

The League's Audience Engagement Committee supports Broadway and Touring Broadway through funding and creating programs designed to develop, cultivate and enrich audiences of all ages nationally.

OCTOBER 2017

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We are pleased to share with you information about our ongoing programs and new initiatives, as well as the education and engagement efforts of our members around the country.

For more information about these programs, please contact Rachel Reiner at 212-703-0215 or rreiner@broadway.org.

THE BROADWAY LEAGUE
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2017 EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT FORUM

On May 14th and 15th, the League hosted the *2017 Education and Engagement Forum* in New York City. Over 100 attendees gathered for a full slate of events that included networking with each other and touring show press agents; considering diversity and inclusion in both programming and staffing; discussing programming that reaches all ages from small children to older patrons through Broadway-based theatre education; and reviewing assessment strategies. In addition, two-time Tony Award nominee and *Bandstand* star Laura Osnes and her *Bandstand* castmate Kevyn Morrow joined the Forum for a panel focused on building connections between Touring Broadway artists and Road venues.

Congratulations to all of our presenters and this year's Forum Planning Committee: Eric Olmscheid (Chair), Jennifer DiBella, Kelli Foster Warder, John Gilmour, Kathleen Lawler Husted, Suzanne Livesay, and Gary Minyard. If you have questions about topics discussed at the Forum or suggestions for future topics, please contact Rachel Reiner, rreiner@broadway.org.



Forum Planning Committee: Back row (left – right): Jennifer DiBella (Roundabout Theatre Company), Sue Frost (Co-Chair, Audience Engagement Committee), Eric Olmscheid (Des Moines Performing Arts), Suzanne Livesay (Straz Center for the Performing Arts), Gary Minyard (Victoria Theatre Association), and Michael Brand (Co-Chair, Audience Engagement Committee). Front row (left – right): Kathleen Lawler Husted (Omaha Performing Arts), and Kelli Foster Warder (Hennepin Theatre Trust)



Broadway Artists and Road Program Connections Session panelists (left – right): Kathleen Lawler Husted (Omaha Performing Arts), Kevyn Morrow (BANDSTAND, THE COLOR PURPLE), two-time Tony Award Nominee Laura Osnes (BANDSTAND, CINDERELLA, GREASE), and Kelli Foster Warder (Hennepin Theatre Trust)

THE JIMMY® AWARDS/NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL THEATRE AWARDS™

Presented by The Broadway League Foundation, the ninth annual Jimmy® Awards were held on June 26th at the Minskoff Theatre. The evening was hosted by 2017 Tony Award® winner Ben Platt, currently starring in *Dear Evan Hansen* on Broadway.

This year's sold out ceremony included a tribute to the late James M. Nederlander, for whom the awards are named, and the inaugural Inspiring Teacher Award, presented by Wells Fargo. In addition, for the first time two student reporters selected from the regional awards programs (they were not nominees) covered the ceremony on Facebook Live. Distinguished theatre professionals judged nominees on their performances both during the ceremony and the previous evening. Our 2017 judges were Kent Gash, Montego Glover, Rachel Hoffman, Kevin McCollum, Alecia Parker, Tara Rubin, Bernard Telsey, and Charlotte Wilcox.

Prior to the ceremony, the 74 nominees, each of whom won the Best Actor or Actress award in their regional awards program, participated in an eight-day theatre intensive. The week was a busy one filled with coaching sessions and rehearsals led by top industry professionals. Broadway stars Andréa Burns, Randy Graff, Adam Kantor, Michael McElroy, Howard McGillin, and Schele Williams worked individually with the nominees as coaches to prepare them for their debuts on a Broadway stage at the Jimmy Awards ceremony. Additional judges during the week of rehearsals were Paul Canaan, Wayne Cilento, Stephanie Klapper, Cesar Rocha, and Tara Rubin. Students also had the chance to attend a performance of the 2017 Tony-nominated musical *Come From Away* and participate in a talkback with the cast.

The 2017 Jimmy Awards for Best Performance by an Actress and Actor were presented to Sofia Deler and Tony Moreno, both from the Applause Awards in Orlando, FL. The winners received \$10,000 to further their education. Seventeen additional scholarships and awards were bestowed to nominees as well. Congratulations to all our nominees!

For more information about the Jimmy Awards, please contact Rachel Reiner, rreiner@broadway.org.



Ben Platt, 2017 Tony Award winner for DEAR EVAN HANSEN, was host of the 2017 Jimmy Awards ceremony.



The 74 Jimmy Award nominees pose on the red carpet with Charlotte St. Martin (President, The Broadway League), 2017 Tony Award Winner Ben Platt (Host of the Jimmy Awards), Kiesha Lalama (Choreographer), and Van Kaplan (Co-Founder and Director).



Jimmy Awards nominees performing the opening number.



The 2017 Production Group performs a tribute to the late James M. Nederlander, the namesake of the Jimmy Awards.



Tony Award-winner Ben Platt with Jimmy Award winners for Best Actor and Best Actress, Tony Moreno and Sofia Deler from the Applause Awards in Orlando, FL.



Jeep Bryant (Director of Marketing & Business Development, The Broadway League), Charlotte St. Martin (President, The Broadway League), Brendan Jennings (Inspiring Teacher Award Recipient), Larry Robinson (Inspiring Teacher Award Recipient), and Jay Everette (Senior Vice President and Officer of the Wells Fargo Foundation) at the 2017 Jimmy Awards.

2017 INSPIRING TEACHER AWARDS

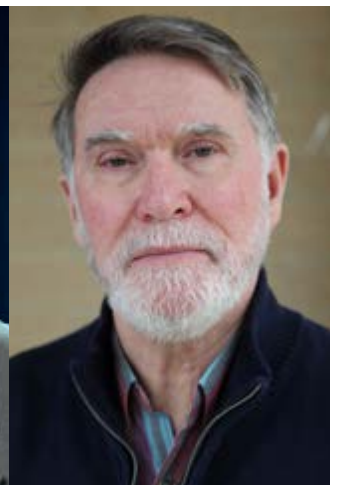
This year's Jimmy® Awards, held on June 26th at the Minskoff Theatre, included the inaugural Inspiring Teacher Award presented by Wells Fargo. Brendan Jennings of John Burroughs High School in Burbank, CA, and Larry Robinson of Central Academy of Technology and Arts in Monroe, NC, both received the award in recognition of their work with students who won the coveted 2016 Jimmy Award for Best Performance by an Actress and Best Performance by an Actor.

As Charlotte St. Martin said, "Behind every great talent is a great teacher who nurtured and inspired them, and we applaud them!"

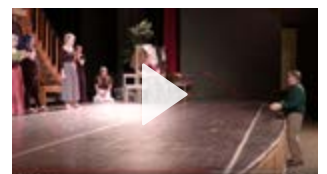
Jay Everette, Senior Vice President and Officer of the Wells Fargo Foundation, explained: "Wells Fargo's education initiatives support the work of teachers in communities across the country. We have been a supporter of the Blumey Awards, the regional awards program participating in the National High School Musical Theatre Awards in Charlotte, since its inception. We are proud to extend our support for the Jimmy Awards at the national level and honor the teachers who are inspiring the stars of tomorrow."



*Brendan Jennings
John Burroughs High School
Burbank, CA*



*Larry Robinson
Central Academy of
Technology and Arts
Monroe, NC*



*Click here to watch a short video
about these teachers' inspiring work*



BROADWAY BRIDGES™



Theatre teacher Amy Anderson-Reese with her students from Brooklyn's Performing Arts & Technology High School before a performance of KINKY BOOTS.

January 2017 saw the pilot of this new League initiative which aims to ensure every public high school student in New York City has the chance to see a Broadway show before graduation. The program seeks to leverage unused inventory to create opportunities for young people to engage with the great American art form of Broadway. In doing so, it complements the theatre arts education work Lincoln Center Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre Company, and the Theatre Development Fund have been doing for years.

From January 31st through March 22nd, over 1,000 tenth graders and their chaperones from 23 schools in all five boroughs attended both evening and matinee performances on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Producers generously offered the program \$20 tickets, plus fees. Of that, schools covered half with the League taking care of the balance and fees.

Many thanks to *Aladdin*, *Come From Away*, *Miss Saigon*, *On Your Feet*, *The Lion King*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, and *Wicked* for their participation and support. As one teacher from the Bronx wrote in a post-performance survey, "I had many students see a show for the first time and (they) were just so amazed...."

With significant financial support this year from the New York City Council and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Broadway Bridges is looking forward to the 2017–18 school year during which 7,500 tenth graders and chaperones will attend a performance. We will welcome 2,500 students from October 17th through November 16th, and 5,000 from January 22nd through March 15th.

We greatly appreciate the Broadway community's support for Broadway Bridges, and the Broadway Bridges Task Force for leading the way. As a Queens teacher wrote when asked about the value of a trip to Broadway, "It brings the group closer together. It makes connections between each other happen and makes lifelong memories and lovers of the art form. This will create lifelong theatre lovers and advocates."

If you have questions about Broadway Bridges, please contact Robin Aronson, raronson@broadway.org.

FAMILY FIRST NIGHTS®

Since 2005, Family First Nights® has given low-income families the opportunity to attend theatre on a regular basis. League research has shown that over 60 percent of Broadway ticket buyers attended a show as a child with a family member. Family First Nights allows low- and middle-income New York families who might not otherwise have access to Broadway tickets to take part in this essential element of New York City culture. Social service agency partners select families who commit to purchasing \$10 tickets for three different productions between October and March. To prepare for their first Broadway show, participants take part in an orientation led by League staff and receive family theatre packets that include study guides, etiquette information, and a map of who does what backstage. They are also invited to stay for a post-show discussion after each performance. In 2016, with the help of Luis Miranda, the Broadway League was grateful to receive \$100,000 from Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker of the City Council, and a matching grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to support the program. As a result, the program welcomed 444 parents and children to their first Broadway shows. This year, families attended *Aladdin*, *Cats*, *On Your Feet!*, *School of Rock*, *The Lion King*, and *Wicked*.



A group of Family First Nights participants ready for a performance of WICKED.



Family First Nights participants take part in a talkback after a performance of SCHOOL OF ROCK.



Participants in the 2017 High School Broadway Management Diversity Initiative with League President Charlotte St. Martin and Director of Audience Engagement Rachel Reiner.

HIGH SCHOOL BROADWAY MANAGEMENT DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

The High School Broadway Management Diversity Initiative introduces students from New York City's public high schools to non-performance careers on Broadway. The five-year-old program is a joint initiative from the League's Audience Engagement Committee and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, executed in partnership with the Department of Education's Office of Arts and Special Projects.

This year the program began with a day-long look at a range of jobs required to mount a Broadway show. In early December, 70 students gathered at the Winter Garden Theatre where they were graciously hosted by *School of Rock*. They broke into small groups to talk with a company manager, general manager, lighting designer, house manager, box office manager and others. Twenty-five of the students were accepted into the more intensive five-day program during February's mid-winter recess. Eighteen productions welcomed these highly-motivated theatre students into their management offices where they participated in a range of activities including marketing meetings, load-ins, Q & As with press agents, shadowing company managers and visiting costume departments. Students not only saw a performance of their host show but shadowed its stage manager during a subsequent performance. Bookending the immersive experience at production offices and theatres were an introduction to the professional world of Broadway at the League, a visit to the Shubert Archive, and a final presentation on the scope of work represented by the different career paths they encountered during the program. Highlights from the week included visiting *Miss Saigon* during rehearsal and posing for photos with a Tony Award at the Shubert Archive. Many thanks, as always, to participating productions: *Aladdin*, *Beautiful*, *Chicago*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Jitney*, *Kinky Boots*, *On Your Feet!*, *Paramour*, *Significant Other*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Book of Mormon*, *The Lion King*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *The Present*, *The Price*, *Waitress*, and *Wicked*.

Please contact Robin Aronson, raronson@broadway.org, if you have questions about the High School Broadway Management Diversity Initiative.



Click here to watch a short video about the program.

2017 NEW YORK ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION GRANTS

Every year, The Broadway League awards two \$5,000 Education and Engagement grants in support of learning initiatives developed by New York-based productions. This year's grant recipients were *Come From Away* and *August Wilson's Jitney*.



The cast of COME FROM AWAY. Photo by Matthew Murphy, 2016.

Come From Away

The “I Am an Islander” project is a multi-session cultural exchange program that connects students in New York City and Newfoundland. With the help of the New York City Department of Education and six towns in Newfoundland, the project creates Collaborative Classroom partnerships to foster cross-cultural learning. Similar to how stories were gathered and shared in the creation of *Come From Away*, students in Collaborative Classrooms interview each other (using email or video conferencing) about their neighborhoods, families, friends, and experiences growing up in their respective communities. Students use these stories to create an art installation which is shared with their partner classroom. Students in schools across the city are able to engage with “I Am an Islander” through a digital platform. A section of *Come From Away*'s website encourages visitors to share a digital message of gratitude via a digital map installation, and Collaborative Classrooms live on the website as pinpoints on the digital map. Each participating New York City student is invited to a performance of *Come From Away*.

August Wilson's Jitney

The Manhattan Theatre Club (MTC) engaged a class of about 20 students at Pathways to Graduation, a program in the Bronx that helps students ages 18–21 earn a high school equivalency diploma. MTC worked with these students through WRoTE (Write on the Edge), a playwriting residency built around *August Wilson's Jitney*. During this 11-session residency, an MTC teaching artist led the class through a series of workshops to prepare students to attend a performance of the play, and then guided them in the development of original short plays inspired by the themes and motifs of *Jitney*. The unit included performances of the students' play by the professional actors for an audience of classmates, school, staff, and family members.



August Wilson's JITNEY at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre. Photo by Joan Marcus, 2017.

SPOTLIGHT: DANA BRAZIL, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Dana Brazil has been the Director of Education at the Dr. Phillips Center in Orlando, FL since 2013. She envisioned and is responsible for all education and community engagement programs at the Center, including a Teen Ambassador program. In 2015, Ms. Brazil received the Broadway League Award for Outstanding Achievement in Education and Engagement. Ms. Brazil brought the Applause Awards, a regional high school musical theatre awards program affiliated with The Jimmy® Awards, to the Center. In 2017, students from the Applause Awards won Jimmy Awards for both Best Performance by an Actor and Actress.



1) What did you bring to your role at the Dr. Phillips Center when you started in it?

I was hired one year before the Dr. Phillips Center opened and had the unique opportunity to create a platform of education programs and establish a School of the Arts centered around our Touring Broadway performances and those of nationally acclaimed artistic talent.

2) The Applause Awards have been a huge success. Do you have a program for teens interested in non-performing careers?

Our Teen Ambassador program introduces motivated students to non-performance careers in the arts. Because we were a new organization, I needed a marketing strategy to reach young people who were interested in the arts. I imagined that by introducing, educating, and engaging teens they would be willing to share their experiences and opportunities to see performances with other teens so that they, too, would want to participate in our programming. We select a group of vibrant teenagers and provide them with behind-the-scenes work, access to performances (including Broadway), master classes with local arts leaders and Touring Broadway companies, and workshops. Through each of these elements, teens develop and promote their own ideas, often taking over the Arts Center's social media channels.

The Teen Ambassadors are also involved with our Applause Awards program, often as participants but also as volunteers. I enjoy providing young people with opportunities I never had growing up. I want to help prepare them to be their best whether they are pursuing careers in performance, technical theatre, or arts management.

3) You are a member of the Spring Road Conference Planning Committee and the Audience Engagement Committee. How has League involvement enhanced your work?

Participating in The Broadway League, its conferences, and professional development programs has made me a better educator, arts administration professional, and artist. I've had the chance to contribute ideas regarding best practices and discuss issues facing education and engagement programs in presenting Broadway organizations, which has given me a greater understanding of the scope of our industry and how to make it better.

Likewise, being a member of the Audience Engagement and Spring Road Conference Planning Committees has given me credible knowledge of all aspects of our industry and how they are intertwined, which has made me a better collaborator.

4) What are some highlights from your work with the League?

I have been participating in The Broadway League/ATPAM Diversity Initiative for the last six years and it is one of my favorite programs. It has been very fulfilling to have the opportunity to provide valuable experience to diverse students and help them find their way and place within this industry. Many of our students have gone on to have successful non-performance careers in the arts, and they attribute their success to their time in the program. Knowledge is power and this program helps us to help students build knowledge about opportunities available to them in the theatre.

The Jimmy Awards is my favorite Broadway League education program. It gives high school musical theatre programs national attention and celebrates all the high school talent from around our country. Once students get to the New York phase of the awards, they are coached and directed by Broadway professionals and make their debuts on a Broadway stage during an evening of celebration. This is the opportunity of a lifetime and I am grateful that The Applause Awards at the Dr. Phillips Center, which has grown significantly since becoming a regional awards program for The Jimmy Awards, is part of the process and journey for these young people.

5) What are three things you've learned from other programs in different markets that you've brought to your current role?

- Specificity during the pre-planning phase of creating education/engagement programs is important for success.
- If you want to reach new audiences, community partners are important for achieving your goals.
- Telling the story of what you do to engage and educate audiences is an important marketing tool.