

# **SOUTHEASTERN THEATRE CONFERENCE, INC.**

## **Board of Directors Meeting Renaissance Riverview Hotel**

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**Mobile, Alabama**

**March 9, 2014**

Executive Committee Members present: VP of Services, Tiza Garland; Secretary, Adanma Barton; VP of Finances, Duke Guthrie; VP of States, Mike Hudson; and VP of Divisions, Bill Murray.

### Board Members present

Kristy Meanor, Community Division Chair; Jeremy Kisling, acting KY State Rep; Amie Kisling, Theatre for Youth division Chair; Bill Murray, Secondary Division Chair & Division Rep Rep; Tony Haigh, Long range Planning Committee Member; Tonya Hays, KEAP Committee Chair, Rory Ledbetter, Voice and Speech Committee Chair, Dan Granke, Movement Committee Vice Chair; John Friedenburg, Undergraduate and Graduate Auditions Chair, NC State Rep; Herb Parker, TN State Rep; Greg Mach, WV State Rep; Todd Ristau, Getchell Award Chair; Karen Baker, Stage Management Vice Chair; Shawn Paul Evans, Stage Management Chair; John Spiegel Endowment Chair; Patrick Gagliano, Scholarships Procedures Committee Chair; Lynn Nelson, AACT Rep; Chris Rich Nominations Committee Chair; Neil David Seibel, AL State Rep, Robert Drummond Acting/Directing, Joe Frost MS State Rep

- Meeting called to order at 9:06
- These proceedings are being recorded to ensure accuracy of the minutes
- Intro of the scribe Zonya Davidson

### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- Tiza thanked chairs for their work and for making sure that all programs offered in their area were visited by a committee member. Tiza used Acting/Directing Chair as an example as to why we should try to visit all programs prior to them starting. Also, stressed the importance of greeting presenters. She asked for reflections on what went well. Positives included: people were grateful that high school students had their own space, so there was not a bunch of students running through and that made people happy. The undergraduate auditions on Thursday ran smoothly. The tech area space set up in the lobby area so that people could peruse at their own leisure was very useful. Students were glad auditions were on Thursday and also liked that the low cost food options were easy to locate.
- Tony Haigh asked about cancellation policy, asked if we tracked them, his students said many workshops were no shows. Tony was answered that the policy for no shows is that they are not allowed back for two years. Tony will follow up with his students on any further no shows.
- Discussion of Online vs. Paper schedule – discussion about having a notification in the paper schedule to check online schedule for cancellations.

- Problems with no Wi-Fi in meeting rooms and if maps can be put on website as well as Sched.org. There was a room listed in the Battle House that was not on a map. Shawn Paul Evans will email Betsey a list of the misprints in the various schedules.
- Tiza will discuss with Quiana if there is a way to add personal items to individual users on Sched so they can enter personal meetings or callbacks to current sched.org program.
- There was a problem with Sched.org listing all state meetings together and difficulty with room selection.
- Adanma mentioned that it seemed problematic to have a master class during the state meeting time.
- Betsey will reexamine the listing/timing of state meetings during conference.
- Discussion returned to needing updated map available. Betsey made the point of how much money we pull in for advertising in the printed program (\$25,000).
- Community Theatre says thank you to Quiana, Central Office, and volunteers.
- Amie Kisling, from Theatre for Youth had great drop off location near the festival space, she recommended having a relational map printed with restaurant choices.
- Rory discussed distance between Ed Expo and rest of the conference - had low turnout for booth. Betsey shared past use of a specific time for College/Univ reps to be at their booths for students to visit. Programing will investigate the reimplementaion of Ed Expo Walk-About .  
Pat Gagliano said he had very good traffic at his booth.
- Chris Rich passed out ballots for nominations.
- Todd Ristau introduced proposed change from Playwriting Committee (Addendum #1 presents the full text at end of this report).
- Pat Gagliano mentioned how great it was to see the SETC posters up in all of the restaurants and stores in town.
- The workshop space in Expo hall did not work out very well. It got too loud, hard for participants to hear.
- Shawn Paul Evans asked for ideas for possible solutions in running Stage Management Olympics. Currently Patricia Crotty's students fulfill the roles necessary to make that even it work (including actors to do scenes).
- The addition of the Admin/Management interest group was applauded.
- 10 Minute Play Festival went very well. The space(s) were perfect for the event. The room gave a huge Thank You to John Spiegel for taking over when Chair Tim Bohn was unable to attend.
- Need signage for rooms that are complicated to find.
- Challenge with KEAP student guardians/chaperones. The students are given the money to come, but sometimes will need an adult. How do we help the students travel to SETC?

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

- Thanked the many people that made the convention possible. A list of sponsors is offered as Addendum #2 at the end of the minutes.

- Thanked the sponsors. Commercial Exhibitors' sponsorships have increased over the years.
- Thanked the City of Mobile, Mobile County and the Mobile CVB for making it possible for SETC to come to Mobile. City and County shipped in \$25,000 and waived cost of convention center (\$70,000).
- Thanked the board and committee members. Without their dedication SETC couldn't exist.
- Thanked the Volunteers & Operations Team including a new category called Production Assistants who helped professional company reps.
- Thanked Central Office staff

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Tiza announced that Ex-Com meets May 23 & 24 at 9:00am, with the 22<sup>nd</sup> being a travel day. Full Board/Advisory Council meets Sept. 5 & 6<sup>th</sup>
- Discussion occurred about the possibility of having additional preconference in-depth workshops to include Stage Management IPAD workshop and CPR workshop next year.
- Mississippi is starting a Community Youth Division. This may be of interest to other states that are looking at how to include certain groups of young people, including individuals home schooled.
- Hist/Theory/Crit wants to appeal to young scholars. Would like to review current award and see how to offer more.
- Tiza requested sending her names of possible keynotes. Names given: Gwendolyn from the banquet, Kristin Linklater, Bonnie Metzger, Carl Rux, Nick Sliver, Lindsey David-Abarie, Heather Henson, Glenda Hartzill, Todd London
- Meeting adjourned 10:49am

## **Addendum #1**

### **Proposed Changes to the SETC High School New Play Project**

The envisioned purpose of the HS Playwriting Contest is to promote the study of playwriting at the secondary school level and to provide encouragement to promising high school playwrights but in practice these goals are not being achieved for the following reasons: over the past seven years the number of submissions has declined rather than increased (this year we had only nine submissions), the overall quality of the submissions has not improved, the winning playwrights have generally expressed more interest in screenwriting or other theatrical disciplines, the majority of high school conference attendees are also interested in areas other than playwriting, it is increasingly difficult to find a qualified and interested chair for this committee, finding qualified and interested readers is increasingly difficult, the rehearsal and sometimes the reading of the winning play frequently conflicts with important playwriting panels which forces the winning playwright, director and casts to choose between the reading and those panels, the submissions and winning plays frequently have very large casts and demand props and costumes which are very difficult to provide in the conference environment, and lastly the expense of travel and accommodations is always going to be great due to providing travel and accommodations for both the winning high school playwright and their chaperone.

It is proposed that we could more efficiently and effectively serve the goal of promoting the craft of playwriting at the secondary level by recognizing creative inclusion of playwriting instruction in high school curriculum by innovative high school teachers.

**Therefore, it is proposed that we change the name of the SETC High School New Play Project to the SETC Innovative Playwriting Instruction Award for High School Teachers.**

Each year SETC would honor a High School teacher for innovation in the teaching of playwriting as part of their curriculum, regardless of discipline. For example, a lesson plan where students write monologues in the voice of a historical figure for a history class or a short play on molecular adhesion in a science class would be as eligible for recognition as a full term formal course in playwriting. The important factors are quality of instruction, philosophy behind the use of playwriting instruction in the classroom, and successful realization of student work.

Nominations (including self-nominations) will be solicited between March 1st and June 1st annually. Nominees will be notified and asked to submit a description of their innovative teaching, CV, and two letters of recommendation. The nominations will be reviewed by the Chair of the Innovative Playwriting Instruction Award Committee and a selected panel of advisors, with the selection of the winning teacher announced in November.

The winning High School Teacher will be recognized during the award ceremony of the annual convention, and receive travel, accommodations, conference registration, awards banquet ticket and one year membership in SETC as part of the award. The winning teacher must agree to attend the convention the beginning of March in order to receive the award. If unable to attend it will go to the first alternate who is able to attend.

It is further proposed that should this proposal have the support of the Playwriting Interest Committee, the Awards Committee and the full board, that we suspend the High School New Play Project for a year to retool this award, and nominate William Leavengood, who teaches playwriting at Shorecrest Preparatory School in St. Petersburg Florida. Each year of the contest not only have his students submitted the largest number of plays, his students have repeatedly won the HS New Play Project prize due to the exceptional quality of the work of these students, which cannot help but reflect well on the quality of his instruction.

Bill has been enthusiastic about SETC and the success of his students, but has never been able to afford to travel to SETC on his own and there is no support available at his school for this kind of professional development for their teachers. We strongly advocate that we recognize his excellence in education and contributions to playwriting instruction at the high school level, and thereby establish the bar for this award, but making him the first recipient of it.

## BIO

William Leavengood is a 1978 graduate of Shorecrest and a faculty member in Shorecrest's Arts and Humanities department who teaches Theatre and Playwriting/Screenwriting. A nationally renowned playwright, two-time Eugene O'Neill playwright award winner, and alumnus of Circle Repertory, Mr. Leavengood's work has been produced across the country. His off-Broadway credits include "Little Mary" at the Sanford Meisner Theatre; "The Head" at the Chelsea Playhouse; "The Preservation Society" directed by Casey Childs, at Primary Stages; and "Florida Crackers", directed by John Bishop, which premiered as part of Circle Repertory's 20th Anniversary Season. Mr. Leavengood's short play, "Steve," was presented at the Town Hall Theatre in New York as part of Brave New World: The American Theater responds to 9/11, and subsequently made into a short film starring Fisher Stevens. His farce, "What is Art?" opened the Reflections Festival of New Plays at the GeVa Theatre, and was later produced at the Court Theatre, Los Angeles, starring Beverly Hills 90210's Ian Ziering. "17 Black" was chosen for the National Playwrights Conference and subsequently received the Brodtkin Scholarship Award. Mr. Leavengood was invited to return to the NPC in 1995 with "The Preservation Society." In Florida, recent successes include "Webb's City: The Musical" at the Mahaffey Theater; "Crossing the Bay" at the Janet Root Theater; "American Road" at the Gorilla Theatre; and "Food & Shelter" at American Stage. Published works include "Florida Bound," a collection of his plays, and "Hellenback High." Mr. Leavengood has received grants from Florida Division of Cultural Affairs; Florida Council for the Arts, Pinellas County Arts Council, and the Berrilla Kerr Foundation. Other awards and honors include the Edith Oliver Fellows Award and "Best of the Bay" Playwright in 1997, 1998, 2000 and 2005. He served as Artistic Director of the LiveArts Peninsula Foundation 2000-2005 and belongs to the Circle East Theatre Company (NYC), the Dramatists' Guild, and the Writers' Guild of America.

**[http://www.shorecrest.org/?page=teacher\\_w\\_leavengood](http://www.shorecrest.org/?page=teacher_w_leavengood)**

## **Addendum #2**

**SETC gratefully acknowledges the following for their sponsorship and assistance.**

City of Mobile, Mobile County and the Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors  
University of South Alabama and Mobile's theatre community  
Arrowhead Conferences and Events, Scott Falk and Jackie Mendez

### **Design Tech Mixer Sponsors**

Barbizon Lighting Company, Inc.  
InterAmerica Stage, Inc.

### **Friday Keynote Sponsor**

New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts

### **On-Site Lighting Sponsor**

Magnum Companies

### **On-Site Sound Sponsor**

Showbiz Theatrical Services, Inc.

### **Reception for Professional Theatre Reps & Program Presenters**

Disney Theatrical Group

### **Festival Hosts & Sponsors**

#### **Community Theatre Festival**

Dramatists Play Service

#### **High School Theatre Festival**

Norcostco

#### **Theatre for Youth Meet & Greet**

Dramatic Publishing

### **Exhibitor Showcase & Social**

Hollins Exposition Services, Barbizon Lighting Co., ETC, InterAmerica Stage Inc., Mainstage Theatrical Supply, Inc., Philips Entertainment, TheatreWorld Backdrops, Pioneer Drama Service, Eye Dialogue

### **Exhibit Hall Park Sponsors**

Barbizon Lighting Co., ETC, InterAmerica Stage Inc., Mainstage Theatrical Supply, Inc., Philips Entertainment, TheatreWorld Backdrops, Eye Dialogue

### **Design Sponsors**

#### **Costume Design**

In Honor of Irene Smart Rains

#### **Lighting Design**

Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC)

#### **Scenic Design**

Sculptural Arts Coating, Inc.

#### **Ready For Work**

Lexington Children's Theatre

Triad Stage

### **Properties Design and Construction**

Friends of Props

#### **Costume Crafts Design**

Norcostco

#### **Sound Design**

Shure, Inc.

#### **Stage Manager Olympics**

EmptySpace Technology