



DEVELOPING THE **NEXT GENERATION** OF THEATRE PROFESSIONALS

2022/23 Season
Impact Report



Summer 2022 La Jolla Playhouse Interns



Mission & Values

Mission Statement

La Jolla Playhouse advances theatre as an art form, telling stories that inspire empathy and create a dialogue toward a more just future. With our intrepid spirit and eclectic, artist-driven approach we will continue to cultivate a local, national and global following with an insatiable appetite for audacious work. We provide unfettered creative opportunities for a community of artists of all backgrounds and abilities. We are committed to being a permanent safe harbor for unsafe and surprising work, offering a glimpse of the new and the next in American theatre.

Values Statement

At La Jolla Playhouse, we believe that stories enhance the human experience, instill **empathy** and help us see the world in new ways. We **respect** all races, ethnicities, cultures, physical/ cognitive abilities, ages, genders and identities, and endeavor to be an anti-racist and **accessible** organization that removes barriers to engagement. As a community of life-long learners who celebrate the spirit of **play**, we **innovate** and **collaborate** to bring theatre to life. We practice **empathy** by listening, challenging our assumptions and staying open to all perspectives. We **respect** and recognize the complexities of *all* lived experiences, identities and cultural backgrounds. We honor the Kumeyaay Nation, the original caretakers of the land on which our theaters sit. We will fight against anti-blackness, the many forms of racism directed at BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and all types of discrimination

and harassment, to be a more inclusive space where everyone feels welcome onstage and off. We work with our community to identify, understand and address ways to make our theatre more equitable and **accessible**. We infuse the spirit of **play** into everything we do, sparking creativity, fun and life-long learning. We **innovate** and take risks to propel theatre as an art form and as a pathway toward fostering belonging and enhancing human connection. We **collaborate** by prioritizing inclusive practices from which diverse voices, talents and ideas can strengthen engagement and creative thinking. We vow to grow and embrace these values. When we falter, we will hold ourselves accountable through transparent communication, measurable outcomes, self-reflection and humility. With great joy and a strong sense of responsibility, we commit to these values in every aspect of our work.

Table of Contents

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP.....	4
DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF THEATRE PROFESSIONALS.....	5
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS	6
YOUR IMPACT	7
INTERNSHIPS	8
INTERN ALUMNI NETWORK	9
BIPOC FELLOWSHIP, <i>HIGHLIGHT (KAT YEN)</i>	10
OBSERVERSHIPS, TEEN COUNCIL, PLAYHOUSE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL	11
STAFF DEIA INITIATIVES.....	12
<i>HIGHLIGHT (LA TIMES FEATURE)</i>	13
AFFINITY GROUPS.....	14
HIRING PRACTICES	15
KEY PERSONNEL	16-17
<i>HIGHLIGHT (COSTUME TEAM & AS YOU LIKE IT)</i>	18-19
WHAT'S NEXT	BACK COVER

A Message from Leadership

At La Jolla Playhouse, our mission is to create the “new and the next in American theatre.” Over the past forty years, we have become one of the most important incubators of new work in the country – premiering more than 110 new plays and musicals to date. Our 2023/24 Subscription Season features six world premieres from artists such as the legendary Anna Deavere Smith and first-time playwright Lisa Sanaye Dring. We are proud to be a creative home to some of the most celebrated artists in the field and the next generation of great theatre creators.

As a mission-driven theatre with a strong emphasis on innovation and collaboration, we have made intentional changes to our practices to better serve as a “safe harbor” for the artists and staff who work at La Jolla Playhouse. We have delved into deep conversations about diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) with clarity of purpose and an embrace of deep care for everyone who walks through our doors. We are heartened to see the incredible level of creative risk-taking and fearlessness that has resulted from those changes and that emanates from our rehearsal spaces every day.

Creativity requires an inclusive space to empathize, ideate, experiment, play, prototype, and persevere.

With gratitude,



Christopher Ashley
The Rich Family Artistic Director
of La Jolla Playhouse



Debby Buchholz
Managing Director
of La Jolla Playhouse



Eric Keen-Louie
Executive Producer
of La Jolla Playhouse

That inclusive space can only exist under strong leadership with proactive decision-making. This is why we intentionally put so many resources into developing the next generation of theatre professionals. This industry needs to continue to evolve to support the changing demographics and the myriad and variety of voices waiting to tell their stories. Just as we proactively seek out the next great artists, we also need to seek out and cultivate the next great leaders of the theatre industry. We can only do that by providing accessible and equitable opportunities for the next generation.

Our accomplishments allow us to provide unique learning and mentorship opportunities. This report documents our key programs and progress in the Developing the Next Generation of Theatre Professionals initiative during the 2022/23 season, highlighting our efforts and areas for growth. And while we are proud of how far we have already come, we know we still have more work to do. Fortunately, the mutual learning that happens from working in multi-generational teams is truly uplifting. We may not know what the future will bring, but we know the theatre will be in good hands with these incredible future leaders.

Thank you for continuing to support the next generation of theatre professionals.

Developing the Next Generation of Theatre Professionals



We believe that sustainable change toward becoming a more equitable, anti-racist, and inclusive theatre requires pathways for students and emerging professionals to receive training, mentorship, career opportunities, and space for community building with peers. Our target population for this program is current and aspirational theatre professionals who reflect the variety of cultures and backgrounds within our communities, particularly underrepresented, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), and socio-economically diverse populations.

To develop the next generation of theatre professionals and create a more inclusive workforce, we have begun executing the strategies and activities outlined in this report. This spectrum of programs creates opportunities for more candidates to engage with the Playhouse by offering positions and interactions with varying amounts of time commitment and requiring different levels of previous experience in the industry.

THANK YOU TO THE SUPPORTERS OF DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF THEATRE PROFESSIONALS

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTERS

HEARST *foundations*



 **SEMPRA**[™]

 **UnionBank**



INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

La Atalaya Fund

Mark and Hanna Gleiberman

Your Impact

Internship Testimonials

"It really helped to link my experience and knowledge from school and connect it to how things are done in the professional world."

"I'm leaving this internship a lot more confident in a professional setting and eager to take the skills and knowledge I've gained from this experience with me."

"One goal was to get some direction in what I want to do once I'm done with college, the internship definitely helped me meet that goal. I now see all of the different things that I can do and still be connected to theatre."

"Not an exaggeration at all: This internship program has been a career-changing experience for me."

Observership Testimonial

"One of the most fun parts for me was seeing everything and everyone involved in the process of bringing theater to life."

BY THE NUMBERS

Total number of individuals served through the project/program (unduplicated):

138



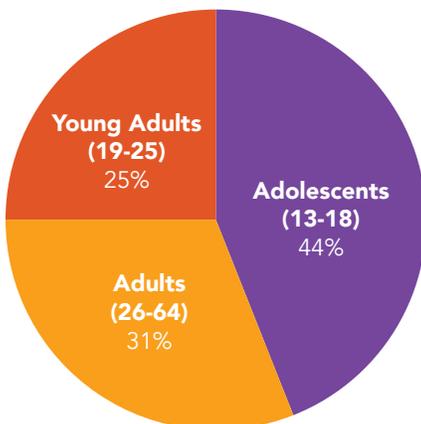
Total number of touchpoints:

1,744

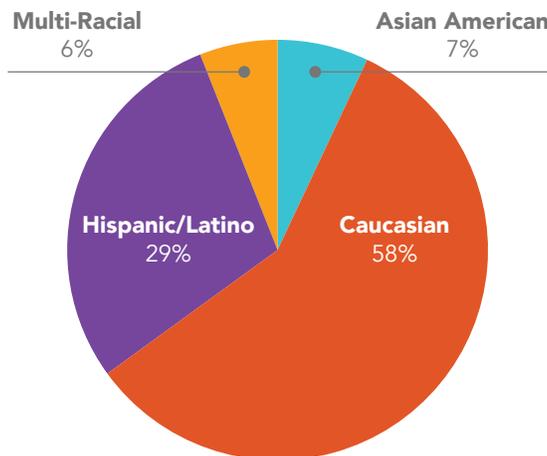


Demographics

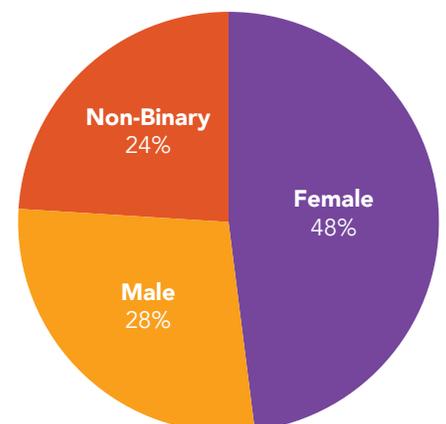
Age Group



Ethnicity



Gender Identity



Internships

The Playhouse has always strived to attract diverse San Diegans for our internships and employment. We pride ourselves in representing diverse voices onstage, and are improving diversity among our staff, but we needed to revamp the career pathway to provide a more inclusive approach to recruiting and mentoring individuals from different backgrounds and experiences. We learned that the people we are most trying to reach do not always have the economic freedom to work unpaid.

Beginning with the 2022 summer cohort, our undergraduate, graduate, and early-career interns are paid minimum wage, and we have refocused our program to be more centered on educational benefits to interns, utilizing a revised curriculum and new learning tools. Interns gain valuable on-the-job experience, learning directly from La Jolla Playhouse staff and leadership. Interns enjoy up to 29 hours per week for up to 15 weeks of practical and theoretical learning opportunities.

SUMMER 2022

In May through August 2022, we served 12 interns, including 9 local students, 7 UC San Diego students, 2 graduate students, and 1 former Playhouse Conservatory student. Summer interns attended 14 seminars with Playhouse administrative and production staff, a seminar with the Playhouse Board, and a financial literacy seminar with Bank of America, in addition to 4 social gatherings with their cohort and Playhouse staff.

FALL 2022

In August through December 2022, we served 7 interns, including 6 local students and 3 returning from the summer program. Fall interns attended 11 seminars with Playhouse administrative and production staff, a seminar with the Playhouse Board, and a financial literacy seminar with Bank of America, in addition to 4 social gatherings with their cohort and Playhouse staff.

SPRING 2023

In January through June 2023, we served 5 interns, including 3 returning from the fall program. Spring interns attended 7 seminars with Playhouse administrative and production staff; a seminar with the Playhouse Board; a Human Resources prep day to learn about resumes, interviewing, and financial literacy; in addition to 2 social gatherings with their cohort and Playhouse staff.



Intern Alumni Network

Interns receive resources, mentoring, and community-building after their Playhouse experience through the Intern Alumni Network Facebook group. The Learning & Engagement Manager posts Playhouse job opportunities and updates, and members engage directly with each other as well. The group now consists of more than 50 current and former interns. In a recent post on the Facebook group, alumni shared how their internship at the Playhouse affected their career in the creative space. Current job titles include: Middle School Theatre

Teacher, Freelance Casting Director, Event Manager, Stuntwoman, Actress, Ph.D. Candidate in Theatre, and Marketing Director.

Several former interns now work at the Playhouse. They include the current Assistant Director of Philanthropy - Institutional Giving, Associate Producer, Board of Director's Trustee, Learning & Engagement Manager, Learning & Engagement Coordinator, Special Events Assistant, Philanthropy Coordinator, and Company Management Assistant.



Summer 2022 Interns

BIPOC Fellowship

BIPOC Directing Fellowship

In 2022, La Jolla Playhouse created a two-year Fellowship for a BIPOC director to embed in the Artistic Department – working on many and ultimately directing one of our Subscription Season shows. The Directing Fellow receives a salary and healthcare benefits. During the application process we received and reviewed 90 submissions and interviewed 10 finalists. **Kat Yen was selected as our first Directing Fellow and started her fellowship in January 2023.**

HIGHLIGHT: KAT YEN

Kat Yen joined the Playhouse in January 2023 to begin her two-year Directing Fellowship. She is a Taiwanese-American theatre director who was born and raised in NYC. She has directed at Atlantic Theater Company, Ars Nova, Cherry Lane Theatre, Ensemble Studio Theatre, and the Bushwick Starr, among others. Recent productions include *Heart Strings* by Lee Cataluna, *Happy Life* by Kathy Ng, *Marisol* by José Rivera, *The Juniors* by Noah Diaz and *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* by Anne Washburn with music by Michael Friedman and Liam Bellman-Sharpe. Kat is an alumnus of Lincoln Center Directors Lab, a former Resident Director at the Flea Theater, the 2016-2017 Van Lier Directing Fellow at Second Stage, and the co-founder and former Artistic Director of Spookfish Theatre Company. She is also a teaching artist at Stella Adler Studio of Acting, LAByrinth Theater Company and Marymount Manhattan College. M.F.A. Directing: Yale School of Drama.



“This directing fellowship has been career changing, even life changing for me. The amount of support I’ve received from the Playhouse for my artistic work and general well-being are unparalleled and I feel so lucky to now be amongst this incredible community of artists and theatre lovers. With this fellowship, I’ve been given a stable bedrock for my art to continue growing and evolving, as well as the unique opportunity to select and direct a play next season, with the Playhouse’s guidance. It is such a gift to have a theatrical institution of this caliber provide me with a platform to share my artistic voice and help carve out my place in American theatre.”

– Kat Yen, Directing Fellow



Observerships

The Production Department and Learning and Engagement team co-host one observership day for each Subscription Season production (six per year). This entails inviting high school and college students to gain exposure to production-related careers in theatre. Participants observe a technical rehearsal, tour La Jolla Playhouse theatres and work spaces, meet with members of production staff to learn about their work and career paths, and then enjoy dinner and a performance that evening.

This program served 60 high-schoolers, 20 college students, and 4 teachers this year.

Groups came from Del Norte High School, LJP 2022 Conservatory, San Diego School of Creative & Performing Arts, Just in Time for Foster Youth, UC San Diego, and Palomar College.



Playhouse Teen Council

Playhouse Teen Council (PTC) is an advocacy and advisory group involving creative and dynamic high school students throughout San Diego County who demonstrate strong leadership qualities and a passion for theatre. The purpose of PTC is to foster the next generation of theatre leaders and professionals through cultivated educational and

interactive experiences with La Jolla Playhouse. Playhouse Teen Council met 17 times including two Teen Nights where students met and discussed the show with the cast. Teen Nights were organized for the production of *As You Like It* as well as *The Outsiders*. **Over 150 teens were engaged through this programming.**

Playhouse Leadership Council

The Playhouse Leadership Council (PLC) is a cross-cultural partnership of community leaders, whose mission is to create a welcoming and inclusive environment, act as ambassadors for La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego, and build and nurture relationships with new audiences. Members attend

scheduled meetings including private artistic chats prior to each production and work directly in the community to increase awareness of theatre to help overcome geographic, economic and perceptive barriers. **30 individuals participated in PLC, meeting seven times over the course of the year.**

Staff DEIA Initiatives

La Jolla Playhouse strives to create a work environment where all employees are valued. We are committed to providing an inclusive, professional work environment free from discrimination and one that supports the next generation of theatre professionals. La Jolla Playhouse's journey as an anti-racist, equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible institution is a work in progress, and the work continues. The following programs help us demonstrate the importance of DEIA to La Jolla Playhouse and allow us to impart these values to the next generation of theatre professionals.

Accountability & Inclusion Alliance Leadership Collective

Established in 2020, the mission of La Jolla Playhouse's Accountability & Inclusion Alliance (AIA) is to equip staff with the tools to discover, address and dismantle systemic inequities within LJP structures, policies and practices to create impactful solutions for a safe, equitable and anti-racist community.

The new AIA Leadership Collective, launched in 2023, will work with our People + Culture partners at Cornerstone Consulting HR to examine organizational gaps and opportunities related to equity, inclusion and access and to find avenues for the staff at large to take part in conversations. The AIA Leadership Collective will work to better ensure the efforts and recommendations of the larger group are fully recognized and realized within co-constructed timeframes and protocols.

The AIA is comprised of three groups including the Strategy Team, Engagement Team, and Communications Team. Members of the Strategy Team including HR Manager Jenn Boaz, Network Systems Specialist Daryl Davis, and Props Supervisor Deb Hatch will examine organizational practices, discuss and make determinations about organizational dilemmas, and address barriers

to inclusion. The Engagement Team, led by Learning & Engagement Manager Hannah Reinert and Associate Director of Ticketing Services Pearl Hang, will focus on creating opportunities for community engagement and planning special events and activities. The focus of the Communications Team, directed by Costume Supervisor Jennifer Ables and Senior Coordinator, Special Events Katie Wallace-Coppo, is to spread the AIA story and opportunities for engagement including special events and activities.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Training

General Manager Ryan Meisheid and HR Manager Jenn Boaz collaborate with Cornerstone Consulting HR to lead our staff through intentional trainings, including unconscious bias awareness and gender bias training for *As You Like It*. Cornerstone Consulting HR (CCHR) is a niche consulting firm specializing in accelerating the growth of organizations and their employees via cogent human resources, leadership development, change management, diversity, equity, and inclusion-based strategies.

We are also continuing to use CCHR as consultants on each unique production (see HIGHLIGHT: *LA Times* Article). The fruits of that labor have been seen throughout our producing practices, including intentional hiring of production crew to create a safe space for our trans, non-binary, and queer company; proactive reimagining of dressing room spaces to reflect company members' different gender identity needs; and creating bathroom spaces that embrace gender diversity. We have heard from many BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disabled artists that having Cornerstone (as well as intimacy coaches and identity-specific consultants as needed) has allowed them to center themselves as artists during their time with us and not feel pressured to be the representative and caretaker for their fellow artists.

A group of performers in traditional Indian attire, including colorful saris and turbans, are captured in a dynamic dance pose on a stage. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a vibrant and energetic atmosphere. The performers are in various stages of movement, with some arms raised and bodies angled towards the camera.

HIGHLIGHT: **LA TIMES** ARTICLE

'I'm not Indian enough?' How a bhangra musical addresses identity with radical nuance

By Ashley Lee | March 30, 2022

In the montage-like opening of “Bhangin’ It,” a stage musical that showcases multiple styles of Indian dance and traditional Indian instruments, the energy and tensions are high. All the college students are smiling through the cardio-centric routines and collecting a trophy after each one. But one competitor, Mary, is visibly struggling, her teammates repeatedly vetoing her ideas.

“No,” she’s told, “because you’re diluting bhangra.” Mary then responds with an audible force: “So, I’m not Indian enough for you? Is that it?”

That line echoes a question that multi-hyphenated Americans have asked themselves all their lives. Yet it’s one that’s rarely touched upon in contemporary-set musicals, let alone tackled with thoughtful nuance.

But “Bhangin’ It” manages to pull it off and more, without any kind of diluting. It presents multiple sides of complex discussions around cultural identity without declaring a definitive winner, incorporates deeply rooted South Asian art forms into an American musical without flattening pronunciations or practices for the historically white theatergoer and genuinely addresses these topics and conversations without sacrificing story, character or crowd-pleasing humor.

...And after the pandemic’s collective pause and the industry’s reckoning with racism and abuses of power, “Bhangin’ It” is proof of the profound artistic achievements that yield from transformative justice techniques, which Afsar says “this creative team made a top priority.”

...The show’s commitment to authenticity was not limited to what was presented onstage. Behind the scenes, the production employed diversity, equity and inclusion consultants from Cornerstone Consulting to lead workshops with the cast, the majority of whom are performers of color.

“A lot of these actors are used to being the sole representative of their community in these rooms and having to do a lot of that cultural fluency work that’s outside their job description,” says Lew. “We needed a way to open the piece to this real wealth of lived experiences that everyone personally had, without anyone feeling like they had to fight for the right version of how to portray their culture.”

Those facilitated discussions — an example of transformative justice practices in theatermaking — led to “Toledo,” the musical’s radically insightful song about the prickly burden of representation: that expectation to be an expert of your own ethnicity, that pressure to overcome language barriers to communicate with family members, that feeling of internalized doubt within a community that ostensibly should be a source of comfort.

“The reality is, it’s hard to have these conversations in real life, let alone sing about it onstage,” says Afsar. “It’s teaching me a lot about myself and the shame I didn’t know I had. But there’s so much power in naming it, acknowledging it and sharing it with others, the way Mary and the other characters do in the story.

“Coming back to work after the shutdowns, there’s a different level of expectation of how we’re going to approach theatermaking differently, and this company took that very seriously, and that beautiful song is a direct result of that care,” Afsar continues. “I think we’re all still learning how to hold each other accountable with grace in order to do it in the best way we possibly can. But moving forward, I know this is the only way I want to work.”

Read more at www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2022-03-30/la-et-bhangin-it-musical-la-jolla-playhouse

Affinity Groups

BIPOC Staff Affinity Group

The BIPOC Staff Affinity Group is a voluntary, collaborative group of 18 employees who are invested in furthering the well-being of La Jolla Playhouse BIPOC staff and visiting artists. It is a space to meet twice a month to connect, create community, and brainstorm ways to continually foster a more inclusive environment at the Playhouse.

Playhouse Pride Affinity Group

Playhouse Pride is La Jolla Playhouse's LGBTQIA+ staff affinity group. The group of roughly 10 individuals meets throughout the year to connect and discuss topics supporting the Playhouse's queer employees. During the past season they met regularly to socialize and worked to create gender-inclusive restroom signs for all public-facing restrooms. As a group they marched in the July 2022 San Diego Pride Parade along with allies; provided additional information and stickers regarding gender pronouns for audience members

attending *As You Like It*; and provided treats to visiting companies to celebrate National Coming Out Day, Valentine's Day, and first rehearsals. Playhouse Pride supports the solicitation of local businesses and provides a list of LGBTQIA+ businesses in San Diego to all visiting artists. The group sponsored the staff training on gender bias which was led by Cornerstone Consulting HR.

Together, the two affinity groups host a dessert reception during each production to welcome the affinity members within the casts and creative teams.



La Jolla Playhouse at the 2022 San Diego Pride Parade



Hiring Practices

Increased Equity in Hiring and Recruitment

We will continue to re-evaluate and re-imagine how the Playhouse recruits and hires staff through a more equitable and transparent application process. We have expanded the reach of our job postings beyond our website and LinkedIn to **include diversity-focused websites such as BIPOC Arts, National Association of Latino Arts and Culture, and the Women in Marketing Facebook group**. We are also broadening our recruitment efforts at the local level to ensure we attract a diverse pool of applicants by utilizing Handshake to share job openings with local universities and posting them on the San Diego Performing Arts League job board.

Additionally, we have reworked our internship program to remove barriers that might prevent BIPOC and underrepresented candidates from applying. We streamlined the application process by providing clear deadlines for application materials well in advance of their launch and allowing candidates to select up to three choices for department interest. We developed partnerships with local community colleges and universities to identify and engage potential interns from diverse backgrounds. As shared above in the Intern Alumni Network section, we hire former interns into other roles at the Playhouse when possible, creating a positive cycle that reinforces our commitment to equitable recruitment.

Key Personnel



Eric Keen-Louie is the Executive Producer at La Jolla Playhouse. In this role he is the lead producer of the Subscription Season and manages the development and growth of the theatre alongside artistic director Christopher Ashley and managing director Debby Buchholz. Eric also directs Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives and the BIPOC Affinity Group. He joined the Playhouse in 2018 as producing director, overseeing productions including the world premieres of *The Coast Starlight*, *Kiss My Aztec!* and *Diana*. He previously worked at the Old Globe for seven years as associate producer and later as associate artistic director. He graduated with a B.A. in Dramatic Literature from New York University and an M.F.A. in Theatre Management and Producing from Columbia University.



Ryan Meisheid is the General Manager of La Jolla Playhouse and oversees the LGBTQ+ affinity group, Playhouse Pride. Previously, Ryan was the Associate Managing Director at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts Theatre Company. Prior to the Denver Center, Ryan was in the general management departments at New York's Public Theatre and the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and worked with Off-Broadway's Second Stage Theatre and Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company. He graduated from the Theatre School, DePaul University in Chicago with a B.F.A. in Theatre Management, and was part of the 2015 Art Equity Facilitator Training Cohort. He is a Trustee of the San Diego Theatrical Health and Pension Funds.



Bridget Cavaiola Stone is the Director of Learning at La Jolla Playhouse and leads a department that impacts over 30,000 San Diegans each year with a team of over 100 contracted staff and volunteers through k-12 programming, internships, and adult learning and engagement opportunities. She is the co-producer for the Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour. She is a former high school English and Theatre teacher and teaching artist and has extensive training in inclusion, professional learning, and arts integration.



Jacole Kitchen is Director of Arts Engagement and In-House Casting at La Jolla Playhouse. As the co-lead of the Learning and Engagement Department, Jacole helps to expand and nurture community partnership, and foster relationships throughout the greater San Diego community of artists. Directing credits: *Iron* (Roustabouts Theatre Co.), *The Music Sounds Different To Me Now* (La Jolla Playhouse - WOW Festival) *Pick Me Last* and *Light Years Away* (La Jolla Playhouse POP Tour), *Cardboard Piano* (Diversionary Theatre), *An Iliad* (New Village Arts), *September and Her Sisters* (Scripps Ranch Theatre – Out on a Limb), and more. In addition, Jacole is a private acting coach and serves as Executive Director for San Diego Performing Arts League (SDPAL).



Hannah Reinert is the Learning & Engagement Manager at La Jolla Playhouse. She supports all Learning and Engagement programming and leads the LJP Teen Council and helps guide the internship program. She holds a BA in Theatre & Communications from UC San Diego, Cum Laude, and is the winner of the 2017 UC San Diego Bronowski Award.



Colette Luckie is the Founder & President of Cornerstone Consulting HR (which leads DEI Training at the Playhouse). She is a board-certified executive coach. A component of her current practice includes training and professional development, customized diversity assessments, individualized competency inventories, instructional design, and partnering with senior leaders to integrate online, cloud-based talent acquisition and performance management systems. Colette holds a master's degree in Educational Administration/HR Management/Organization Development from New York University and a bachelor's degree in Business Education/Information Systems from Pace University in New York.

HIGHLIGHT: COSTUME TEAM & AS YOU LIKE IT

Historically, dressing room assignments are made based on the gender binary however, as the entire cast of *As You Like It* identified on the LGBTQ+ spectrum, binary dressing rooms were not an option for this production. The costume, stage management, production management, and directing teams had several conversations about how to proceed. Considerations included privacy needs surrounding elevated concerns of those mid-transition and those with heightened fear/trauma/body dysmorphia around undressing in front of others. Additional considerations included preferences for energy level in the dressing room from quiet and focused energy to high energy with music.

The planning team sent an email to cast members explaining the process, welcoming feedback, and requesting responses to an anonymous survey regarding privacy and dressing room needs and concerns. Based on the response from the actors, a quiet room and a high-energy room were implemented. For privacy needs, pipe and drape booths were set up in each room. Since typical gender-based dressing rooms were not being used for *As You Like It*, the costume team took a day to intentionally memorize which dressing room each actor was in.

Now, the costume team has an intentional discussion with each production about how to approach dressing spaces based on their needs.

“Treating each cast as a group of individuals and addressing their needs for personal and private spaces on a show-by-show basis, as well as eliminating gendered language in our routine discussions of those spaces, allows us to more completely support and welcome incoming casts, communicate more clearly amongst the dressing team, and honor the diversity of gender identity.”

– Junior Bergman, Wardrobe Supervisor

The Playhouse has permanently stopped referring to dressing rooms as “men’s” and “women’s” and use other terms such as “north” and “south” or “male presenting” and “female presenting.” The same holds true for the gendered terms around clothing, working to weed out gendered language where it is not necessary.





Top: Members of the cast of *As You Like It*.
Middle: (L-R) Cody Sloan, Rami Margron, Esco Jouléy and Taiwo Sokan.
Bottom: (L-R) Peter Smith, Esteban Andres Cruz, David Greenspan. Photos by Rich Soublet II.

WHAT'S NEXT

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS: June 13 – August 12, 2023

ACADEMIC YEAR INTERNSHIPS: September 19, 2023 – May 19, 2024

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

Supporter Benefits

Inner Circle - \$1,000

- Invitation to annual Playhouse Backstage Tour
- Invitation to behind-the-scenes production-focused experiences(s)
- Recognition in *Performances Magazine* and on website
- Two (2) invitations to Inner Circle Nights
- One (1) invitation to VIP Celebration Night

Actors Circle - \$2,500 *All benefits of Inner Circle, plus:*

- Concierge ticketing services
- Private Backstage tour offered for friends/family
- Invitation to all Inner Circle Nights
- Invitation to two (2) VIP Celebration Nights

Celebration Circle - \$5,000 *All benefits of Actors Circle, plus:*

- Invitations to readings, workshops and select rehearsals
- Reserved parking at La Jolla Playhouse (*subject to availability*)
- Eligible to purchase VIP Celebration Night Subscription
- Concierge ticketing for Broadway and other regional theatres (*subject to availability*)
- Invitation to travel with the Playhouse
- Invitation to all Inner Circle Nights
- Invitation to all VIP Celebration Nights

Directors Circle - \$10,000 *All benefits of Celebration Circle, plus:*

- Invitation to private hosted events with Playhouse leadership
- Recognition as a key supporter of a Playhouse program (such as WOW Festival, POP Tour, DNA)

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how you can support our Developing the Next Generation of Theatre Professionals initiative, please contact Keely Daximillion, Associate Director of Philanthropy, at kdaximillion@ljp.org or (858) 228-3084.

For Corporate Support, please contact Rebecca Pierce Goodman, Assistant Director of Philanthropy, Institutional Giving, at rgoodman@ljp.org or (858) 228-3059.