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**ATW SECURES \$1M DONATION & MATCHING CHALLENGE  
GRANTED BY THE EDWIN BARBEY CHARITABLE TRUST  
TO SUPPORT ITS ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER INITIATIVE (ALWI)**

**PROGRAM WITH FOUR-YEAR TRACK RECORD PROVIDES  
CRUCIAL EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING RESOURCES  
IN ORDER TO CREATE  
A MORE EQUITABLE, DIVERSE AMERICAN THEATRE**

**New York, NY (April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021)** — The American Theatre Wing has announced a \$1M donation and matching challenge from the Edwin Barbey Charitable Trust in support of its **Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative (ALWI)**, a program created in 2016 with seed funding from the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation to catalyze systemic change in the American Theatre by infusing new resources into the theatre ecosystem that bolster the pipeline for historically under-represented talent – on stage and off.

Through this Initiative, the American Theatre Wing seeks to directly address several key systemic issues that create obstacles in the education and training pipeline, and which have contributed to the creation of a less equitable and less diverse American theatre. These include lack of access to theatre among school-aged children due to poor arts infrastructure in under-resourced public schools, inequitable access to out-of-school training for middle- and high-school aged students from low-income families, lack of tuition support for college-bound students, and lack of mentoring and support for young professionals from marginalized communities.

In just four years, the ALWI has...

- Provided an introduction to theatre to nearly 45,000 students at 42 Title 1 schools across the nation.
- Provided full scholarships to 93 under-represented middle-school and high-schoolers to receive advanced theatre training in out-of-school programs with concentrations ranging from production design, acting, musical theatre composition, choreography, and stage management.
- Provided university tuition support and mentoring opportunities to 23 university students majoring in theatre nationwide.

In announcing this new gift and matching challenge, American Theatre Wing President & CEO Heather Hitchens stated, "The pathway towards systemic change that the ALWI promises is now coming into focus as young people provided with in-school theatre programs advance to become ALWI training scholars,

training scholars advance to be University Scholars, and University scholars begin to graduate into positions in the field. I am extremely grateful to the Edwin Barbey Charitable Trust for their generous past support of this Initiative and for their latest extraordinary commitment and vote of confidence.”

On behalf of the Edwin Barbey Charitable Trust Pamela Barbey added, “My family and I are passionate about closing the gap between talent and opportunity. It has been thrilling to be a founding funder of this Initiative and to have had a front row seat in helping sow the seeds of change. It is very clear to me that with additional investment, the tested slate of programs that make up the ALWI have the potential to jumpstart generational change, and pave the way for a long-term transformation of the theatre industry. It is my great hope that others who share my desire to see this change will come on board and help provide the additional investment needed to ensure the full realization of this important goal.”

The matching challenge seeks to raise an additional \$1M over the next two years. With this expanded support, by 2025 the American Theatre Wing will be able to reach 75 public schools and 60,000 K-12 students, provide 125 students with training scholarships, help send 25 high school seniors to university to study theatre and theatre administration, and through mentoring opportunities pave the way for an infusion of hundreds of new and diverse theatre professionals into the theatre industry.

The Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative is just one way in which ATW is working to achieve a more diverse and equitable American theatre. Equity and inclusion are guiding principles of our Organization and all of our programming and initiatives. In addition, together with the Asian American Performers Action Coalition and Counting Together, a coalition of researchers and activists, we are helping lead a data collection effort on race, gender, and disability in the theatre in order to forge new pathways to greater equity and inclusion.

To learn more about the Barbey Matching Challenge and how you can help <https://americantheatrewing.org/andrew-lloyd-webber-initiative-1-million-matching-challenge/> and for more detailed information about this program, past recipients, how to apply <https://americantheatrewing.org/program/the-andrew-lloyd-webber-initiative/>.

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## **ABOUT THE AMERICAN THEATRE WING**

The American Theatre Wing is a not-for-profit organization, founded on the eve of America’s entry into WWI by 7 suffragists and theatre makers who came together to support the nation by harnessing the power of theatre. More than a century later, ATW’s vital work continues to be driven by the fundamental belief that theatre is essential to our economic, educational, and social and emotional well-being as a society.

Through a powerful suite of programs that address all aspects of the national theatre ecology, ATW encourages the discovery of theatre by people of all ages, nurtures talent on stage and off, creates pathways for success for students and young professionals, and encourages the development of the art form itself by recognizing and supporting innovative and excellent work with awards and grants. Building a just, equitable and inclusive American theatre is a guiding principle of all of ATW’s work and programs.

ATW’s Andrew Lloyd Webber Initiative provides discovery, training, and career launching support to under-served young people. Our Musical Theatre Songwriting challenge gives high school songwriters the opportunity to professionally record their original songs. SpringboardNYC provides a bridge from college to career for young actors working to establish themselves on Broadway. Our digital Masterclass offerings for rising creative professionals provide free access to advice, insight, and training by theatre’s top creative professionals. The Network for Emerging Theatre Leaders creates a pathway for young aspiring theatre administrators to have successful careers in the theatre by providing inside information,

technical assistance, networking opportunities, and mentoring. We incubate innovative theatre throughout the country with our National Theatre Company Grants and through our Jonathan Larson® Grants, which support emerging musical theatre writers with significant unrestricted support. We give students, professionals and audiences alike a virtual backstage pass through our five-time Emmy-nominated “Working in the Theatre” documentary series which illuminates the creative process.

ATW is the founder and co-presenter (with The Broadway League) of the Tony Awards®, and the home to OBIE Awards.

Visit [AmericanTheatreWing.org](http://AmericanTheatreWing.org) to learn more about the extensive programming and grant opportunities for students, theatre professionals, and audiences. For the latest updates and news, follow the Wing on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).