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AAD320

Writing Activity A: DEI

Part 1: Sample DEI Statements

“We are an interdisciplinary troupe of artists working to reinvigorate and redefine the form of cabaret in the 21st century by fusing it with theater, opera, and dance. We play with nostalgia and humor to question the embedded social messages in popular culture and tackle the politics of gender, identity, and artistic invention with sparkle and wit.”

- Bearded Ladies Cabaret

<https://www.beardedladiescabaret.com/>

“Steppenwolf Theatre Company strives to create thrilling, courageous and provocative art in a thoughtful and inclusive environment.

We succeed when we disrupt your routine with experiences that spark curiosity, empathy and joy.

We invite you to join our ensemble as we navigate, together, our complex world.”

- Steppenwolf Theater

<https://www.steppenwolf.org/About-Us>

“Since we began in 1989, our work has taken many forms in response to the needs of the times. Currently, we focus on creating commissioned work about social issues for corporations, schools from elementary through university-level, and social services agencies. In other ongoing projects, we also pair amateur actors and seasoned professionals to create work about the lives of underrepresented populations.

- *People with disabilities.*
- *Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgendered Adults and Youth.*
- *People with Alzheimer’s and early onset dementia.*
- *Women with cancer.*
- *Survivors of suicide.*
- *Supporters of Reproductive Choice*
- *At risk youth*
- *University students*

These are a few of our friends and creative partners. Check us out or better yet, join us.”

- That Uppity Theater Company

<https://www.uppityco.com/about-uppity>

Part 2: Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement: At Bantam Productions, we strive to bring evocative and passionate works of theater to all walks of life eager to engage, particularly presenting inclusive theater to those inhibited by hearing deficits, vision deficits and other cognitive disabilities. Our experienced staff and acting conservatory are devoted to educating and sparking passion within our audiences through live theater, spreading the idea that the thespian world is truly for all.

Vision Statement: We fill the sensory gaps that exist for audiences with disabilities in theatrical productions by incorporating ASL interpreters and audio descriptors into our productions. We aim to make known the fact that this world of theater, which already is one of the more inclusive environments out there, still has a long way to go in being the most inclusive.

Part 3: Steps Towards Implementing DEI Policies

- Make sure that all of our amenities are as physically accessible as possible. This includes wheelchair accessible ramps into the theater and down through the house, as well as backstage for performers, and elevators to the second floor. We must also have an adequate number of headsets for those with hearing impairments, as well as for the blind audience for audio descriptions during the performance, and the headsets must be high quality.

- We must be very particular about who we hire, and look for people with very specific skillsets not only for the productions, but for every moment surrounding the performances. For example, it would be beneficial to have a handful of ASL trained staff members working as ushers or merchandise and refreshment sellers, knowing that a large portion of our audiences are deaf. We also need our employees to have high levels of patience considering the abilities of each audience member are going to vary greatly. For the productions themselves, we want to be certain that the interpreters we hire are experienced and excel at their jobs, and that they are given enough preparation ahead of time.
- We want to make sure that all of the different features our performances offer are advertised well. We can promote shows geared towards deaf audiences to local communities and schools for the deaf, and coordinate helpful features like transportation to and from the theater to make it all the more accessible.
- We must keep in mind the audience's experience from the moment they walk into the theater, as was mentioned when deciding who to hire. There should be hand rails with the ramps, and all signage in the lobby should be very clear directing those needing hearing aids to their locations, or those needing better sight of the ASL interpreters to their seats. We must also keep in mind what kind of music we play in the lobby (or lack thereof) and number of people coming into one area at a time, thinking of some guests whose cognitive disabilities might cause them to become overwhelmed in such a scenario.

- It is crucial to include community members of the impaired audiences on our advisory board for the theater. Having a member of the deaf community, for example, on our board would allow us to have better knowledge on what we can improve upon in the ASL interpreted productions. This would also express to people of these minority groups that they have the ability to voice change and control in the theater.