



AMERICAN
THEATRE
WING

Andrew
Lloyd
Webber
Foundation



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RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE AMERICAN THEATRE WING'S ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER INITIATIVE UNIVERSITY AND TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS

PETER AND PAMELA BARBEY JOIN IN LEADERSHIP SUPPORT FOR THE ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER INITIATIVE AND MAKE MATCHING CHALLENGE GRANT

New York, NY (July 12, 2017) – The **American Theatre Wing** (Heather Hitchens, President and CEO) announced today the recipients of the **Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative 4-Year University Scholarships** and the **Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative Training Scholarships**. These scholarships represent the Wing's most aggressive investment in direct support for underserved public school students demonstrating exceptional talent and economic need to continue their study of theater.

"Heather Hitchens and her committee have done a spectacular job in finding truly extraordinary students of theater to support with these scholarships. Each person on this list is a shining example of why this kind of investment is so vital to the continuation of the art form," said **Andrew Lloyd Webber**.

"The process of going through the hundreds of applications for these scholarships underscored not just the overwhelming need for this kind of financial support, but also the incredible talent and promise in every region of the country," said **Heather Hitchens**, President of the American Theatre Wing. "These twenty-five students represent some of the finest examples of passionate and committed young artists I've ever seen, and I'm thrilled that the Wing is able to help them on their journey to deepening their theatre practice."

"Serving on the panel was such a joy and so eye-opening for me," said **Bernard Telsey**, member of the Andrew Lloyd Webber University Scholarships Panel. "The students' applications reminded me why we do what we do and the effect that theatre has on young people. I'm so thrilled that they'll get the additional support to go to college to further pursue their passion for the arts. Mark my words, they will be the next generation of stage managers, set designers and actors."

"It was an honor to be part of the selection panel. As an educator who knows firsthand the value of a quality arts education for young artists, I am convinced that these scholarships will have a transformative impact on the lives of the diverse, bright, and talented students we selected. It was a thrill to be part of a process seeking to give access to the arts to young people that truly represent our country's rich cultural and ethnic tapestry," said **Alexander Santiago-Jirau**, member of the Andrew Lloyd Webber Training Scholarships Panel.

Additionally, it was announced today that *Village Voice* owner and Obie Awards co-presenter **Peter Barbey** and wife **Pamela Barbey** have generously donated \$500,000 towards the American Theatre Wing's Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative through the Edwin Barbey Charitable Trust. In addition, they have pledged to match others' donations for investment in the future of the initiative, dollar for dollar, up to \$500,000 for the next two years. Funds raised by this matching challenge will be used to establish a new program reserve fund for the future stability and enhancement of the Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative.

"I have immensely enjoyed working with the Wing and its accomplished staff over the past two years co-presenting the Obie Awards, and Pamela and I have particularly admired the work that they have done expanding access to theater education alongside the venerable Lord Lloyd Webber. We are delighted that the Edwin Barbey Charitable Trust will help expand the initiative this coming year. In addition, we hope our matching challenge will encourage others to join us in support so that even more young people can develop their creative potential." said **Peter Barbey**.

High School students in Grade 12 who demonstrated talent and ability in the theater arts, but lack the resources to attend a four-year university program, were eligible to apply for the **4-Year University Scholarships**. These scholarships can be used at an accredited private or public university or college in the United States. Each of the scholars are provided with scholarships of up to \$10,000 towards their course fees, renewable for four years so long as a minimum GPA of 3.0 is maintained.

The selected students include: production designer/technician **Natalia Avila** of Houston, TX, who will attend the University of Oklahoma; stage manager **Carrli Cooper** of Winter Garden, FL, who will attend the University of Michigan; actor **Kaisheem Fowler-Bryant** of Bronx, NY, who will attend Howard University; actor **Marcus Gladney** of Huntsville, AL, who will attend Carnegie Mellon University; and actor **Grace Pruitt** of Ashland, OR, who will attend Azusa Pacific University.

Public Middle and High School students who demonstrated talent and ability in the theater arts, but have a lack of resources to receive high level training prior to college were eligible to apply for the **Training Scholarships**. These scholarships can be used for Private or Group Voice, Dance, or Music lessons; theatre training programs that stand alone or are housed in professional theatre settings; theatre training camps; or special training opportunities.

The selected students include: **Eugene Bois** of Marietta, GA, who will attend the International Summer Dance program at Point Park University; **Destiny Cable** of Pacoima, CA, who will attend the Musical Theatre Summer Institute at UCLA; **Colette Caspari** of Cumming, GA, who will attend the Nexus Musical Theatre Summer Camp; **Quinn Chisenhall** of Quinton, VA, who will attend the Pre-College Stage Design Studio Program at Emerson College; **Jamia Croft** of Louisville, KY, who will attend the Summer Dance Intensive at the Cincinnati Ballet; **Daelin Elzie** of Manvel, TX, who will receive after-school voice lessons at Theatre Under the Stars; **Aaron Graham** of Riverview, FL, who will attend New York Film Academy's Acting for Film summer study program; **Anijah Lezama** of Brooklyn, NY, who will attend a summer study program at the French Academie of Ballet; **Sydney Lopes** of Smyrna, GA, who will attend the five-week Summer Performance Program at Berklee College of Music; **Kelly Lukito** of Flushing, NY, who will attend the Teens Summer program at Young Actors at Strasberg; **Jhala Martin** of Detroit, MI, who will attend the Rutgers Summer Acting Conservatory; **Dina Perez** of Chicago, IL, who will attend Interlochen's Shakespeare Bootcamp; **Haley Prince** of Houston, TX, who will attend the Destination Broadway summer study program in New York City; **Jennifer Reyes Fernandez** of Louisville, KY, who will attend a summer study program at the Walden Theatre; **Jada Rice** of Chicago, IL, who will attend the iO Theatre Summer Intensive; **Ariana Rodriguez** of Bronx, NY, who will attend a summer study program at TADA! Youth Theater; **Julia Schick** of Kennesaw, GA, who will attend the five week Panorama program at The Performing Arts Project; **Alex Serrano** of Fresno, CA, who will attend the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts' Summer Intensive; **Amara Valerio** of Yonkers, NY, who will attend Riverdale Children's Theater Summer Lights Program; and **Leon Weir III** of Grosse Pointe Woods, MI, who will attend the Rutgers Summer Acting Conservatory.

Through these University and Training Scholarships, the Wing hopes to bridge the gap between talent and opportunity, and create a strong pipeline to the professional theatre for promising artists of all backgrounds. The student's area of focus can be from any aspect of theatre from performance, to design, to writing, to stage management, and others.

These inaugural grants are part of the **American Theatre Wing's Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative**, a major new national initiative which received \$1.3 million in seed funding from the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation to promote diversity, equity, and access to the arts. This project is an expansion of the work that the multi-Tony Award winning composer and producer has been doing to promote and fund arts education through his Foundation in the United Kingdom. The Initiative's focus is to bridge the gap between talent and opportunity, creating a stronger pipeline to the professional theatre for promising artists of all backgrounds—fostering a future generation of theatre makers and patrons that reflects the diversity and dynamism of America as a whole.

The three components of the initiative are annual **Classroom Resource Grants, Training Scholarships**, for middle and high school students covering the costs to attend summer study and after school training programs and **University Scholarships**, providing financial support of \$40,000 over 4 years for students to pursue theatre studies at the University level.

For more information on the American Theatre Wing's Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative, visit <http://americantheatrewing.org/program/the-andrew-lloyd-webber-initiative/>.

Those wishing to join the Wing in their efforts to provide these critical opportunities for young people can contact the American Theatre Wing's Director of Development, Nicole Gardner (nicole@thewing.org.)

About the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation

The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation was set up by Andrew in 1992 to promote the arts, culture and heritage for the public benefit; since inception Andrew has been the principal provider of funding for all its charitable activities.

In 2010, the Foundation embarked on an active grant giving program and has now awarded grants of over \$20m to support high quality training and personal development as well as other projects that make a real difference to enrich the quality of life both for individuals and within local communities. Significant grants include \$4.5m to Arts Educational Schools, London to create a state of the art professional theatre, \$3m to The Music in Secondary Schools Trust, \$1.3m to The Architectural Heritage Fund, \$1.7m to the American Theatre Wing and over \$380,000 annually to fund 30 performing arts scholarships for talented students in financial need. www.andrewlloydwebberfoundation.com

About the American Theatre Wing

One hundred years ago, on the eve of America's entry into World War I, seven suffragettes—all women of the theatre—came together to form The Stage Women's War Relief. A century later, the spirit and vision behind the founding of **American Theatre Wing** remains a touchstone for all we do. The Wing continues to champion bravery, with a focus on developing the next generation of brave artists. The Wing advances the future of American Theatre by celebrating excellence and nurturing the next generation: on stage, behind the scenes, and in the audience. We envision an American Theatre that is as vital, multi-faceted, and diverse as the American people.

The Wing's programs span the nation to invest in the growth and evolution of American Theatre. We provide theatre education opportunities for underserved students through the Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative, develop the next generation of theatre professionals through the SpringboardNYC and Theatre Intern Network programs, incubate innovative theatre across the country through the National Theatre Company Grants, foster the song of American Theatre through the Jonathan Larson® Grants, honor the best in New York theatrical design with the Henry Hewes Design Award, and illuminate the creative process

through the Emmy-nominated “Working in the Theatre” documentary series. In addition to founding the Tony Awards® which are co-presented with The Broadway League, the American Theatre Wing co-presents the Obie Awards®, Off Broadway’s Highest Honor, with *The Village Voice*.

Visitors to AmericanTheatreWing.org can gain inspiration and insight into the artistic process through the Wing’s extensive media collection, and learn more about its programming for students, aspiring and working professionals, and audiences. Follow the Wing on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) @TheWing, and on [Facebook.com/TheAmericanTheatreWing](https://www.facebook.com/TheAmericanTheatreWing).

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