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Theatre Communications Group Announces Round 4 Cycle A Recipients of Leadership U[niversity] Program

New York, NY – Theatre Communications Group (TCG) announces the 2016 Round 4 Cycle A recipients of the **Leadership U[niversity]—Continuing Ed** program. Through the support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, grants of up to \$5,000 will support nine mid-career and veteran theatre professionals at TCG Member Theatres for learning opportunities to advance their leadership skills. The goal of this program is to strengthen the field by developing the individuals who are the core and the future of theatre.

“What does professional development look like to these nine theatre leaders? It looks like building connections with immigrant and other at-risk communities, discovering innovative approaches to developing new and classic plays, recruiting and retaining a diverse staff, forging new capitalization strategies, and so much more” said Teresa Eyring, executive director of TCG. “With the support of our longstanding partnership with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, these mid-career and veteran theatre professionals aren’t just strengthening their own practice, but contributing to a more vital and inclusive theatre field.”

Leadership U[niversity] awards grants in two initiatives: **One-on-One** for early-career leaders and **Continuing Ed** for mid-career and veteran professionals. **Continuing Ed** grants of up to \$5,000 are awarded to mid-career to veteran professionals at TCG Member Theatres for learning opportunities to advance their leadership skills. Grants have been awarded to the applicants’ home theatres on behalf of the theatre practitioners. Leadership U[niversity] has awarded over \$1.8 million dollars in total grants over the life of the program.

Continuing Ed Grant Recipients:

Angie Kamel, Artistic Engagement Manager at A Contemporary Theatre (Seattle, WA), will travel to the Twin Cities to study its vibrant, thriving arts community and how the theatres develop powerful and healthy connections with East African-immigrant and Asian-American populations. Included in her travels will be observerships and meetings with Guthrie Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre, Mu Performing Arts, Penumbra Theatre Company, Walker Arts Space, and more.

Patricia Garza, Artistic Development Program Manager at Center Theatre Group (CTG) (Los Angeles, CA), on behalf of CTG’s established Diversity, Equity and Inclusion task force, will pursue targeted training activities to help CTG identify key organizational issues around retention and recruitment of staff. She will participate in specific learning experiences such as attending Disney Institute, MuseumCamp: Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, Compassion Cultivation Training at Stanford University, and observerships at The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design and more.

Kathleen Dorman, Director of Education at Classic Stage Company (New York, NY), will travel to locations in the US and UK to meet with and learn from practitioners and organizations that are excelling in bringing Shakespeare and elementary school audiences together. In preparation for a proposed co-production between Classic Stage Company and Trusty Sidekick Theater Company, she

will gain a comprehensive understanding of available techniques to design a curriculum and devise an exciting new work for young audiences based on Shakespeare's work.

Beth Wood, Associate Artistic Director at Cleveland Public Theatre (Cleveland, OH) will engage the leadership of organizations who have deep experience with producing new works, particularly those with tailor-made development processes to learn how to develop a model for multi-year, customized new play development for local artists, observing how these theatres develop new works over an extended time and/or take a customized approach to developing new works.

Brenna C. Thomas, Development Director at HERE (New York, NY) will plan for next steps at HERE by attending a three-day course in Capital Campaign management through Indiana University's Lilly School of Philanthropy; lead quarterly online convenings with peers from similar-sized organizations to discuss the nature of individual giving across the country; and attend the 2017 TCG National Conference to network with a wider circle of peers and share findings.

Wade Handy, Education Programs Manager at Manhattan Theatre Club (New York, NY) will travel to four cities to visit five different programs to learn best practices in managing community partnerships, as well as developing and administering programs, from peer organizations working with at-risk youth. These learnings will work to help him improve and enhance Stargate Theatre, a program that provides 15-20 court-involved young men transitional employment, work-readiness training, and literacy education as they compose, rehearse, and perform a drama in an intensive theatre-making process over seven weeks.

Gabriel Barrera, Charge Scenic Artist at Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, OR) will advance his professional skills as a manager of a team and leader of diversity and inclusion initiatives in theatre production by attending a curated series of conferences, convenings, and organizations to observe a variety of approaches to diversity and inclusion, mentor and teach scenic painting workshop for underrepresented populations, and recruit culturally diverse candidates for OSF's FAIR program. These experiences include attending the Latina/o Theatre Commons convening, the United States Institute for Theatre Technology conference, and connecting with the Latino Producers Action Network, Homeboy Industries, and Compton YouthBuild.

Stephanie Ybarra, Director of Special Artistic Projects at The Public Theater (New York City) will participate in a professional-development curriculum that includes: enhancing her facilitation skills and Spanish-language knowledge; attending the Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit; and an observership with community-based theatre collective Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani in Lima, Peru to study practices on activating grassroots community issues, mobilization, and advocacy. These experiences will greatly inform and enhance her leadership of The Public's Mobile Unit.

Kelvin Dinkins, Jr., General Manager of Two River Theater (Red Bank, NJ) will complete a fellowship in the Banff Centre for Leadership's "New Fundamentals: Leadership for the Creative Ecology" program in Canada, and will investigate the development of new models for arts organizations--as well as models for collective action and equity, diversity, and inclusion--within the Los Angeles and Seattle arts communities. Doing so will bring best practices and resources to Two River Theater in service of inclusion and connectivity with underrepresented populations in the Red Bank community.

The **Leadership U[niversity] Continuing Ed** Round 4 Cycle A panel included: **Jerry Ruiz**, executive director of the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center; **Tiffany Vega**, general manager, Hi-ARTS/Hip-Hop Theater Festival; and **Criss Henderson**, executive director, Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Founded in 1969, **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** endeavors to strengthen, promote, and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies by supporting exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. www.mellon.org.

For over 50 years, **Theatre Communications Group** (TCG), the national organization for U.S. theatre, has existed to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit theatre. TCG's constituency has grown from a handful of groundbreaking theatres to nearly 700 member theatres and affiliate organizations and more than 11,000 individuals nationwide. TCG offers its members networking and knowledge-building opportunities through conferences, events, research and communications; awards grants, approximately \$2 million per year, to theatre companies and individual artists; advocates on the federal level; and serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute, connecting its constituents to the global theatre community. TCG is North America's largest independent publisher of dramatic literature, with 14 Pulitzer Prizes for Best Play on the TCG booklist. It also publishes the award-winning *American Theatre* magazine and ARTSEARCH®, the essential source for a career in the arts. In all of its endeavors, TCG seeks to increase the organizational efficiency of its member theatres, cultivate and celebrate the artistic talent and achievements of the field and promote a larger public understanding of, and appreciation for, the theatre. www.tcg.org.

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