



LEAGUE EDUCATION COMMITTEE Newsletter

The Education Committee supports the Broadway and Touring Broadway industry by creating and sustaining programs designed to develop, cultivate and enrich audiences of all ages nationally.

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THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN THEATRES AND PRODUCERS, INC.
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Family First Nights – Spring 2006 Update



Participating families at *The Color Purple*

LAST MONTH, THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN THEATRES AND Producers launched the Family First Nights program for 2006. Family First Nights is designed to encourage at-risk families to attend theatre on a regular basis. Families commit to attend the theatre together three times over the course of one year. Each family member pays \$10 per ticket for orchestra seats, for about the cost of a movie ticket. Participating families take part in post-performance discussions and are given family theatre packets including study guides, etiquette information, a guide to who's who backstage, and a CD of the show, if available.

Some of the families were also treated to a special appearance by renowned choreographer, director, performer and Tony Award® nominee Maurice Hines and seven-time Grammy Award winner Maurice White of "Earth, Wind and

Fire." The two are currently working together on the upcoming Broadway musical *Hot Feet*. The performers were on hand to show their support for Family First Nights, and to express their commitment to bringing new audiences to the theatre.

The League partnered with the South Brooklyn Youth Consortium and the Harlem Children's Zone, two social service agencies that were responsible for identifying appropriate families, coordinating family participation, and organizing transportation and other logistics.

The soul-stirring new Broadway musical *The Color Purple*, based on Alice Walker's acclaimed novel, is the first of three productions the families will see. After the performance, the families had the opportunity to attend a discussion with cast members from the production. One hundred families in total will participate in the program this year.

Funding for this program comes from the producers of *The Color Purple* and other participating shows, the League, and New York City's Departments of Cultural Affairs and Youth and Community Development. New York City Council Member Domenic M. Recchia Jr., (District 47 in South Brooklyn), chairman of the Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations of the New York City Council, was instrumental in obtaining city funding for the program for this year.



Maurice Hines, Jed Bernstein, Sheryl Robertson, Maurice White and Council Member Recchia at the South Brooklyn Youth Consortium.



Maurice White and Maurice Hines speak to the SBYC children participating in Family First Nights

This is the newsletter of the Education Committee of the League of American Theatres and Producers, Inc. We would like to take this opportunity to share with you information about our ongoing programs and new initiatives, as well as the education efforts of some of our members around the country. For more information about the League's Education Committee and programs, please contact Rachel Reiner at 212-703-0215 or rreiner@broadway.org

2006 LEAGUE EDUCATOR APPLE AWARDS

THE LEAGUE IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE 2006 recipients of the League Educator Apple Awards. The purpose of this award is to reward, acknowledge and support the efforts of educators, administrators, district heads and education teams

who collaborate with League member venues and organizations around the country. The award is given jointly to the educational collaborators — teacher(s) and administrator(s) as applicable — and the education coordinator at the venue/

organization. These awards help foster stronger connections between venues and schools around the country, and encourage schools to integrate theatre into the curriculum and send student groups to Broadway shows.

ANITA WINSTEAD, MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Ms. Winstead made it possible for her third grade class to experience live musical theatre, many for the first time. Not only did she take her entire class to see *Annie* at the Kentucky Center for the Arts, but she also incorporated the production into many other aspects of the classroom. Her class learned about homelessness, made a Caring Quilt for a homeless family, and were visited by a local social worker to discuss the topic. Students learned terminology and elements of drama and also had visits from actors from the touring company. After viewing the live performance of *Annie*, the class wrote and performed their own school-wide adaptation, which the adopted homeless family attended. Prior to this program, Ms. Winstead also spent her own money to send 25 students to see *The Lion King* when alternative funding was unavailable.

ELIZABETH BROOKS-GORDON, KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL; DAVID JESTER, J.T. WILLIAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL; KIM HOTCHNER, NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF THE ARTS; CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

These three educators collaborated on an event called *Movin' Stories* for their middle school students in conjunction with the North Carolina Blumenthal Performing Arts Center and the tour of *Movin' Out*. The process had three elements, all inspired by *Movin' Out*. First, Ms. Brooks-Gordon's class researched events from 1990 through 2004 (picking up where Billy Joel's timeline ends) to create a social, political, and cultural timeline. Next, Mr. Jester's class turned the timeline into a creative writing story following four friends throughout the years. The collaboration ended with Ms. Hotchner's students who created a dance interpretation of the other two classes' work. The project culminated with a presentation highlighting all three schools' activities.



TARA KISSANE, PARADISE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Ms. Kissane, the District Arts Coordinator, helped coordinate the logistics of ASU Public Events' Kaleidoscope program, an arts education program that recognizes, encourages, and motivates students who might not otherwise, by choice or circumstance, have an opportunity to experience live theatre. Before seeing *The Lion King* at Gammage Auditorium, Ms. Kissane's fourth grade students participated in a variety of learning activities during a ten-week unit. The students met twice a week to learn about social studies, history, science, and math as they relate to *The Lion King*. Three Arizona artists also introduced the students to music, culture, and theatrical techniques. After viewing the live production, students had the opportunity to speak with cast members during dinner. The following week, the students met to assess what they had learned during the process.

PHYLLIS SIMS-ROY AND LISA STEWART, OVERTON HIGH SCHOOL, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Mrs. Roy and Mrs. Stewart have proven great dedication to Overton High School dance students by offering the opportunity to see a touring Broadway show, meet and work with dance professionals and be exposed to different styles of dance. Participating touring Broadway productions over the last few years include *Fosse*, *42nd Street*, *The Lion King*, *Hairspray* and *Chicago*. Mrs. Roy, the assistant principal, coordinates the relationship with the Orpheum Theatre, and Mrs. Stewart works with the students to prepare them for master classes and introduce them to the shows, helping them to see the connection of various forms of Broadway choreography. This program has also helped enhance the Orpheum's partnership with the entire student population of the school.



2006 NEW YORK CITY EDUCATION GRANTS

THE BROADWAY PRODUCTIONS OF *DIRTY Rotten Scoundrels* and *Rabbit Hole* received the League's 2006 New York City Education Grants. Each production received \$5,000 to support its educational initiatives. The grants are important for the growth and development of theatre education in the city as they encourage theatres to create

more opportunities for young people and model programs for the industry.

The New York Education Grants were established by the League in 2002 in recognition of education initiatives and to support further programs for Broadway shows. The League also sponsors a grant program to support education programs for

touring Broadway productions. The two programs combined have to date awarded \$550,000 to theatres in New York and across the country. Both awards were established by the League's Education Committee and are generously supported by Theatre Development Fund.

Rabbit Hole

David Lindsay-Abaire's *Rabbit Hole* serves as an excellent model of playwriting and production for 875 participating high school students, teachers and family members. Manhattan Theatre Club (MTC) is proud to produce this bittersweet play about a couple dealing with loss in the aftermath of a life-shattering accident that takes their young son. MTC's educational outreach serves students from all five New York City boroughs, with a goal of providing access to an artistic culture otherwise unavailable.

The Core Program, Project InterAct and Write on the Edge (Wrote) are each built around the attendance of a student matinee performance of *Rabbit Hole*, marking a pivotal point in the educational process and giving many students what may be their first experience of a Broadway play. The Family Matinee Series also culminates in a performance, but here students bring a family member, guardian or mentor with them, which encourages communication between adults and adolescents regarding the themes addressed in the play. In advance of these student-driven activities, MTC holds a professional development workshop for all participating teachers in each of its programs to acquaint them with the material and provide teaching techniques to be used in the classroom.

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels

The producers of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* offer an exclusive and comprehensive student education program along with discounted tickets in conjunction with the Broadway production. The program's service provider, StudentsLive, Inc., estimates 3,000 to 5,000 high school students will participate in 2006 "Great Big Stuff" programs in New York, including exclusive student workshops and matinees.

The program contains a comedy writing lyric contest, utilizes a game show format, and explores the geography of the French Riviera. Master classes involve writing from the perspective of a con victim or real-life historical con artist. This program provides a rich theatrical experience that instills a stronger appreciation and understanding of the theatre, while also helping the students develop academic and daily-life skills.

National Education in Action



Photos from the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, which received a 2005-2006 National Education Grant for its *Wicked* education program.

Photos from the Victoria Theatre Association in Dayton, Ohio, which received a 2005-2006 National Education Grant for its *Hairspray* education program.



More photos on Page 4.

Broadway Speakers Bureau

THE LEAGUE'S BROADWAY SPEAKERS BUREAU PROGRAM IS NOW IN its third year. Begun in September 2003, this pilot program was designed for students to learn about non-performance careers in the performing arts from industry professionals. Panels of three to four speakers, moderated by League member Alan Simon on behalf of the League's Education Committee, represent different aspects of the industry, including producing, general management, marketing, etc.

In the third year of the program, students from Borough of Manhattan Community College, Brooklyn College, Ithaca College, the Juilliard School, Long Island University, Muhlenberg College, New York University and Rutgers University participated. Speakers included Dave Auster, Peter Bogyo, Steven Chaikelson, Adam Epstein, Nancy Gibbs, Hugh Hysell, Pamela Koslow, Stewart F. Lane, Mari Nakachi, Matt Polk, Kenneth Waissman, Donna Walker-Kuhne, Susan Weaving, Brannon Wiles, Randall Wreghitt and others.

Students who attended the panels were also given information about internship opportunities in theatre industry offices as well as student and rush tickets to Broadway shows.



League members Adam Epstein, Mari Nakachi and Steven Chaikelson speak with students about careers in theatre.



Students from Ithaca College listen to speakers from the Broadway Speakers Bureau.

League Education Forum

LEAGUE MEMBERS AND THEIR STAFF ARE INVITED TO ATTEND AN Education Forum in New York City on Monday, May 8th. Education Directors and Coordinators will participate in lively, interactive discussions with guest speakers regarding theatre curricula, funding strategies, institutional support, and best practices from around the country. Information and registration forms are available on the members' section of the League's website, www.LiveBroadway.com.

National Education in Action, cont.



Photos from the *Doctor Dolittle* education program at Hershey Theatre in Pennsylvania



Education Program Data Bank

THE LEAGUE'S EDUCATION COMMITTEE MAINTAINS A USER-FRIENDLY data bank in the members only section of the League's website (www.LiveBroadway.com) that facilitates the sharing of education program ideas among different markets. League members are encouraged to visit the data bank to view the past programs listed and submit successful education programs from their venues, which will be automatically added to the data bank.