STUDENT THEATRE COMMUNITY (STUCO*)-REPLAY PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM

REVIEW

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**Problem:** Until this winter, there was no system in place to dispose of the vast amounts of lumber and other building materials student theatre productions discard each weekend. In the past, student theater groups have gotten in trouble with the city of Evanston, TI, and Norris for illegally dumping materials. Student groups have the option of renting University dumpsters, but at $150 per dumpster, per production, this is more than most student groups can afford.

**Solution:** This past year, ISEN funded a pilot recycling program for winter and spring quarters of the 2011 school year. Through this pilot, a recycling company (Insider’s Entertainment Inc) brought a truck to campus each weekend to collect waste from multiple shows (i.e. one pickup per one weekend for multiple shows). Insider’s Entertainment Inc then recycled or resold these waste materials (over 23,567.77 lbs)

This program significantly decreased the student theatre community’s carbon footprint, and was cheaper than the only other legal recourse - renting University dumpsters at $150/production. This program is also more efficient than past solutions. Traditionally each show rents one Uhaul which must be used to make three trips - dropping off student group sets and furniture, disposing of trash, and returning rented lighting equipment. After a typical 8 or 10 hour strike, and a 60 hour tech-week leading up to the show, the sooner strike is done the better!! ISEN’s allocation for Replay improved the student theater experience at Northwestern, as well as relationships with Norris, other University officials, and the Evanston community.

*StuCO is an umbrella organization composed of 8 student theatre boards on NU’s campus: Arts Alliance, the African American Theatre Ensemble, WAVE Productions, Sit & Spin, Lovers and Madmen, the Jewish Theatre Ensemble, Vertigo, and Purple Crayon Players. Each board independently produces 4-5 mainstage shows per school year.*
Additionally, funding from ISEN created a “trickle-down effect” of green behavior within the student theatre community. A typical production team consists of 30-40 undergraduate students, who then worked with Replay to recycle sets during strike. Through word of mouth and the use of advertisements in programs of participating shows, the majority of the student theatre community is now aware that recycling sets is a viable alternative to trashing them, and that the Replay program is an easy way for them to do so. At the beginning of the year, I had to approach producers to convince them to participate in the program. By the end of spring quarter, I was receiving multiple emails each week from producers asking how to participate.

**Next year:** WAVE Productions received an Alumnae grant to extend the pilot program for another year, with the hope of receiving SAFC funding in 2013 once all of the kinks have been worked out.

**Why WAVE?** Although continued funding for this program benefits the entire student theatre community, recent changes to the StuCO constitution prohibit it from applying for funding as an entity. WAVE as an exec board is excited to contribute to the theater community by spearheading this funding campaign and overseeing continued implementation of the program. WAVE is eager to step into this stewardship role and provide this service to its community. WAVE’s Director of Development will work with StuCO to contact individual producers of shows in the StuCO season, as well as other cultural groups. WAVE’s Director of Development would also work with StuCO and Replay to collect data on the amount and type of waste recycled at the end of each quarter.

**Room for improvement:**

-StuCO had trouble working with SOFO to get checks to Insider’s Entertainment on time. This was due to both StuCO’s unfamiliarity with the paperwork necessary and the large number of payments made.

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Next year, WAVE will reduce the amount of payments to Insider’s Entertainment from 5 to 2, and has created standardized forms for the WAVE treasurer to use.

-WAVE is working to give individual production teams more agency in scheduling pick-ups. WAVE’s Director of Development is creating a page on the student theatre Wikipedia page with information on the recycling program and an online ordering system.

**Student groups that will continue to use this program next year under WAVE’s stewardship:**

African American Theatre Ensemble, Arts Alliance, Jewish Theatre Ensemble, Lovers and Madmen, Purple Crayon Players, Sit & Spin Productions, Spectrum Theatre Company, WAVE Productions, Vertigo

**Please see attached spreadsheet for quantitative break-down of materials recycled.**

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