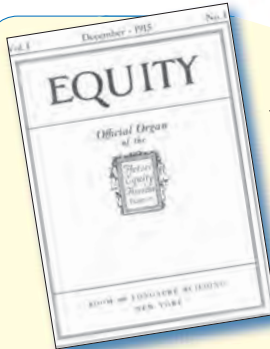
(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

(2) Dial your city extension:

- 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
- 835 San Diego
- 836 San Francisco
- 837 Seattle
- 838 St. Louis
- 839 Washington DC/Baltimore

# 2015

## YEAR IN REVIEW



exclusive panel

### January/February

• *Equity News* turns 100. First published in 1915, the union's publication celebrates its own centennial with a full-page spread in the paper celebrating the numerous, colorful renditions of its history.

• Equity celebrates Black

History Month with an



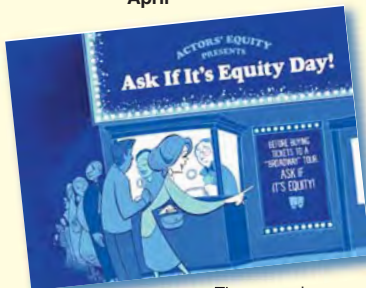
sponsored by the EEO committee. The union's event encouraged panelists to discuss their careers and how Broadway has changed their lives.

### March

• Late this month, Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette, Chorus Councillor Allyson Tucker, CRB non-Councillor Peggy Thorp and Senior Business Representative Larry Lorczak attend National Arts Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C. where they pushed for more arts funding, spoke about wireless mic issues, 401(k) funding through the arts and arts education.

• Equity celebrated Women's History Month with a special *Equity News* issue focusing on women who work in a union and for a union.

### April



The campaign remains part of the union's ongoing efforts to take back control of the road and strengthen conditions for actors and stage managers on tour.

### May

• Kate Shindle is elected president of Actors' Equity and 16 others become Councillors on Equity's National Council. Other officers were re-elected for their seats.

### June

• The North Hollywood Audition Center opens! The state-of-the-art center in Equity's Western Regional office opens and demonstrates another way that Equity is building a strong foothold in the Western Region for union actors and stage managers.

• Equity celebrates the legalization of same-sex marriage. Council unanimously passed resolutions in the past in support of marriage equality everywhere.

### July/August

• Council approves the new four-year TYA contract, which features substantial monetary gains for members as well as safe and sanitary improvements.

• Councillors and members march in New York City's First Annual Disability Pride Parade in honor of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

• The union declares July 8, 2015, as *Ask If It's Equity Day* to celebrate members on tour across the country.

### September

• Members across the country march in their local Labor Day Parades, marching in solidarity and showing their union pride.



### October/November

• The New York Equity office opens its Fourth Floor Waiting Space for members to relax in while they wait for auditions, audition sign-ups or VITA appointments.

• The new four-year Production Contract is ratified by a 97.04% "yes" vote and features an historic change in eligibility requirements to access health insurance that will benefit all members for the four years of the new contract.

• Equity's beloved Gypsy Robe turns 65.



## AWARDS

### EQUITY AWARDS

ACCA – *An American in Paris*  
 Extraordinary Excellence in Diversity on Broadway Award – *It Shoulda Been You*  
 Kathryn V. Lamkey Award – *Ellen Alberding Equity/Alan Eisenberg Award Scholarship – Isabelle McCalla*  
 Rosetta LeNoire Award – *Weston Playhouse Theatre Company*

### EQUITY FOUNDATION AWARDS

Clarence Derwent Award – *Phillipa Soo and Josh Grisetti*  
 Richard Seff Award – *Julie Halston and Brad Oscar*  
 Roger Sturtevant Award – *Amanda Hartley Urtea*  
 St. Clair Bayfield Award – *Amanda Quaid*  
 The Joe A. Callaway Award – *Suzanne Bertish and Paxton Whitehead*  
 Paul Robeson Citation Award – *Arthur French*



ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION 1913

## EQUITYNEWS

Editor: JOSH AUSTIN

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## COST Negotiations

(continued from page 1)

submit photo/résumé requests and will schedule appointment auditions for a minimum of ten actors who have submitted.

"The COST producers were attentive and understanding of Equity's concerns, asking questions and really listening to our responses. Likewise, we listened and learned about the complexities in running a theater and producing good work," said Sloan.

When it comes to safe and sanitary, the negotiating team worked with the producers to create a more detailed fire safety procedure conditions and emergency evacuation plan. If there are stunts within the show, a stunt coordinator will be engaged to teach the maneuvers and a fight captain will be required every time there are fights staged for a production, not only when the fights are large or involve extraordinary risk.

"The COST negotiations were challenging, but also interesting and congenial," said Councillor Ruth E. Kramer, chair of the COST committee. "The Equity negotiating team worked

hard to break through obstacles; our chief negotiator Beverly A. Sloan and her staff, Jeffrey Bateman, Kathy Mercado and Raymond Morales, contributed necessary — and sometimes surprising — history, statistics, ideas and strategies, and our bargaining partners across the table were indeed our 'partners,' demonstrating by their responses to our arguments that they value our members."

Members of the COST bargaining unit consisted of Todd Schmidt of Paper Mill Playhouse, assisted by Chris Slavik; and Jason Loewith of Olney Theatre Center, assisted by Fred Paul.

Equity's negotiating team consisted of Ruth E. Kramer, chair; Michael Dotson, 1st vice chair; Mark Aldrich; Linda Cameron; Wally Dunn; Christine Toy Johnson; Matthew J. Kilgore; Jeanne Lehman; and Jason A. Quinn. Equity staff members included Senior Business Representative Beverly A. Sloan, COST Business Rep Jeffrey J. Bateman, Business Rep Kathy Mercado, and Raymond Morales, Assistant to the Senior Business Rep.

## From the PRESIDENT

# On Gratitude

By Kate Shindle

This time of year always brings reminders of community, family and gratitude. I, for one, believe that I have a lot to be thankful for this year.

In our industry, though, the holiday season also brings an increased workload. Here in New York, schedules are changing, performances are added to already demanding weeks, and it can seem like a major battle just to weave through the Times Square crowds on the way to half hour.

Despite these challenges, it's a great moment to be in the theatre. Our business is rapidly changing and expanding, and new models continue to emerge for distributing live theatre across various platforms. I'm excited to explore the ways in which we can increase the accessibility of our art form. In truth, we have to do so; as producing shows becomes more and more expensive and ticket prices rise accordingly, we must seek out new frontiers for delivering the theatre, while somehow preserving the fundamental treasure that is the live interaction between players and audience. I don't yet know how we will balance these competing interests. But in addition to bringing theatre to wider demographics, and engaging the next generation of audience members, this kind of big-picture thinking also has the potential to open up new revenue streams and opportunities for the employers who hire us — especially in our small cities and towns across the

country, where it can often seem like a daily struggle just to keep the lights on.

One of my favorite parts of this job is the opportunity to sit down and collaborate with big thinkers. In a business where we can sometimes feel like the sun rises and sets on the outcome of our audition for a yogurt commercial, it's fantastic to be able to have large-scale conversations about the future of our industry and possible pathways to achieving collective success (not for nothing, it also appeals to the part of my brain that insists that there's more to life than yogurt commercials. No offense, yogurt.) And I've been talking to some of my longtime favorite people — and also to some new faces I've only recently learned to appreciate — about theatre in the digital era. And expanding the models we use to do what we do. And diversity. And gender parity. And the ways in which we participate in the development of new shows.

The last of those seems to be pretty radioactive this year. Like many of us, I've done dozens upon dozens of readings, workshops, concerts of new work, presentations and work sessions. Never, though, have I seen our members reach what feels like a tipping point in this conversation. We are hearing significant calls to eliminate the Lab Contract, which allows producers to develop new shows without mounting full productions, but does not include participation in future rights. In fact, plenty of members

have suggested to me that all developmental contracts and codes without rights participation be eliminated (although I would caution against rushing into that strategy, for a number of reasons). Part of this, of course, has to do with what's been going on here in New York (or here on Broadway) and our members' feeling that when they help to make a show wildly successful, they should be able to negotiate a portion of the future revenue. By nature, this is an overscale negotiation, and thus not within Equity's purview. But it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore those voices — coming from some of our most active and prolific members — insisting that change be considered.

One of the hallmarks of a successful development period is that a "project" becomes a "job." That is what most of us are working toward when we sign onto these nascent shows, in whatever preliminary form they may take. What our members seem to be asking right now is how to balance the happiness (some would even call it gratitude) that results when a contract actually comes to fruition. Because what many of the same members are asking is whether our colleagues are equally grateful to have us in the room with them, exploring their creations and working to make them better. There is no simple answer. But I have a feeling it's a conversation that will continue for a while.

That's all for now. Have a happy, safe and creative holiday season!

## #EquityWorks

# Theater News & Notes

Staff successfully negotiated Equity contracts for 12 actors and two stage managers for the world premiere of Hal Prince's new stage musical *Prince of Broadway*, which played two engagements in Japan and is aiming for a spring 2016 run on Broadway.

**La Mirada, CA** — A new MSUA Agreement with **McCoy/Rigby Entertainment** for its production of *The Little Mermaid* will utilize 21 contracts for the duration of the

10-week run.

**Minneapolis, MN** - **New Epic Theatre** has joined the Equity family as a transitional SPT-1 for the 2015-16 season adding more than 18 new member workweeks.

**New York, NY** - **MOD Theatre Company**, a new nonprofit member company, comprised of artists and educators and dedicated to adapting literary classics for the stage, is producing its 2015 inaugural production of *A Christmas Carol* under the Off-

Broadway Transition Contract.

**New York, NY** - After a period of financial hardship, **Fallen Angel Theatre Company**, a nonprofit member company committed to presenting dynamic Irish and British plays written by and about women, is once again producing Off-Broadway under the Transition agreement.

**New York, NY** - *Futurity*, co-produced by **Ars Nova** and **SoHo Rep**, extended its sold-out run for three weeks under the Off-Broadway agreement (moving up from the Mini agreement), allowing for 16 members to be paid at the higher contract salary.

**Portland, OR** - **Tears of Joy Theatre** will produce *When Animals Were People* under a new TYA agreement, resulting in eight workweeks for one member.

**Tokyo, JAPAN** - As a result of successful COST agreement term negotiations, over 25 contracts are expected for the three-week Tokyo engagement of the **McCoy/Rigby Entertainment** production of *Dreamgirls*.

Due to accommodations made by the Business Theatre & Events committee chair, Eastern Regional staff was able to successfully negotiate terms for a new product launch

event — the LG washing machine — took place in Times Square. Equity was able to achieve a total of seven contracts, gaining 21 workweeks for a total of \$25,386.

### TRACKING WHAT YOU'RE OWED

Western Regional staff recovered almost \$800 in missing vacation pay for two actors from Western Regional LORT Theaters. Additionally, staff recovered over \$600 in unreported health, pension and dues payments, and over \$1,700 in media fee payments for 14 actors from a Western Regional TYA employer.



## Partnering Professionals with Kids

*St. Louis' Variety Children's Theatre puts on a musical with union members and kids with disabilities*

“Anything can happen if you let it.” This mantra is the driving force behind the musical *Mary Poppins* — and those words were perhaps never more à propos than they were when Broadway's Elizabeth DeRosa sang them onstage at the Touhill Performing Arts Center in St. Louis, Missouri, surrounded by children of all ages, many of them with disabilities.

This particular production was staged by Variety Children's Theatre as part of Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis, an organization devoted to enriching the lives of children with disabilities. Variety

began working with Equity actors in 2009, allowing its “Variety Kids” the opportunity to work onstage with union professionals.

Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor and Business Representative David Kolen travelled to St. Louis to see this year's performance and meet the members who worked on the show. Both noted the extraordinary work the Variety staff has done, and continues to do, in undertaking this massive and important work.

“Over my 25 years as an Equity member,” said member John Flack, who has performed in the last five Variety shows, “I have had so many wonderful

theatrical experiences that it would be impossible for me to recount all of them. But I can tell you that, hands down, the most rewarding of all have been the Variety Children's Theatre productions. Working with the Variety kids and their families brings in to sharp focus the power and beauty that music, dance, comedy and drama can have in all of our lives.”

Allison Newman, who returned to her hometown to work on this show, said “to see the joy on those kid's faces throughout this whole process, is something I will take with me for the rest of my life. The team at Variety is such a special

## Remembering Two Former Councillors

### Evan Thompson

Evan Thompson, who passed away at the age of 83 this past February after battling a respiratory illness, joined Equity in 1956. He would go on to serve as Principal Councillor from 1968 until 1973. Having worked across the country in regional theaters, summer stock houses, theater for young audiences, cabarets and Broadway, Thompson was a proud actor and member of Equity.

In 2014, battling lung cancer, Thompson kept acting; he took part in the Off-Broadway play *A Beautiful Day in November* on the *Banks of the Greatest of the Great Lakes*. Of course, he and his wife, Joan Shepard, continued to perform for children with the Fanfare Theatre Ensemble, a troupe that the couple founded in 1971. The duo would write, perform, design and direct adaptations of fairy tales for young audiences.

“My father had the purest spirit and the truest heart of anyone I have ever known,” said Owen Thompson, Evan's son, in a statement. “It is utterly appropriate that his final performance was given to a theater full of adoring children. He never lost contact with the child in the deepest place of his soul.”

### Zale Kessler

Having served on over 15 committees, former Councillor Zale Kessler was a dedicated Equity member. Kessler joined Equity in 1959 and remained a member until his death on Sept. 28, 2015. He served as Principal Councillor three times, his last term in 2004 and served on the Western Regional Board twice throughout his union tenure.

Known as a colorful character, Kessler worked on committees and negotiating teams such as Entry to Equity, WCL0 Negotiating Team, Developing Theatre, LORT and Hollywood Area Theatres Contract, among others.

He was born in St. Louis but moved to New York City in the late '50s to appear in the Broadway musical *The Nervous Set*. His Off-Broadway debut came shortly after in a show called *O, Oysters!!!*. Other Broadway appearances included roles in *Gantry* and *Darling of the Day*. He replaced Milo O'Shea as the leading man in Jerry Herman's *Dear World*, opposite Angela Lansbury. And when the first theatrical production at the Lincoln Center Theater (a play by Peter Ustinov titled *The Unknown Soldier and His Wife*) moved to Broadway, Zale joined the cast as a replacement.

group of people and they are changing kids' lives every day. It has filled the passion tank inside me to the brim, and I only hope I can go back and be a part of future productions.”

As the theater continues to mount such magical and successful productions, the staff in the Central Region is

thrilled to watch them grow. Kolen noted, “It is an honor to have crafted an agreement that allows Equity members to work with such an incredible organization. I can't wait for more of our members to have the experience of working in such a unique and challenging environment.”



## How I Got My Equity Card

*Richard Balin*



I am celebrating my 53rd year as an Equity member.

At 22, auditioning for the summer season of '63, I had been offered the role of Emile De Becque in *South Pacific* at a non-Equity house. Soon after, a friend who was going to be the choreographer at the then-Ephrata Legion Star Playhouse, a small Equity theater in PA, got me an audition at the old Lambs Club. The company had a big season of mostly musicals, but was opening with *Come Blow Your Horn* — and I wanted the

part of the younger brother, Buddy.

A girl came out of the audition room saying that she got the job.

“What did you sing?”

“Oh, I didn't sing,” she said.

“He said anyone who went to Juilliard doesn't have to sing for me. I didn't have the nerve to tell him I was in the dance department.”

My turn. I entered a small, bare room with an elderly man sitting at a table and an old upright piano against the wall. I

introduced myself, handing him my résumé and making sure to mention the choreographer and how right he thought I was for the role. “That's our opening show,” he said. “It says here that you've done — [pause] — only children's theater. Why should I hire you?”

“Because I'm right for the part.”

“Sing something for me.”

“Where's the accompanist?”

“I don't have one — a waste of money,” he said. “You can sing or you can't, you don't need a piano. You may accompany yourself if you need to.”

I turned and hit a starting note on the old upright. When I finished he said:

“Not bad. I'll be in touch with you.”

“Don't you want me to read?”

“Well, you must be pretty good if you want to read. Go ahead.”

I had gone to French's and

purchased the script. The opening line was: “Hello Alan, are you busy?”

“Not bad,” he said, “but I'm looking for a youthful quality.”

I was 22, and believe me, very youthful. I read a bit more, and he said he'd be in touch. I left in a daze. It certainly didn't go the way I had envisioned it. My dog and I sat around our apartment wondering how we were going to spend the summer — and if we would ever eat again. The dog more than I, as I knew I would be taking some meals at my mother's.

The phone rang: A gruff voice on the other end said, “Are you ready to go? I'm driving up tomorrow. Meet me at 10 a.m. at the Lambs and don't be late.”

“Who is this? What are you talking about?”

“It's John Cameron, the producer of the Ephrata Legion Star Playhouse. We're starting our season; you're my juvenile

for the whole season starting with *Come Blow Your Horn*. You'll be there all summer. I'll have the Equity contracts with me. You didn't take anything else did you?”

“No, but I'm not prepared. I have a dog,” I said.

“No animals; they're not allowed in the hotel.”

“I'll have to find someone to take him. What's the salary?”

“We're a 'z' house; \$70 a week, but I take some out for the hotel room. I guess I forgot to call you sooner. Are you coming with me tomorrow or not?”

“Yes, I'll be there. I have to make some arrangements for my dog and I'll have to give up my apartment, but I'll be there. Thank you.”

It was an incredible summer and an invaluable experience: playing great roles and becoming a professional Equity actor.



We asked the staff at the Hippodrome Theatre to tell us about the company; this is what they had to say:

The Hippodrome's history and vitality are built on its artistic achievement. The Florida-based company has produced more than 100 world, American and Southeastern premieres in its 43-year history. Acclaimed playwrights, including Tennessee Williams, Eric Bentley, Paula Vogel and Lee Breuer, among several others, have developed new works on the Hippodrome stage.

For over four decades, the theater has been the epicenter of Gainesville's arts and cultural district. Known as "The Hipp," it is a landmark attraction serving over 80,000 patrons annually, producing eight mainstage plays each season. Through every production, the Hippodrome strives to provide an environment that helps its patrons understand the past, accept the present and work toward positive change for the future.

The Hippodrome is centered on its Acting Company. Artistic Director Lauren Caldwell

## Centered On and Growing With Actors

assembled this company in 2014, focusing on the mission to create an artistic home for a core group of professionals, the majority of which are members of Actors' Equity.

Caldwell elaborated, "We all know that funding sources are dwindling at a rapid pace for the arts. The Hipp's Acting Company creates a shortcut in the rehearsal process. The actors know each other so well, believe in the mission and fully support each other. We welcome new artists with open arms; the Hippodrome takes great pride in the assurance that there is a group of actors to whom we can be dedicated to artistically and financially."

Acting Company and Equity member Tim Altmeyer says, "Home is an important thing for me — as I think it is for so many actors, roving gypsies that we often are. Many of those with whom I've collaborated with at the Hipp are like family to me."

As a director, Caldwell's process is organic, allowing for director, designers and actors to share equal investment in the production.

The theater is located in the

heart of downtown Gainesville, Florida, occupying a classical revival style historical building.



Hippodrome actors, artists and administrators are dedicated to preparing a new season of storytelling to awaken ideas, stimulate change and encourage dreams.

"The Hippodrome occupies the most beautiful building in downtown Gainesville and has long been used as a cultural focus point for the region," said Acting Company Equity member Sara L. Morsey.

In addition to its theatrical productions, the company also serves as Gainesville's only art-house cinema, provides award-winning educational programming, hosts an annual playwrighting competition and reaches out to community partners for event collaborations. As a result, the Hipp has built a strong reputation as providing the Gainesville community with an artistic home to

nurture collaboration and individual creativity.

"To call the Hipp a 'theater' only tells part of the story. In my 20-year relationship with the Hippodrome, it has always felt like an epicenter of artistic thinking in Gainesville, with a visual art gallery, independent cinema, eclectic seasons and deep roots in the Florida art

scene," said Altmeyer

For the 2015-2016 season, the Hippodrome will intersect creation and convention with retellings of classics tales as well as presenting two southeastern premieres (*All Girl Frankenstein* and *Women in Jeopardy*) and a world premiere (*The Snow Queen* written by company member Charlie Mitchell). With every performance, the artistic mission is to enrich the community and world through the art of theater.

At the core, the Hippodrome's growth and success has been made possible through their key partnership with Equity. Through this collaboration, the Hippodrome has been able to provide high-quality, professional theater to audiences across North Central Florida and beyond.

Morsey said, "I joinedAEA the first chance I got. Once I decided I was going to be a professional actor, it became my goal to be a member of 'the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.' That pretty much says it all, doesn't it? I know I can hold my own with any fellow actor anywhere, and that's a great feeling."

## A LOOK BACK

### 75 Years Ago December 1940

- Equity issues a preliminary report on new Sunday performances. After the Council decides to allow members to work Sunday performances, it appears that shows that were on the verge of closing begin to extend their runs — noting that the

additional day is extending performance weeks — benefiting union members.

### 50 Years Ago December 1965

- Late this month, Equity moves into its new home in the Eastern Region. Moving to 165 West 46th Street, the union makes its location change, citing

more reasonable economic purposes. At this point, the union will have the entire 13th and a small portion of the 14th floors. It's noted that the new space has six modern, high speed elevators that can climb 600 feet per minute.

- The National Council on the Arts announces the first government grants to seven projects in the arts. The sum of \$500,000 has been designated to help found three theater companies "of the highest professional quality" where theater is not readily accessible.

### 25 Years Ago December 1990

- Equity News prints, in its entirety, "A Statement of Mutual Understanding," a letter by Council laying out the specific terms and conditions to which *Miss Saigon* producer Cameron Mackintosh agreed. The letter speaks to race, diverse casting efforts, specifically the role of Kim, and the meetings the union and Mackintosh had throughout the previous few months.

### 10 Years Ago December 2005

- The Resident Musical Theatre Association Contract, or RMTA, is extended to 2009 with a significant increase in health rates, plus increases in minimum salaries. Additionally, the Musical Stock Unit Attraction Agreement, or MSUA, is approved for five years. The major goal was to maintain the Actuarial Health Rate, which was accomplished — as well as increases in minimum salaries.

## The Actors Fund and Career Transition for Dancers Merge Services

The boards of The Actors Fund and Career Transition for Dancers (CTFD) announced a merger recently of the two nonprofit human services organizations. CTFD's operations will be fully integrated into The Fund's facilities in Chicago, New York and Los Angeles at the end of the year.

"The Actors Fund also helps dancers and we pride ourselves on responding to their unique needs," said Equity member and Actors Fund Trustee Bebe Neuwirth. "In working together,

both organizations will be better positioned to help more dancers across the country to thrive during all phases of their careers."

The Fund, which shares a mission of providing programs and services to dancers and the dance community, will integrate the services of CTFD into the ongoing programs of The Actors Fund, such as the Dancers' Resource and The Career Center at The Actors Fund.

Additionally, The Actors Fund Work Program has a new

name. Now known as The Career Center at The Actors Fund, the new name is intended to reflect the full scope of activities, programs and services available to Equity members.

The Center is meant to assist those in the industry in identifying and finding meaningful sideline employment or a new career through one-on-one counseling, seminars, workshops and panel discussions.

For more information, visit [actorsfund.org](http://actorsfund.org).

## Arthur French Awarded 2015 Paul Robeson Citation

Actors' Equity member Arthur French was awarded the 2015 Paul Robeson Citation, presented by the Equity Foundation on October 16, 2015, in New York City.

"I remember how I got my Equity card," French said. "During my first show, *Raisin' Hell to the Son*, the director said to me, 'You have to join Equity.' I walked down every block and looked at the marquees. I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. But when he said that, 'you have to sign a contract,' it was clear for

me. I knew then, that this is where I wanted to be. Equity's been good to me. I'm so happy to be here among so many members."

Created in 1971, the award honors individuals or organizations that best exemplify and practice the principles to which 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

(continued on page 6)

# Equity Members Help Set New Fundraising Record at Broadway Flea Market & Grand Auction



1 Broadway fans celebrated the 29th Annual Broadway Flea Market & Grand Auction

by bidding on and buying everything from tickets to a bevy of opening night performances to custom-made music mixes, from autographed musical phrases to once-in-a-lifetime theatrical experiences.

The result: a record \$756,655 was raised for Broadway

Among the show tables offering one-of-a-kind memorabilia, including



2

costume pieces, vintage Playbills and show posters,



3

Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. The biggest day of the year for Broadway fans brought

CDs and specialty items made by the cast members themselves were the



4

hundreds of Equity members and thousands of other theater lovers into Times Square, Shubert Alley and onto West 44th Street this fall. They were greeted by a record 74 tables full of Broadway treasures and 68 of Broadway's brightest stars at the "autograph table" and photo booth. In addition, more than 200 auction lots were offered in live and silent auctions throughout the day.

companies of *An American in Paris* (1), *Beautiful - The Carole King Musical* (2), *The Book of Mormon* (3), as well as long-running tables from Actors' Equity (4) and the Stage Managers Association, both now part of the Flea Market for more than 25 years. In all, 74 tables representing Broadway and Off-Broadway shows, as well as theater owners, management offices,

unions and guilds and many other organizations within the Broadway community raised \$385,915. The top five tables raising the most money were *Hamilton* with \$22,624 (5), *Wicked* with \$21,916, TDF's annual "Pik-a-Tik" with \$15,212, Creative Goods Merchandise with \$13,745 and *Finding Neverland* with \$13,434.

Bryan Batt and Broadway Cares' esteemed auctioneer Lorna Kelly again entertainingly handled hosting duties for the live auction, which raised a record \$295,500. The top-selling lot of the day left its winning bidder saying "yeah" to an appearance onstage in *Kinky Boots*, which raised \$13,000.

VIP tickets and an exclusive meet-and-greet at *Hand to God* was auctioned off by the show's Tony Award-nominated star Steven Boyer and his ever-present, foul-mouthed sidekick Tyrone, as well as backstage experiences at 18 other shows, including three opportunities at this season's smash hit, *Hamilton*. Earlier in the day, Equity

members Stephen Wallem and Kirsten Wyatt co-hosted the silent auction, which raised \$75,240.

The Broadway Flea Market & Grand Auction was born in

The 29 editions of the Broadway Flea Market & Grand Auction have raised a grand total of \$11.8 million for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and has become a



5

1986 when the company of *A Chorus Line* sold items on two tables outside their stage door in Shubert Alley. In 1987 a number of other shows joined them and raised \$12,000 to benefit Equity Fights AIDS.

cherished tradition of the Broadway theater community each fall.

For a full story, photos and video, visit [broadwaycares.org/fleamarket2015](http://broadwaycares.org/fleamarket2015).

Actors' Equity wants to better understand its membership so that broad services can be created that benefit all members. To do that, we'd like your help. Take a moment to log on to the Member Portal ([members.actorsequity.org](http://members.actorsequity.org)) and visit your profile, where you can provide information about yourself, including your cultural background/ethnicity and/or any disability. **Please note: This is strictly for internal use and will not be shared with employers.**

## Arthur French

(continued from page 5)

of the individual and concern for and service to all humans of any race or nationality.

French has been a working actor for more than 50 years, from his early work with the Negro Ensemble Company to his most recent appearance on Broadway in *The Trip to Bountiful* (2013). For his extensive body of work Off-Broadway, he received an Obie Award for "Sustained Excellence" in 1997. In 2006, he received the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Featured Actor in August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*. He's also appeared in productions of *Dividing the Estate*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The River Niger*, *The Iceman Cometh* and *Ain't Supposed to Die a Natural Death*, among others.

In addition, he has worked on the road, been on the faculty of HB Studios and has volunteered at senior centers.

Previous recipients of the Paul Robeson Citation include: Paul Robeson; Maya Angelou;



Paul Robeson Citation winner Arthur French along with Councillor Julia Breanetta Simpson.

Harry Belafonte; Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee; James Earl Jones; Athol Fugard; Lena Horne; Joseph Papp; Sidney Poitier; Pete Seeger; and, in 2014, Baayork Lee.

The Actors Equity Foundation, a philanthropic and humanitarian nonprofit

organization, was created in 1962 to aid and assist the members of the acting profession and to promote the theatre arts. It is separate from Actors' Equity Association and receives its funding from estate bequests and individual donations.

# The 2014–2015 Theatrical Season Report

## An Analysis of Employment, Earnings, Membership and Finance

### By Steven DiPaola

#### Assistant Executive Director for Finance and Administration

In 1995, Guy Pace, the executive at Actors' Equity Association then responsible for creating this report, proudly stated that earnings by the members working on Equity contracts had set a new high — \$188 million. Now, we can proudly observe that member earnings have once again established a new high — this time of more than \$367 million — almost twice as much as that milestone achieved 20 years ago. In the recently concluded 2014-2015 season, earnings under the Production contract alone exceeded the total member earnings under all contracts in that 1994-1995 season. So, after several seasons following the global economic crisis that began in 2008, when member earnings hovered around the \$330 million mark, this season they came roaring back providing a very bright spot of good news in this year's summary of employment and earnings.

Certainly, the lingering impact of the economic calamity of seven years ago still remains in certain areas. Work weeks climbed again this year, but continue to do so at a slow pace and have yet to recover all the losses suffered in the immediate aftermath of 2008. Some contracts and geographic areas are still especially negatively affected. Other areas have seen a much more robust recovery and are further removed from the difficulties of the recent past. What is clear is that there is no single storyline of continued difficulty or success coupled with optimism. There are instead many smaller storylines occupying the space between those two opposite points.

**Employment:**

This season's work week total of 294,367 (a work week is defined as one week of work by one member) represents the highest level of employment since the fall-off that occurred following the so-called Great Recession that began in 2008. It represents a small and yet hopeful step back to the level of 300,000 work weeks that had been attained prior to the recession. As work weeks have remained stable over the past four seasons, so too have the number of individual members who found work in our jurisdiction and the average number of weeks worked per member. An additional 190 members worked on an Equity contract this season, and since

Season	2014-15		2013-14		2012-13		2011-12	
<b>Table 1 Employment Summary</b>								
<b>SEASONAL TOTALS:</b>								
<b>Members Working, Per Season</b>	17,712		17,522		17,532		17,446	
Average Weeks Worked	16.6		16.7		16.7		16.1	
% Employed	41.8%		41.3%		40.3%		42.6%	
<b>Total Work Weeks</b>	294,367		292,712		292,273		281,614	
Eastern Weeks	197,731	67.2%	196,712	67.2%	193,729	66.3%	188,503	66.9%
Central Weeks	47,295	16.1%	45,373	15.5%	44,515	15.2%	42,438	15.1%
Western Weeks	49,341	16.8%	50,627	17.3%	54,029	18.5%	50,673	18.0%
Principal Weeks	178,130	60.5%	180,603	61.7%	181,232	62.0%	169,446	60.2%
Chorus Weeks	69,711	23.7%	64,882	22.2%	65,506	22.4%	67,595	24.0%
Stage Manager Weeks	46,526	15.8%	47,227	16.1%	45,535	15.6%	44,573	15.8%
<b>AVERAGE WEEKLY TOTALS:</b>								
<b>Members Working</b>	5,661		5,629		5,621		5,416	
% Employed	13.3%		13.3%		12.9%		13.2%	
Eastern	3,803		3,783		3,726		3,625	
Central	910		873		856		816	
Western	949		974		1,039		974	
Principals	3,426		3,473		3,485		3,259	
Chorus	1,341		1,248		1,260		1,300	
Stage Managers	895		908		876		857	

the work week number increased only modestly, the number of average weeks worked by each member decreased fractionally.

While the number of work weeks over the past four seasons has traveled within a narrow range of only about 13,000 work weeks, as the middle part of Table 1 illustrates, there has been more notable movement within work weeks, regionally. Eastern work weeks have increased over the past four seasons by 4.9%, a rate a bit higher than the overall total. Central work weeks have grown at a rate of 11.4% over the past four seasons, more than twice the overall rate. Western work weeks have shrunk a bit over the same four seasons by a rate of about 2.6%, so that now Central and Western work weeks come close to evenly sharing the work weeks not occurring in the Eastern region, where more than 2/3 of the employment occurs.

Further on down the table, we can see that Principal work weeks shrunk a bit from last season, as did Stage Manager work weeks, while Chorus work

weeks grew a bit. However, over the four-season range, these distributions have remained fairly consistent and they are largely a function of the material that is being produced.

The lower third of Table 1 displays some average weekly totals. This season, about 245 more members were employed in an average week than four seasons ago, a number that closely tracks the growth in the number of members working throughout the season over that same time period. Since the overall number of members has grown over four years, despite the growth in the weekly average, working members continue to represent just a little more than 13% of the entire membership. However, reflective of the regional work week distributions discussed above, we can see that over the four seasons there are almost 200 more members working in the East during an average week, and nearly 100 more employed members in the Central region each week. In the Western region, the number of members working each week declined slightly over the four seasons.

Finally, there are more people employed in all three work categories each week than four seasons ago.

As noted above, while work weeks overall have increased modestly over the past four seasons, there have been more significant movements within the individual regions. Charts 2A, B and C give a closer view of those movements over a broader period of time.

It's clear that all three regions saw peak employment right around the 2007-2008 season, when overall work weeks hit their highest level in the history of the union: 314,681. The recession began during the 2008-2009 season

and all three regions experienced a drop in employment, but from there the employment stories of each region diverge. In the first full season after the downturn, the Eastern region suffered an even more precipitous fall-off in employment, experiencing a 5% decline in work weeks over the two seasons. But employment bottomed out in that second season, and from that period, there has been a consistent increase in employment, modest and tentative at first, but very strong over the past three seasons, so that this season Eastern work weeks exceeded the 2007-2008 level and have set a new high.

**Chart 2A, Eastern Region Work Weeks**

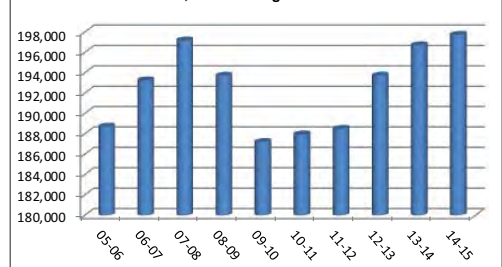


Chart 2B, Central Region Work Weeks

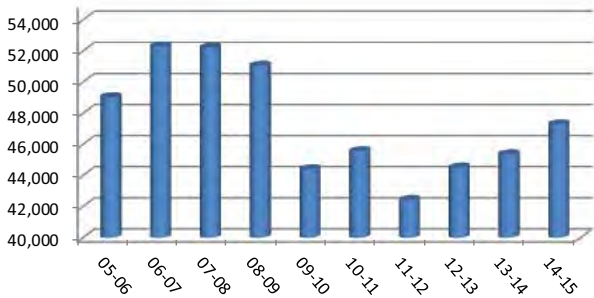
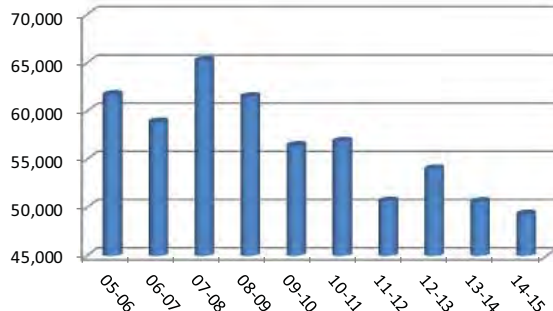


Chart 2C, Western Region Work Weeks



In the first season of the decline, the Central region had a small drop-off in work weeks, but suffered a far steeper fall in the second season, losing 15% of its work weeks. Employment in that region hadn't yet hit bottom, though. After a modest recovery in the next season, work weeks fell substantially again and established a new bottom. The region's employment was 19% off its high at that time. Since that 2011-2012 season, there has been a steady rate of growth, though, and while Central work weeks are still off their high, about half of the lost employment has been recovered and a consistent upward trajectory seems to have been established.

Like the other two regions, the Western region experienced two seasons of declining employment with the downturn, and like the Central region, experienced a small recovery in the third season, only to be followed by another steep drop-off in the fourth season. By that 2011-2012 season, the Western region had experienced a 22% drop in work weeks. However, that still wasn't the bottom and after a nice increase in the 2012-2013 season, work weeks dropped again in the subsequent two seasons. At this point, the region has had a 24% drop-off in employment since its high prior to the downturn. Clearly, there are theatre centers around the region that are still trying to make the necessary adjustments to the new economic realities brought about by the deep recession, and the stories of these cities' struggles have been documented in the news over that time. All business, theatre included, has struggled.

Table 3 breaks down this season's 294,367 work weeks by contract type in each region. For comparison purposes, it also displays the same totals for the previous four seasons.

As is always the case, the Production contract is the largest source of employment, accounting for nearly 1/4 of all the work in Equity's jurisdiction this season. Likewise, because of its use on Broadway in New York, the Production contract is the largest employer in the

East, accounting for 35% of the region's work weeks. The second largest source of employment in the Eastern region is the LORT contract, where 15% of the work weeks occurred this season. So, combined, 50% of the work in the Eastern region came from the Production and LORT contracts.

The LORT contract is the largest source of employment in both the Central and Western regions, where it made up 20% and 36% of the work weeks, respectively. With its 19.5% share of all work in Equity's

jurisdiction, the LORT contract, when combined with the Production contract, provided more than 44% of all the work in Equity's jurisdiction this season.

The Production and LORT contracts will be examined more closely later, but it's valuable to identify the other significant employment drivers in each region. After the Production and LORT contracts, the next largest sources of Eastern employment in order are the Disney World, Small Professional Theatre and Off-Broadway contracts. These

three contracts provided more than 43,000 work weeks in the Eastern region this season. As Table 3 clearly illustrates, the Disney World contract has provided a stable source of employment for Equity members over the past five seasons. Off-Broadway, while falling off a bit this season from last season, remained strong and seems to have recovered from the huge employment losses that occurred in that area due to real estate and economic issues in New York City in the early 2000s.

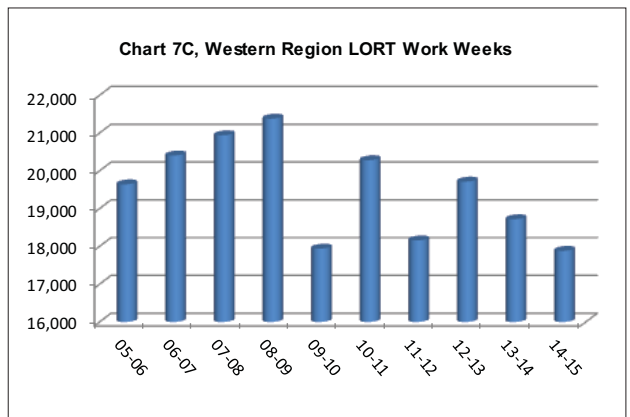
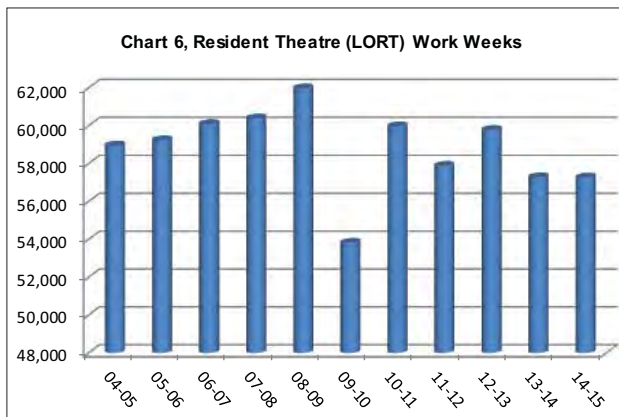
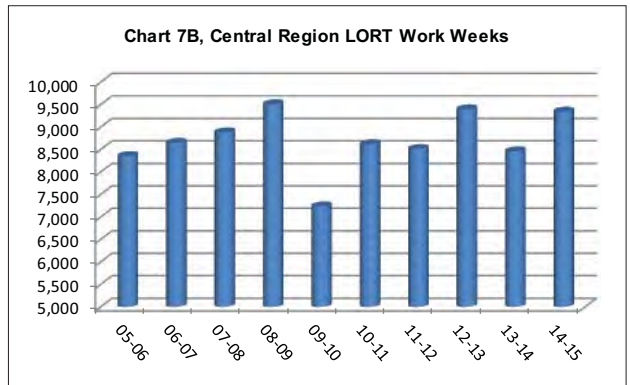
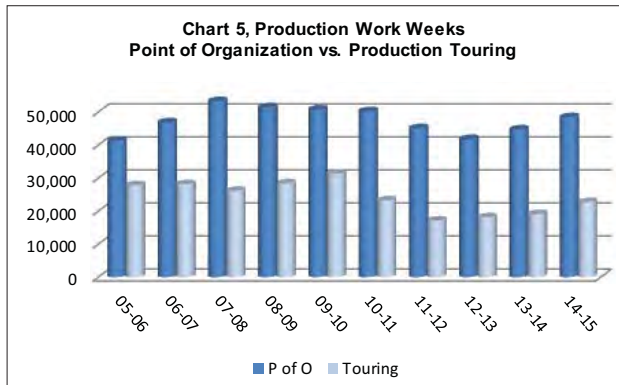
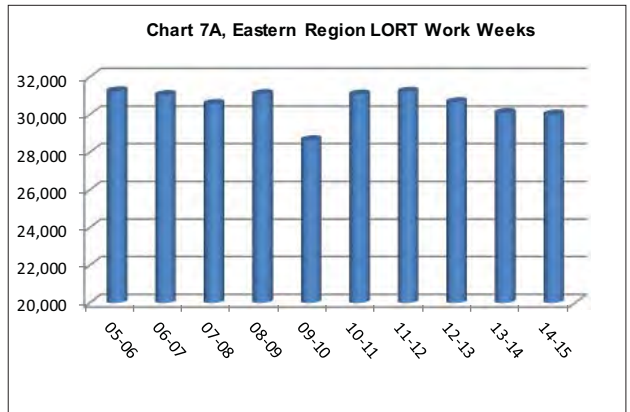
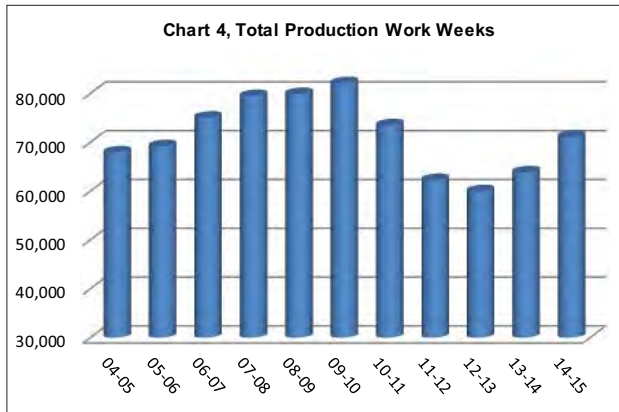
In the Central region, the

importance of the Chicago Area Theatre (CAT) contract cannot be overestimated. With 8,070 work weeks this season, it is not far behind LORT, accounting for 17% of the employment in that region and has been a large and consistent source of employment for the past five seasons. Finally, the Small Professional Theatre contract is also important to the Central region with its 7,280 work weeks. So, the LORT, CAT and the Small Professional Theatre contracts were the source of more than 50% of the employment in the Central

Table 3, 2014 - 2015 Season Work Weeks By Region, Contract Type and Job Category

	2014-15				% of Total	2013-14 Total	2012-13 Total	2011-12 Total	2010-11 Total
	Eastern	Central	Western	Total					
<b>Production</b>	<b>69,063</b>	<b>3,665</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>72,953</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>64,708</b>	<b>60,737</b>	<b>62,273</b>	<b>73,505</b>
Point of Organization	48,430			48,430	16.5%	44,749	41,841	45,131	50,243
Tiered Tours	5,771			5,771	2.0%	2,342	5,904	5,550	8,207
Full Tours	13,088	3,665	225	16,978	5.8%	16,759	12,242	11,592	15,055
Developmental Lab	1,774			1,774	0.6%	858	750		
<b>Resident Theatre (LORT)</b>	<b>30,018</b>	<b>9,374</b>	<b>17,882</b>	<b>57,274</b>	<b>19.5%</b>	<b>57,288</b>	<b>59,785</b>	<b>57,898</b>	<b>59,982</b>
LORT Rep	2,147	383	3,526	6,056	2.1%	6,208	6,454	7,416	6,993
LORT Non-Rep	27,871	8,991	14,356	51,218	17.4%	51,080	53,331	50,482	52,989
Small Professional Theatre	13,734	7,280	8,101	29,115	9.9%	27,266	27,481	25,195	20,426
Letter of Agreement	9,382	3,630	6,902	19,914	6.8%	20,214	20,624	19,844	25,690
Short Engagement Touring (SETA)	6,255			6,255	2.1%	11,500	14,344	12,714	5,260
<b>Stock</b>	<b>5,391</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>7,396</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>7,695</b>	<b>7,600</b>	<b>7,619</b>	<b>8,488</b>
COST	3,266	192	464	3,922	1.3%	3,223	2,938	2,518	2,220
COST Special	291			291	0.1%	294	310	660	1,413
CORST	1,526	167		1,693	0.6%	2,020	2,378	2,306	2,435
MSUA		699	161	860	0.3%	1,332	1,299	1,457	1,525
RMTA	308		322	630	0.2%	826	675	678	852
Outdoor Drama									43
Special Agreements	4,021	4,823	2,863	11,707	4.0%	10,039	11,822	11,701	12,028
Young Audiences (TYA)	5,069	1,315	1,528	7,912	2.7%	8,052	8,445	7,826	9,146
Cabaret	1,506		158	1,664	0.6%	2,338	2,637	3,561	3,297
Guest Artist	3,907	809	2,093	6,809	2.3%	7,824	7,527	6,607	6,761
Special Appearance	4,345	1,558	2,379	8,282	2.8%	8,089	7,945	7,176	6,861
University Theatre (URTA)	1,288	632	382	2,302	0.8%	2,345	2,351	2,023	2,195
Dinner Theatre	1,188	4,502		5,690	1.9%	5,688	1,793	3,275	3,884
Dinner Theatre Artist	30	28	162	220	0.1%	301	289	168	106
Casino		43	1,569	1,612	0.5%	2,278	4,010	3,934	5,139
Midsize	76	41	175	292	0.1%	169	289	418	353
Special Production						3	3	41	227
Business Theatre	447	57	24	528	0.2%	259	457	308	232
Workshop	207			207	0.1%	355	333	230	140
Staged Reading	780			780		348	83		
Off-Broadway (NYC)	12,634			12,634	4.3%	15,351	12,656	11,872	9,420
NYC/LOA	3,400			3,400	1.2%	3,483	3,779	2,559	3,205
Mini (NYC)	1,391			1,391	0.5%	1,351	757	857	1,066
ANTC	2,832			2,832	1.0%	2,760	3,272	2,448	1,955
Transition	902			902	0.3%	1,136	951	812	621
New England Area Theatre (NEAT)	2,651			2,651	0.9%	2,540	2,343	2,377	2,668
Disney World	16,801			16,801	5.7%	16,974	17,115	16,691	16,278
Orlando Area Theatre (OAT)	413			413	0.1%	457	409	299	268
New Orleans Area (NOLA)		410		410	0.1%	371	302	330	385
Chicago Area (CAT)		8,070		8,070	2.7%	7,844	8,228	6,920	7,438
Western Light Opera (WCLO)			1,284	1,284	0.4%	1,264	1,127	1,539	1,324
Hollywood Area (HAT)			345	345	0.1%	229	953	297	370
San Francisco Bay Area (BAT)			1,839	1,839	0.6%	1,833	1,440	1,478	1,290
Urban Broadway Series (UBS)								72	
Modified Bay Area Theatre (MBAT)				483	0.2%	360	386	252	402
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>197,731</b>	<b>47,295</b>	<b>49,341</b>	<b>294,367</b>		<b>292,712</b>	<b>292,273</b>	<b>281,614</b>	<b>290,410</b>





region. The Small Professional Theatre contract is once again important in the Western region. With its 8,101 work weeks this season, it was the second largest source of employment, and rose by almost 8% over the previous season. Though far behind LORT, it still accounted

for 16% of the work weeks in the West. As noted earlier, the Production contract was — and has continued to be — the largest source of employment in Equity’s jurisdiction. Chart 4 illustrates employment levels on that contract over the past ten seasons.

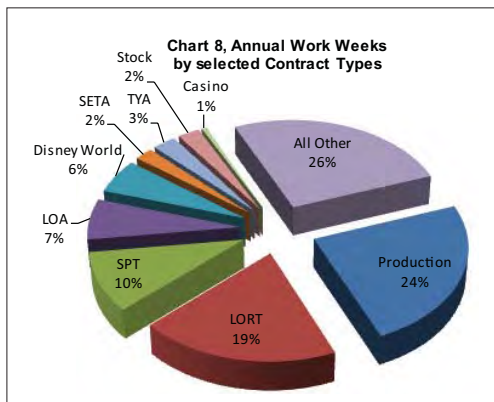
Production work weeks had their own falling off after the downturn, but as the chart shows, it occurred about two years after the recession began, likely caused by the timetable for bringing a Production contract show to fruition. After establishing levels of around 80,000 work weeks for three seasons, there was a steep decline over the next three seasons when work weeks fell by about 27%. However, there has been a nice recovery over the past two seasons, and this season’s work week total is the highest since the 2010-2011 season and represents an increase of more than 11% over last season.

Production work weeks are made up of two components: point of organization work weeks, or those for productions that “sit” in New York (on Broadway), Chicago or Los Angeles; and touring work

weeks, for shows that normally are first produced on Broadway and then create separate companies to travel to various cities around the country.

Chart 5 breaks down the work weeks displayed in Chart 4 into their point of organizing and touring components. This chart shows that while both components fell after the downturn, the fall in the touring component was far more

significant, likely because of two factors: the expense of touring, and the more profound impact of the downturn on the cities to which tours commonly travel. However, it’s interesting to note that the touring component began to recover lost work weeks one season prior to the point of organization component, and over last season production touring work weeks were up a very strong



**Table 10**  
**Seasonal Earnings Summary**

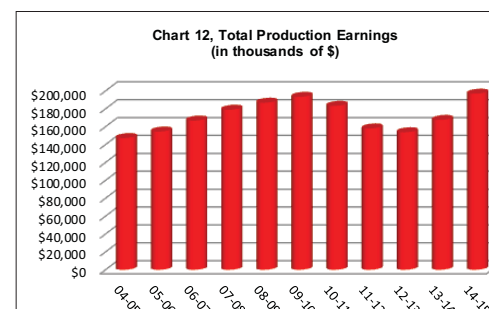
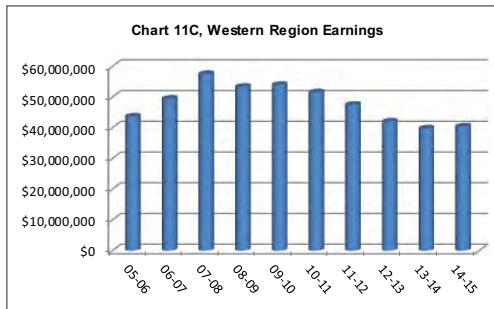
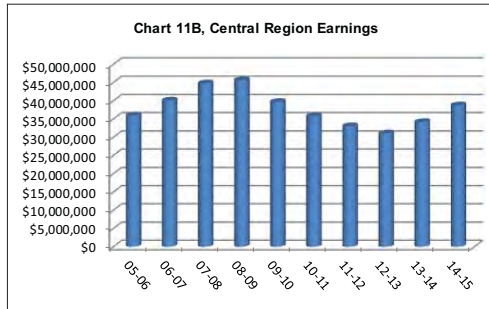
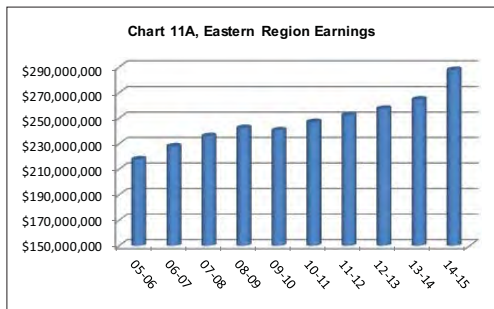
Season	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
<b>Total Seasonal Earnings</b>	<b>\$367,053,644</b>	<b>\$338,681,573</b>	<b>\$330,590,097</b>	<b>\$333,031,199</b>
Median Member Earnings	\$7,548	\$7,463	\$7,100	\$7,256
Eastern Earnings	\$287,828,784 <b>78.4%</b>	\$264,643,519 <b>78.1%</b>	\$257,431,938 <b>77.9%</b>	\$252,426,578 <b>75.8%</b>
Central Earnings	\$38,791,165 <b>10.6%</b>	\$34,220,503 <b>10.1%</b>	\$31,094,902 <b>9.4%</b>	\$33,088,312 <b>9.9%</b>
Western Earnings	\$40,433,695 <b>11.0%</b>	\$39,817,551 <b>11.8%</b>	\$42,063,257 <b>12.7%</b>	\$47,516,309 <b>14.3%</b>

rebound and returned to a level just about equivalent to where they were in the 2007-2008 season. This season, they had an even bigger bounce, increasing by 8.4% to just over \$367 million — the highest level ever and surpassing the previous all-time high (established in the 2008-2009 season) by more than \$25 million. So, while employment is recovering slowly, member earnings seem to have come back more strongly.

Table 10 shows some earnings facts over the most recent four seasons. As you can see, median earnings for a member employed in Equity's jurisdiction this season stood at \$7,548. The median is thought to be more statistically relevant than the average, which would be skewed higher by salaries at the upper levels. The preponderance of member earnings — like work weeks — occurs in the Eastern region, largely driven by the Production contract on Broadway; as the table shows the concentration of earnings in the Eastern region has increased over the four years. The concentration of earnings in the Central region has likewise grown, while it has decreased in the Western region.

Charts 11A, B and C delve deeper into regional earnings over the past ten seasons. While the Eastern region had a slight drop-off of less than 1% after the recession began, those lost earnings were recovered and built upon in the ensuing years, establishing new all-time highs in each season from 2010-2011 on. This season's increase of 8.8% is especially large and mirrors the increase in overall earnings. Over the 10-season period, Eastern earnings have increased by about \$70 million, or 32%.

The Central region saw a much larger drop in earnings than the East, equivalent to about 13% in the first full season after the recession began, but unlike the Eastern region, earnings continued to decline for another three seasons before beginning to rise again last season. They rose once again this season by about 13.4% so that over the



19%. Looking now to LORT work weeks, they have remained at levels within a fairly narrow range over the past 10 seasons, and were virtually identical this season compared to last season.

As Chart 6 illustrates, with the exception of one outlier season (2009-2010, following the beginning of the recession), work weeks under LORT have been between about 57,000 and 62,000, but they have been consistently below their earlier highs for the past several seasons.

Looking at LORT regionally in Charts 7A, B and C, all three regions saw a big decline after the 2008-2009 season, but it was far less significant in the Eastern region than in the other two regions. There have been small declines in LORT work weeks in the Eastern region over the past three seasons, but only a cumulative decline of about 4%. In the Central region, after a decline last season, LORT work weeks returned to a nearly identical level as in the 2012-2013 season — which was its second highest total in the decade. In the Western

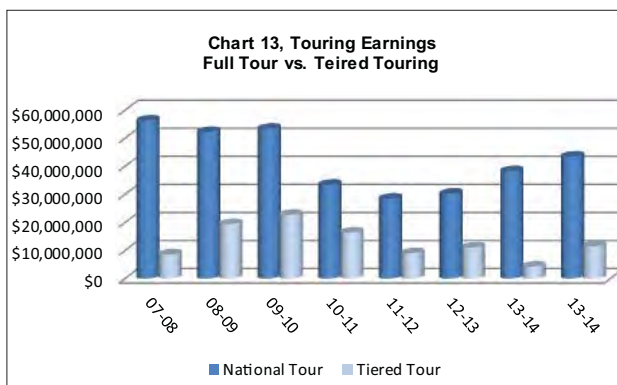
region, LORT work weeks have been more inconsistent, and have fallen about 9% over the past two seasons to their lowest level in the 10-season period. These declines in Western LORT work weeks have been a significant contributor to the decline in Western employment overall.

As seen earlier in Table 3, there are dozens of Equity contracts under which the 17,712 members found employment this season. As also noted earlier, there are several contracts — such as

Off-Broadway and CAT — that are especially important sources of work in individual regions/cities. As Chart 8 illustrates, however, about 75% of all Equity employment is concentrated in just nine contracts.

**Earnings:**

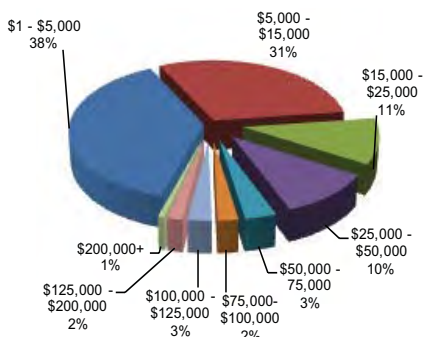
Like work weeks, member earnings fell following the recession, but not as significantly. Then for four seasons, earnings remained virtually stagnant. However, last season, they saw a nice



**Table 15**  
Seasonal Earnings, 2014-15  
by Region & Contract Type

	Earnings						Total	% of Total
	Eastern	%	Central	%	Western	%		
<b>Production</b>	<b>\$186,492,368.98</b>	<b>64.8%</b>	<b>\$9,303,071.33</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	<b>\$978,374.09</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>\$196,773,814.40</b>	<b>53.61%</b>
Point of Organization	\$140,179,799.47	48.7%					\$140,179,799.47	38.19%
Tiered Tours	\$11,539,184.86	4.0%					\$11,539,184.86	3.14%
Full Tours	\$33,156,094.81	11.5%	\$9,303,071.33	24.0%	\$978,374.09	2.4%	\$43,437,540.23	11.83%
Developmental Lab	\$1,617,289.84	0.6%					\$1,617,289.84	0.44%
<b>Resident Theatres (LORT)</b>	<b>\$30,523,537.12</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>\$8,737,274.03</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>\$18,046,458.17</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>\$57,307,269.32</b>	<b>15.61%</b>
LORT Rep	\$1,724,145.17	0.6%	\$307,625.68	0.8%	\$4,886,688.31	12.1%	\$6,918,459.16	1.88%
LORT Non-Rep	\$28,799,391.95	10.0%	\$8,429,648.35	21.7%	\$13,159,769.86	32.5%	\$50,388,810.16	13.73%
Small Professional Theatre (SPT)	\$7,125,568.64	2.5%	\$3,432,496.77	8.8%	\$3,799,979.35	9.4%	\$14,358,044.76	3.91%
Letter of Agreement (LOA)	\$5,695,137.61	2.0%	\$2,357,023.46	6.1%	\$3,760,801.26	9.3%	\$11,812,962.33	3.22%
<b>Short Engagement Touring (SETA)</b>	<b>\$10,510,118.66</b>	<b>3.7%</b>					<b>\$10,510,118.66</b>	<b>2.86%</b>
Stock			\$951,685.20	2.5%			\$951,685.20	0.26%
COST	\$2,741,776.61	1.0%	\$177,395.93	0.5%	\$415,849.58	1.0%	\$3,335,022.12	0.91%
COST Special	\$222,637.96	0.1%					\$222,637.96	0.06%
CORST	\$1,140,542.00	0.4%	\$123,992.33	0.3%			\$1,264,534.33	0.34%
MSUA			\$650,296.94	1.7%	\$247,044.30	0.6%	\$897,341.24	0.24%
RMTA	\$419,849.47	0.1%			\$384,996.85	1.0%	\$804,846.32	0.22%
Special Agreements	\$3,747,764.57	1.3%	\$3,204,565.57	8.3%	\$2,625,485.85	6.5%	\$9,577,815.99	2.61%
Young Audiences (TYA)	\$2,142,482.32	0.7%	\$740,249.84	1.9%	\$811,104.85	2.0%	\$3,693,837.01	1.01%
Cabaret	\$1,108,987.39	0.4%			\$155,367.66	0.4%	\$1,264,355.05	0.34%
Guest Artist	\$1,901,666.13	0.7%	\$371,015.39	1.0%	\$956,631.64	2.4%	\$3,229,313.16	0.88%
Special Appearance	\$1,329,117.69	0.5%	\$459,078.61	1.2%	\$662,612.66	1.6%	\$2,450,808.96	0.67%
University Theatre (URTA)	\$1,393,835.41	0.5%	\$475,836.92	1.2%	\$296,520.33	0.7%	\$2,166,192.66	0.59%
Dinner Theatre	\$982,158.84	0.3%	\$3,663,614.65	9.4%			\$4,645,773.49	1.27%
Dinner Theatre Artist	\$21,137.00	0.0%	\$10,820.00	0.0%	\$128,977.00	0.3%	\$160,934.00	0.04%
Casino			\$40,333.00	0.1%	\$4,316,797.19	10.7%	\$4,357,130.19	1.19%
Midsize	\$106,150.00	0.0%	\$32,243.39	0.1%	\$138,052.34	0.3%	\$276,445.73	0.08%
Special Production								
Business Theatre	\$434,275.79	0.2%	\$70,441.06	0.2%	\$40,876.00	0.1%	\$545,592.85	0.15%
Workshop	\$163,518.00	0.1%					\$163,518.00	0.04%
Staged Reading	\$375,223.64	0.1%					\$375,223.64	0.10%
Royalties	\$1,761,989.08	0.6%					\$1,761,989.08	0.48%
Filming and Taping	\$151,230.67	0.1%					\$151,230.67	0.04%
Off-Broadway (NYC)	\$8,216,998.52	2.9%					\$8,216,998.52	2.24%
NYC-LOA	\$1,261,214.85	0.4%					\$1,261,214.85	0.34%
Mini (NYC)	\$644,457.46	0.2%					\$644,457.46	0.18%
ANTC	\$1,616,521.28	0.6%					\$1,616,521.28	0.44%
Transition	\$272,911.59	0.1%					\$272,911.59	0.07%
New England Area (NEAT)	\$1,094,793.56	0.4%					\$1,094,793.56	0.30%
Disney World	\$14,106,059.47	4.9%					\$14,106,059.47	3.84%
Orlando Area (OAT)	\$124,753.50	0.0%					\$124,753.50	0.03%
New Orleans (NOLA)			\$108,304.47	0.3%			\$108,304.47	0.03%
Chicago Area (CAT)			\$4,833,111.52	12.5%			\$4,833,111.52	1.32%
Western Light Opera (WCLO)					\$1,428,555.66	3.5%	\$1,428,555.66	0.39%
Hollywood Area (HAT)					\$137,783.39	0.3%	\$137,783.39	0.04%
San Francisco Bay Area (BAT)					\$986,693.82	2.4%	\$986,693.82	0.27%
Urban Broadway Series (UBS)								
Modified Bay Area Theatre (MBAT)					\$114,732.70	0.3%	\$114,732.70	0.03%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$287,828,783.81</b>		<b>\$38,791,165.21</b>		<b>\$40,433,694.69</b>		<b>\$367,053,643.71</b>	
<i>Regional % of Total</i>	<b>78.4%</b>		<b>10.6%</b>		<b>11.0%</b>			

**Chart 16, Members with Earnings by Selected Dollar Ranges**



past two seasons, Central regional earnings have recovered about half the losses suffered after the 2008-2009 season.

Unlike the Eastern and Central regions, earnings in the Western region did not immediately drop in the first full

season after the recession began because the region had an unusually high amount of Production contract earnings that season. However, earnings then did drop for the next four seasons. Earnings in the West increased by a small amount this season — despite the drop

in Western work weeks — and hopefully it will mark the beginning of a sustained upward movement for that region since its earnings are down about 30% since establishing an all-time high in the 2007-2008 season.

As noted earlier, the

**Table 17**  
Membership Summary

Season	2014-15	2009-10	2004-05
<b>Members in Good Standing</b>	<b>42,469</b>	<b>42,475</b>	<b>39,443</b>
Eastern Region Members	26,819   <b>63.1%</b>	26,960   <b>63.5%</b>	24,610   <b>63.2%</b>
Central Region Members	4,101   <b>9.7%</b>	3,657   <b>8.6%</b>	3,329   <b>8.5%</b>
Western Region Members	11,549   <b>27.2%</b>	11,858   <b>27.9%</b>	11,504   <b>29.3%</b>
<b>New Members</b>	<b>2,088</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>2,327</b>

**Table 18,  
Race, Ethnicity and Gender, 2014-15  
Active Membership Counts**

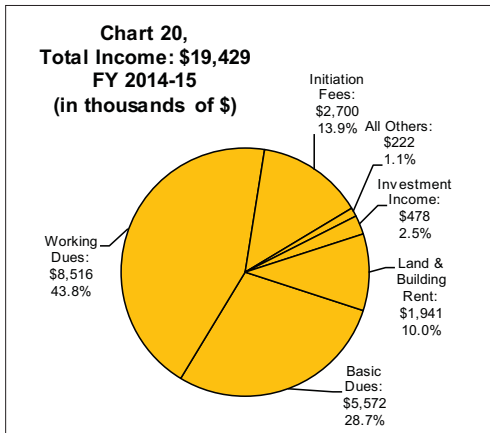
Race or Ethnicity	Male	Female	TOTALS	
<b>No Record</b>	<b>3,665</b>	<b>3,446</b>	<b>7,134</b>	<b>16.8%</b>
African American	1,394	1,326	2,720	7.7%
Asian American	343	460	803	2.3%
Caucasian	14,635	14,810	29,445	83.3%
Hispanic American	570	473	1,043	2.9%
Multi-Racial	600	671	1,271	3.6%
Pacific Islander	17	9	26	0.1%
American Indian	24	26	50	0.1%
<b>Ethnic Counts Only, Sub-Total</b>	<b>17,583</b>	<b>17,775</b>	<b>35,358</b>	
%	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>50.3%</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21,248</b>	<b>21,221</b>	<b>42,469</b>	
%	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>		

City	2014-15
New York	15,935
Los Angeles	7,013
Chicago	1,589
San Francisco	968
Washington D.C./Baltimore	854
Philadelphia	852
Boston	845
Orlando	591
Minneapolis/St. Paul	437
Seattle	397

Production contract is the largest source of Equity employment. Not surprising, then, is that it is also the largest source of earnings. This season's nearly \$197 million in earnings on the Production contract account for more than half of all member earnings. Chart 12 shows Production contract earnings over the past ten seasons. In the first six seasons of the decade, the chart shows sustained growth. In that seventh season two years after the beginning of the recession, the downward effects begin to show. (You will probably recall that Production work weeks also responded more slowly to the recession than other contract types.) During three years, beginning with the 2010-2011 season, Production earnings fell by 20%. Fortunately, after increases last season and particularly this season — when they increased by 17.5% — earnings on this contract have now set an all-time high.

Just as Production work weeks are made up of the point of organization and touring elements, so are production earnings.

More than 70% of Production earnings this year derived from point of organization shows that remained in one city — this season, all were on Broadway in New York City. However, nearly \$55 million in Production earnings this season derived from its two touring elements: full tours, and tiered tours, which are more economically viable and available for certain productions. Chart 13 shows earnings for the two Production



touring components for this season and the nine prior seasons. As we have seen so many times, the downward impact of the recession began in the 2010-2011 season, when full tour earnings fell by 37% and tiered tour earnings by 28%. The next several years were difficult ones for this segment of the Production contract, but full tour earnings have rebounded a good deal (earnings are up 44% over the past two seasons), and this season's combined earnings on the two Production touring elements were the highest since the 2009-2010 season.

Earnings under the LORT contract are the second highest source of income under Equity contracts and this season's total of more than \$57 million account for more than 15% of overall member earnings. (The Production and LORT contracts combined for just under 70% of all the earnings in Equity's jurisdiction.)

As Chart 14 shows, LORT earnings have been erratic over the past ten seasons, and while the familiar drop occurred after the recession, there have been several other peaks and valleys. The good news is that this season's tally is the second highest in the ten-year period in this very important employment

segment for Equity's members around the country.

Broadening the earnings view, Table 15 shows earnings on each contract type in each region. Not surprisingly, the Production contract is the largest center of earnings in the East with 65% of total regional earnings, followed by LORT at 10.6%. The \$14.1 million in earnings on the Disney World contract in Orlando is the third largest source of income in the East at just under 5%. The Off-Broadway contract had earnings of \$8.2 million and that was just under 3% of total earnings in the region.

In the Central region, the Production contract was the largest source of earnings this season at 24%, but this is anomalous as there was an unusual amount of activity on the Production contract in Chicago with the tours of *Book of Mormon* and *Motown, The Musical*. Generally, the largest earnings driver in the Central region is the LORT contract, but this season it was just behind Production at 22.5%. The CAT contract is a perennial earnings leader in the Central region, and its \$4.8 million in member earnings this season accounted for 12.5% of the regional total.

In the Western region, the LORT contract was far and

away the earnings leader, accounting for almost 45% of the regional total. Earnings of \$4.3 million under the Casino contract followed LORT at 10.7%, and the Small Professional Theatre contract and Letters of Agreement were just behind Casino, accounting for 9.4% and 9.3% of regional earnings, respectively.

As we've seen, there is often a link between work weeks and member earnings, but sometimes the way those overall earnings on a contract impact the individual members working on the contract can vary greatly. For example, as noted the Production and LORT contracts lead all other contracts in work weeks and earnings. The average earnings per work week for a member working on these contracts this season were \$2,697 and \$1,001, respectively. On the other hand, the Small Professional Theatre contract and the Letters of Agreement, which combined for about 49,000 work weeks and almost 17% of employment, have average earnings per work week of \$493 and \$593, respectively. Nevertheless, these contracts offer important opportunities for work to a great many Equity members, not to mention an opportunity for health care eligibility and pension credits.

Further reflecting on how overall earnings impact the individual members working in Equity's jurisdiction, Chart 16 shows what percentage of the 17,712 members who worked this season fell into nine earnings ranges. As you can see, 69% — or more than 12,000 of them — earned less than \$15,000 with 11% (1,832 members) earning greater than \$50,000.

**Membership:**

Table 17 provides a snapshot of members in good standing (those current in their basic dues) for the most recent season and the seasons five and ten years ago. Over the decade, paid membership has increased by almost 8%, a remarkable achievement given the challenges of the decade and to unions in general. Also notable is that in all three seasons more than 2,000 new members joined the union and chose to assert their professionalism by equating it with membership in a labor union. Looking at these numbers from a regional perspective, the table shows that the number of paid up members in the Eastern grew by about 9% and the number of paid up members in the Central region grew by 23%. Membership in the Western region remained relatively even over the ten-year period. As for regional distribution, the percentage of total paid members living in the Eastern region remained virtually

identical over the ten years, but a greater percentage of members now live in the Central region with a smaller percentage in the West.

Several demographic facts are shown in Table 18. The distribution of male and female members is statistically identical percentage-wise, and slightly more than 50% of females have voluntarily submitted race/ethnicity data vs. just under 50% of males. A bit more than 83% of members identify themselves as Caucasian, with those identifying as African American making up the next largest group at slightly less than 8%. By way of comparison, ten years ago the same two groups made up the largest segments, but those self-identifying as Caucasian accounted for almost 87% with African Americans at just over 6%.

The ten cities with the largest numbers of Equity members are depicted in Table 19. This list comprised the same ten cities ten years ago, but Washington DC/Baltimore and Philadelphia have exchanged positions over the decade. All ten cities have seen their populations of Equity members increase except for Los Angeles, but the city with the largest growth by far has been Washington DC/Baltimore where the member population has more than doubled.

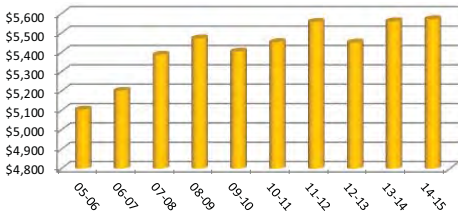
**Finance:**

The next few tables and charts provide a brief summary of the union's finances during the 2014-2015 fiscal year that began in April and concluded in March.

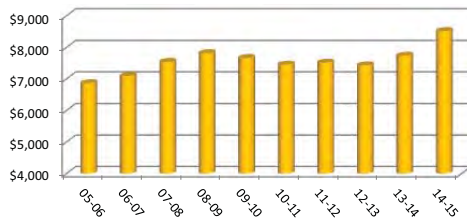
Chart 20 illustrates a breakdown of Equity's income with the largest segment by far coming from working dues — the 2.25% that Equity members pay on their first \$300,000 of gross earnings when working on an Equity contract. The second largest source of income is basic dues; all active members in good standing pay \$118 per year, accounting for this income. The third largest source of income is initiation fee; new members have a maximum of two years to pay this one-time fee of \$1,100 when joining the union. Working dues, basic dues and initiation fees have been charged at the same rates since 2002, which marked the last time that Equity asked its members to increase them despite having markedly increased services to the members over that time and battling inflationary cost increases.

Charts 21, 22 and 23 show how income from basic dues, working dues and initiation fee has changed over the past ten years. Looking first to basic dues, we see that there have been several periods of growth and overall, basic dues income has increased by 9% over the period despite the rate of \$118 remaining the same, which is

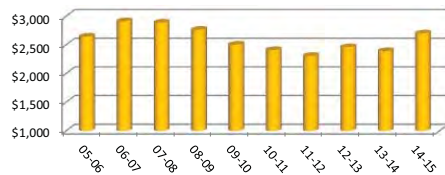
**Chart 21, Basic Dues Income**  
(in thousands of \$)



**Chart 22, Working Dues Income**  
(in thousands of \$)



**Chart 23, Initiation Fee Income**  
(in thousands of \$)



reflection of having more members now than at any other time.

Working dues income has increased by 44% over ten years, once again even though the rate of 2.25% has remained the same. This increase was caused by a growth in member earnings over the period driven primarily by successful contract negotiations by Equity. It should be noted that these earnings have increased despite the fact that work weeks this season were virtually identical to what they were ten years ago.

Finally, initiation fee income

has increased by 10% over the past decade and once again this has occurred despite the fee remaining the same. This increase can be the result of several different factors, not the least of which is the nearly 8% growth in Equity's membership over the period noted in the previous section.

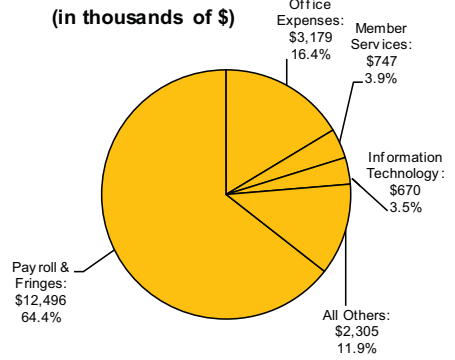
The fourth largest segment of income derives from the valuable land on which Equity's New York building stands and from the two buildings it owns in Chicago and Los Angeles. These three sources of revenue now account for 10% of overall

income. If one were to look back ten years, these four segments would have still been the top income generators, but Land and Building Rent only accounted for a little more than 4% of the total at that time. This segment of income has tripled over the ten years and has provided an important source of income from a source other than the dues and fees paid by members. Further, it has helped to keep operating costs in the form of rent in those three offices down.

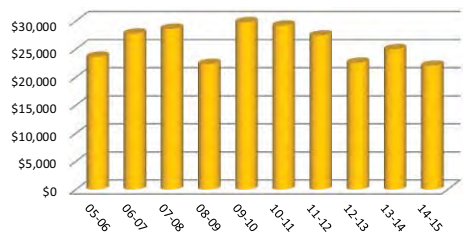
Chart 24 provides a breakdown of expenses by category. As is typical for unions, the cost of employing the staff that provides various types of member services makes up the largest segment at about 64%. Interestingly, this portion of the budget is about 1% smaller now than it was ten years ago despite salary and benefit cost increases over the years. This has been achieved through various efficiencies recognized over the decade. The growth of all expenses have been tightly managed, but even with that, total expenses have increased by 40% over the past ten years while income has increased by only 29%, accounting for the very narrow margin between total income and total expenses in the past fiscal year.

Finally, Chart 25 shows the value of the union's investment portfolio over the past ten years. A union builds a portfolio so that it can negotiate from a secure position and to protect it from unforeseen circumstances. Consistent with other trends observed throughout this report, the value of the investments fell with the recession that began in 2008, but those losses were recovered. The value of the portfolio stands at about 4.5% less than it did ten years ago, but during the decade Equity made major infrastructure upgrades in technology that have reduced operating costs while increasing our ability to analyze data. In addition, there

**Chart 24, Total Expenses: \$19,397**  
**FY 2014-15**  
(in thousands of \$)



**Chart 25, Portfolio Market Value**  
(in thousands of \$)



have been communications advances. Finally, funds were also used to buy the buildings in Chicago and Los Angeles, which decreased costs while enabling Equity to increase its member programs in those cities. The value of these two buildings and the land Equity owns in New York is not reflected in this portfolio.

In this aftermath of the 2014-2015 season, there is a great deal about which to be optimistic. Most notable is the surge in member earnings, but there is also the continued growth in Equity's membership at a time when other unions are struggling to maintain membership numbers, and the recently concluded negotiations for a new Production contract that saw important gains for the

members who will work under this contract over the next four years. As noted in this report, there are also challenges, but Actors' Equity Association looks upon those as opportunities to make further gains for the membership as it continues its work.

Special thanks are due to Joey Stamp, the Associate for Finance and Administration who compiles the enormous amount of data provided by IT Director Doug Beebe, Comptroller Joe DeMichele and Director of Membership John Fasulo into the tables and charts that make up the foundation of this analysis. Without these four individuals and the many others who support them, this report would not be possible.



# NATIONAL NEWS



**(From L to R): Councillor Kristine Nevins with panelists Jeff Williams, Dana Ivey, Victoria Clark and Mercedes Ellington along with moderator and 3rd Vice President Ira Mont.**

## New York City

### Pass It On — Actors Reflect on a Life in the Theater

After auditioning for the film version of *West Side Story*, Mercedes Ellington got a call asking whether she'd want to perform in the show *Down Under*. "So I went down to Australia. That's how I got my American Equity card, and it's been fun ever since!"

With almost 60 Broadway credits among them, a distinguished panel of longtime Equity members gathered for the second annual *Pass It On: Thriving Artists Reflect on a Life in the Theatre* in the New York Equity office. Joining Ellington on the panel were Dana Ivey, Jeff Williams and Victoria Clark. Moderated by Ira Mont and sponsored by the National EEO Committee, the discussion covered the many aspects of a long theatrical career — from getting a start and managing the rough times to developing as a performer as one ages.

"Between contracts I teach," said Clark. "It's my passion to share with younger people and my peers. I'm several colleagues' secret voice teacher."

Williams, on the other hand, has a more traditional fallback. "I've had the same restaurant job since the '80s," he said. "They let me come and go as I work. I say I take a pay cut when I work on Broadway."

One of the hardest times in Clark's career was during *Sister Act*. "No one prepared me for what menopause does to your voice. It was like going a hundred miles an hour and hitting a brick wall. People don't talk about it. Sometimes I would open my mouth and James Earl Jones' voice would come out."

When asked how to handle the very different lifestyle acting requires compared to the lives of friends and family, Ivey

acknowledged how difficult, yet rewarding an actor's life can be. "You have to have a real fire in your belly," she said. "It can be very lonely to choose this, but the work is the glory when I get to do the thing I love so much."

"One of the most important things about longevity is versatility," Clark said. "If one thing isn't working, it's imperative to adapt and grow."

Ellington agreed. "If nobody's calling you, make it yourself. Somebody somewhere is going to buy."



**The ensemble of *Changing the Stats: Asian Americans on Broadway*.**

## New York City

### Changing the Stats: Asian Americans on Broadway

In a rendition of "We Can Do It," a hilarious number from *The Producers*, Max Bialystock (played by Herman Sebek) encourages Leo Bloom (Raymond J. Lee) to join him in his rather groundbreaking producing scheme.

Picture it: "A hit show with Asians in it. Something new and innovative — hardly ever seen.



Photo: Don Warnock

## New England

### Welcoming Two Artistic Directors to the Northeast

**By Donna Maria Sorbello, Equity and New England Liaison Committee member**

The annual New England Equity meeting was held October 26, 2015, at Central Square Theater in Cambridge, MA. At the helm was Liaison Committee Chair Michael Dell'Orto.

The well-attended meeting welcomed Tom Carpenter, Eastern Regional Director, Assistant Executive Director, General Counsel; and Melissa Robinette, Eastern Regional Vice President, who spoke about both local and national issues, such as her participation in the recent FIA (International Federation of Actors) conference. Hope Bowman, Business Representative for NEAT and SPT contracts in the Northeast, joined her colleagues to address questions regarding local contracts. With several stage managers present, a consensus by the group

indicated that the compensation offered in the "extra duties" riders in NEAT was now fairly consistent across theaters. Bowman congratulated stage managers for standing together to insure that parity and urged them to keep her office informed of any further issues.

The highlight of the meeting proved to be the presence of two guest speakers: the new Artistic Director of Merrimack Repertory Theatre (MRT), Sean Daniels, and Gloucester Stage Company's AD, Robert Walsh. Walsh is well-known in the Boston theater scene as an actor and director, as Artistic Director of the Actors' Shakespeare Project, Producing Artistic Director of American Stage Festival and as a member of the faculty of the Brandeis Theater Department. Walsh is looking forward to continuing the tradition of GSC's original mission: being "a safe harbor for playwrights and new plays." Walsh stated that he intends to continue this season's practice

of engaging new artists at GSC and bringing back alumni.

Daniels hails from Geva Theatre in Rochester, New York; California Shakespeare Company; Dad's Garage Theatre in Atlanta of which he was co-founder; and most recently from Actors Theatre of Louisville, where he was an associate artistic director. Daniels became particularly interested in MRT when he attended a performance and saw the investment of the audience. In his, thus far, short tenure at MRT, he has developed the "Cohorts Club" — an idea he originated at Geva — which is meant to engage members of the audience in the theater process. He's introduced free babysitting during performances and has established the "Patriots Program," an association of 60 theater artists from New England and beyond, whom he hopes to bring to the theater for various projects. He has already brought artists together for readings of new works, with an eye for development.

Equity attendees were especially eager to hear that both artistic directors intend to seek out talented New England area members. This was welcome news to an audience of local actors who, though the landscape has changed in their favor in the past several years, find that there are still mid and large-size New England theaters that opt to audition and cast out-of-state actors in many roles. New England members left the meeting feeling encouraged by new possibilities in the local theater scene.

theater dream roles.

"As national chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee," said Equity Councillor Christine Toy Johnson,

"I'm so proud of the many ways that Actors' Equity Association stands up for the inclusion of all our members in the American landscape of storytelling — and tonight's concert of dream roles not traditionally cast with Asian American actors was a true celebration and extension of our tenacity in achieving more and more."

Iconic characters such as the exuberant Rose from *Gypsy* (Ann Harada), brooding Bobby from

*Company* (Jose Llana), elegant Margaret from *The Light in the Piazza* (Johnson) and the tantalizing Ulla from *The Producers* (Emily Hsu) were

showcased in front of a sold-out house at the Leonard Nimoy Thalia at Peter Norton Symphony Space in New York City.

The actors, accompanied by Ming Aldrich-Gan on piano and Joshua Samuels on percussion and directed and choreographed by Rommy Sandhu and Marc Oka as well as Johnson, set out to prove

that inclusion on stage is vital — and with the wealth of talent featured at the performance, there's no shortage of Asian American actors.



**Albert Guerson as Tulsa singing "All I Need is the Girl" from *Gypsy*.**

Photo: Bruce Alan Johnson

Photo: Bruce Alan Johnson

## New York City Enjoy the "Yes"

New Members in NYC were greeted by Broadway's Max Von Essen during the fall New Member Reception

At Equity's NYC New Member Reception on Oct. 26, 2015, Max Von Essen, Tony Award nominee for *An American in Paris*, told the union's newest members to enjoy every moment of their careers.

"In a business full of 'no,'" he said, "you have to revel in the 'yes.' Give yourselves time to celebrate achievements in your career, no matter how big or how small — even paying your rent on time deserves acknowledgement. This is a challenging business. Celebrate yourself."

As an economics major at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Von Essen quickly realized that his passion wasn't an eight-hour a day office job crunching numbers, so he followed his instincts to pursue his artistic dream.

Members from across the country, with hometowns rooted in Kentucky, New York, London

and Australia, among others, learned about Von Essen's journey and the road leading up to *An American in Paris* and his recent Tony nomination. While he has faced his share of "no's," Von Essen is aware that he has had a fortunate number of "yes"

moments to rejoice in lately. For the actor, success has been, and still is, surreal. His career has taken him across the country in several regional tours and to regional theaters as well as to Broadway productions such as *Evita*, *Les Misérables* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Throughout the many incarnations of *An American in Paris* leading up to the Palace Theatre, he was fearful of acknowledging his good luck. During the show's workshop Von Essen told himself that he could accept his good fortune once the workshop was completed. Then he postponed that acceptance to



Photo: Stephanie Masucci

once the production completed its run in Paris, and then once the company moved into the Palace and then after the opening — and then after the reviews. To be honest, he joked, the surreal feeling never quite goes away. In fact, he still laughs in disbelief that he's come this far. There are even moments while on stage at the Palace that he can't quite grasp that he is on Broadway with a Tony Award nomination to his credit.

His advice: Go to as many auditions as possible. Get noticed. Meet people. Sometimes a "no" eventually leads to a "yes."

The event agenda included information regarding the role of Equity, the role of the professional actor, discounts available to members, Equity auditions and an overview of Equity health insurance and retirement benefits.

Visit Facebook to see photos of Equity's New Members in NYC.

Photo: Ray Renick



(From L to R) Members Michael Shipley, Kelly Ground, Susan Monson and Alex Shafer.

## San Francisco, California Welcoming New Members to the Bay Area

On October 26, 2015, the San Francisco Bay Area Liaison Committee hosted its second annual Equity East Bay Mixer at the Albatross Pub in Berkeley, CA. Organized by Safiya Fredericks, the meeting hosted 50 members, where committee members greeted new members and were on hand to answer questions and address concerns about the San Francisco Bay Area Equity scene.

The Bay Area mixers were created to replace the previous second general membership

meeting and give members a less formal environment to express their thoughts and feelings about the theater scene to their representatives — a South Bay mixer is set tentatively for January 25, 2016. A similar mixer for Sacramento members is also in the works. Liaison Chair Aaron Wilton touted the benefits of these mixers to the Western Regional Board during its October meeting, suggesting it was a fun, easy and free way to encourage community within a region.



Equity member Johnnie Hobbs, Jr. receiving the Barrymore Lifetime Achievement Award.

## Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Barrymore Awards Celebrate Equity Members

In early November, the Philadelphia theater community gathered to celebrate the excellent 2014-2015 season at the Merriam Theater for the annual Barrymore Awards — a program of Theatre

Philadelphia — including an award for the Philadelphia Artists' Collective.

This season, many mid-sized and smaller Equity companies were recognized with awards, including Theatre Exile, Theatre

Horizon, Passage Theatre and InterAct Theatre Company. Individual honors in the acting categories were presented to members Catharine K. Slusar, Scott Greer, Ben Dibble, Liz Filios, Leah Walton, Dan Hodge, Michael Philip O'Brien and EMC candidate Campbell M. O'Hare.

Member and former Philadelphia Liaison Committee member Johnnie Hobbs, Jr. was recognized for his distinguished career as an actor, associate professor of theater at the University of the Arts and his contributions to arts and culture with a Barrymore Lifetime Achievement Award.

Philadelphia Artists' Collective (PAC) was founded by AEA members Dan Hodge and Krista Apple-Hodge, Charlotte Northeast and Damon Bonetti. They currently work under the Special Appearance agreement. PAC was awarded the June and Steve Wolfson Award for an Evolving Theatre Company.

## Milwaukee, Wisconsin



Photo: Pete Koenig

Equity member and Milwaukee/Madison Liaison Committee Chair Kathi Karol Koenig presented C. Michael

Wright, the producing artistic director of the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, with a 40th Anniversary proclamation from Actors' Equity on Oct. 17.

After 40 years "the mission of Milwaukee Chamber Theatre is to produce intimate, high-quality, professional theatrical works of literary merit that engage and challenge the audience, while employing and nurturing principally local theater artists."

"Our Milwaukee/Madison union actors and stage managers are lucky to have Milwaukee Chamber Theatre as one of our producers," said Koenig. "They provided me one of my first contracts when I moved to the area. They continually push the envelope with exciting projects and a commitment to hiring local talent. Their partnership with Forward Theater in Madison has been a wonderful collaboration for the region and we look forward to working with Chamber for the next 40 years."

## New York City

### Inaugural Broadway Run Raises \$9,110

A team of Equity performers, staff and theater fans joined forces on Sunday, October 25, for the inaugural *Broadway Run* to benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

They tackled the five-mile Poland Spring Marathon Kickoff in Central Park. The 14-person team included Equity members Tarantino Smith, Brian Walters and Stefanie Frey, who is also a business representative for the Off-Broadway department of Equity. The team raised \$9,110 for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, supporting the social service programs of The Actors Fund and more than 450 AIDS service organizations in all 50 states.

Inspiration for the run came from Broadway Cares volunteer and actor Susan Slotoff. She wanted to bring together friends and colleagues in the theater community to combine her passions for running and helping others. Slotoff turned



Runners Brian Walters, Sarah Cardillo, Stefanie Frey and Susan Slotoff participate in the Broadway Run to benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

to BC/EFA staffer Sarah Cardillo for assistance in making the dream a reality.

"Participating gave me a chance to actively send support and care to those who have to endure far worse than running in the rain," Walters said. "I'm proud to have made a difference, surrounded by loving and caring members of our community."

This was Smith's first experience in a run like this: "I am not certain if I finished last in our group but I am certain that our cause didn't."

Next year, the *Broadway Run* will be part of the Dash to the Finish Line 5K on November 5. To get involved, contact [broadwayrun@broadwaycares.org](mailto:broadwayrun@broadwaycares.org).



## In Memoriam

"Were I to die and go to heaven and find it populated by actors, I would not be unhappy."

—Playwright Ben Hecht

### Reported between 07-20-2015 and 11-17-2015

Tyrone Aiken	Marty Ingels
Michael Ansara	Kyle Jean-Baptiste
Harold Baldrige	Peggy Johnson
Lani Ball	Ron Johnston
Theodore Bikel	Dean Jones
H. Edgar Bodiford	Charles F. Kartali
Bill Capizzi	Zale Kessler
Judy Carne	Carole Ann Lewis
Eddie Carroll	Leslie Loeb
Lilyan Chauvin	David London
Al Checco	Denise Lor
Sterling Clark	Joan Mankin
Ralph M Clift	Bob McAndrew
George Coe	Danny McNie
John Connell	Barbara Meek
Catherine E. Coulson	Aurelia Mills
Yvonne Craig	Martin Milner
Paddy Croft	Dick Moore
A. Donald Cross	Dale Muchmore
Ron Curameng	Maureen O'Hara
Diana Douglas	Joshua Park
Susan Duffy	Natasha Parry
Chris Eann	Donald Perkins
Vivien Eng	Frances Peter
Terrence Evans	Gary Plantiff
John Flynn	Anthony Ridley
Fred C. Forsman	Alex Rocco
Andrew Gerado	Jack W. Schmidt
Jay Gerber	Victoria Stern
Herb Goldstein	Leon B. Stevens
Sondra Gorney	Wesley Stevens
Malcolm B. Grant	Jeremiah K. Tatum
Rosemary Hartup	Tom Toner
Dennis Hearn	Honey Waldman
Ann Hegira	Frederick Walters
Victor R. Helou	Alan Weeks
Edena Hines	Alan Willig
Brenda C. Huggins	Michael F. Wolf
Bruce Hyde	Wallace W. Wood

## Nominations Due for the 2016 Rosetta LeNoire Award

Actors' Equity is accepting nominations for the 2016 Rosetta LeNoire Award. The award, named after the noted actor and producer Rosetta LeNoire, is given in recognition of her body of work in the theater, her outstanding work with Equity's Equal Employment Opportunity Committee and also for founding the AMAS Repertory Theatre Company, an organization dedicated to maintaining an "interracial company" of actors.

Inherent in the award is acknowledgement that the recipient has an exemplary record in both the hiring of ethnic minorities (including female actors, actors with disabilities and senior actors); and should have a working relationship (and a history) with Actors' Equity Association.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, February 12, 2016.

### Nomination Procedures and Guidelines

- There are two ways to nominate an individual, a theater company and/or an organization for the award. Nominations can be either electronic or hard copy/paper.
- A 2016 Rosetta LeNoire Award Submission Form must be completed for each nominee. The submission form must be returned with all nominee supporting documentation and pertinent information no later than Friday, February 12, 2016.
- To obtain an electronic submission form, go to [actorsequity.org](http://actorsequity.org) and click on the "Rosetta LeNoire Award" link.
- To obtain a hard copy submission form, contact Luther Goins at 312-641-0393, ext. 237, or [lgoins@actorsequity.org](mailto:lgoins@actorsequity.org).
- All nominee supporting documentation, including the submission form, is limited to ten pages. (Any nomination over ten pages will be edited

down to ten pages by Actors' Equity.)

- All electronic nominations (including the submission form) should be submitted via email to [RosettaLeNoire@actorsequity.org](mailto:RosettaLeNoire@actorsequity.org).

- All hard copy nominations (including the submission form) should be mailed directly to Luther Goins at:

Rosetta LeNoire Award Nominations  
c/o Luther Goins  
Actors' Equity Association  
557 West Randolph Street  
Chicago, IL 60661

Remember, the deadline for receipt for all 2016 Rosetta LeNoire Award Nominations (including the submission forms and all nomination materials) is Friday, February 12, 2016. The award will be presented at Equity's Annual Membership Meeting on Friday, April 8, 2016.

For more information, contact Luther Goins at 312-641-0393, Ext. 237, or by email at [lgoins@actorsequity.org](mailto:lgoins@actorsequity.org).

## Applications Being Accepted for Roger Sturtevant Musical Theatre Award

The Roger Sturtevant Musical Theatre Award, given under the auspices of Actors Equity Foundation, is available to current Equity Membership Candidates (EMCs) who have demonstrated outstanding abilities in the musical theater field.

The \$1,000 award is presented to one male and one female EMC and is based on a

taped audition, written recommendations and a completed application. A panel of judges, including actors/members of the Actors Equity Foundation and members of the Casting Society of America, select the recipients. The panel strictly adheres to the principles of non-traditional casting and actively encourages actors of all cultural backgrounds to apply.

Applications are available at [actorsequity.org](http://actorsequity.org). Submissions are accepted from Jan. 1 through March 15, 2016. The award was established in 2005 and is supported by donations from friends and family of noted casting director Roger Sturtevant.

For more information, contact Joan Glazer at 212-869-1242 or email [jglazer@actorsequityfoundation.org](mailto:jglazer@actorsequityfoundation.org).

## Letters to The Editor

Letters received from paid-up members on subjects of concern to Equity members will be considered for publication in Equity News, provided that they are no greater than 175 words in length. Letters selected for publication may be edited for space requirements. Actors' Equity Association reserves the right to decline to publish letters at its sole discretion. When multiple letters on the same topic are submitted, the Editor may decide to select a smaller number of representative letters for publication. Letters must be signed and must provide preferred contact information for verification purposes, but names may be withheld from publication in certain limited circumstances, at a member's request. Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those of Actors' Equity Association.



### In Memoriam

My great friend Alan Weeks suddenly passed away on Oct. 10, 2015. Alan had a distinguished Broadway résumé that went on even longer than the first act of *Les Miz*.

Up in that heavenly sing-a-long, my faith tells me that Cab Calloway, obviously one of Alan's major influences if you ever saw him perform, so dug Alan's way with "There's A Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York" that he took Alan to a Chinese banquet on him. Alan had a follow-spot sized weakness for Chinese food.

Alan Weeks, I will always love me some you.

— Paul Villani

Stage Manager Leslie Loeb (8/10/58-9/26/2015) received her Equity card from Circle Repertory Company.

Broadway: *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, *Once on This Island* (both directed by Graciela Daniele), *Anything Goes* (with Patti LuPone), *House of Blue Leaves*, *Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*. Off-Broadway: *Hello Again*, *Square One* and *Baby Makes Seven*. Ford Theater D.C.: *Captains Courageous*.

In Seattle, Leslie managed productions at the Intiman Theatre and Seattle Repertory Company while striking out on her own "Go Productions" to call industrial events for Microsoft,

Toyota, Boeing, Nike and Hewlett-Packard.

Leslie met her (future) spouse and life partner, Vicki Pardee, during the Broadway run of *Redwood Curtain* by Lanford Wilson. This play premiered in Seattle, where Pardee introduced D'art (a shepherd mix dog) to acting. D'art was instrumental in the two meetings in NYC.

Leslie was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and fought bravely for three years. She died at home — surrounded by family and friends thanks to Death with Dignity in Washington State. A lunar eclipse immediately followed her departure.

— William Joseph Barnes

Harold G. Baldrige, a graduate of the Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre, was executive director of the Playhouse 1980–2012 and then Executive Director Emeritus. He was a Meisner and Shakespeare acting teacher, set and lighting designer, theater director. Graduates under his tutelage include Ashlie Atkinson, Brian Geraghty, Allison Janney, Dylan McDermott and Sherie Rene Scott. Prior to the NP, Mr. B was AD of Theatre Calgary for six years, where he directed 30 productions, including *Walsh*, *Equus*, *Hamlet & Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* (played in repertory), *Threepenny Opera* and *Jacques Brel*.

From 1965-72, he was AD of the Woodstock Playhouse in NY, where he directed nearly 60 productions, including *West Side Story*, *...Marat/Sade*, *Cabaret*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *Six Characters...*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, featuring Diane Keaton in her

first professional role. His credits as director and designer included seminal productions of *The Blood Knot* and *The Toilet and the Slave*. Recently he taught Shakespeare and directed at the Acting Studio.

— Ashlie Atkinson

### Office Closing

All Equity offices will close early on Thursday, December 24, 2015, and remain closed on Friday, December 25 in observance of Christmas. The Chicago, Los Angeles and Orlando offices will close early on Thursday, December 31 and will be closed all day on Friday, January 1, 2016, in observance of New Year's. The New York office will be closed all day on December 31, 2015, and January 1, 2016. All offices will be closed on Monday, January 18, 2016, for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.