

pittsburgh applause!

arts & entertainment newsletter

Use Of RAD Funds Raises Concerns

Allegheny County's financially troubled mass transit system is getting help from the **Regional Asset District** --- and this has raised concerns among Pittsburgh's non-profit arts community.

Begun in 1994, the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) is a special purpose unit of county government that receives 1/2% of the county's 1% sales tax. The funds are distributed to civic, cultural and recreational entities.

The use of RAD dollars is part of an agreement to keep the **Port Authority** from cutting any more service. The state is providing \$35 million and the county \$4.5 million. Transit workers are contributing through a new contract that frees up about \$60 million over four years.

The **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council** (GPAC) is among those raising concerns. In an eblast distributed on August 24, CEO Mitch Swain explained that while GPAC values a strong transit system, "We're concerned about the use of RAD funds as a contributor to the long term solution to tran-

sit. It represents a new direction in the use of RAD funds . . . Funding transit through RAD represents a dangerous precedent as it redefines the [term] 'regional asset' in a way that could be applied to many municipality- or county-owned projects and concerns which already receive funding from the 1% tax stream."

However, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald insists that no groups will be adversely affected. *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Joe Smydo quotes him as saying "no assets would be cut."

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Pittsburgh
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QED Gets Major Grant

WQED Multimedia has been awarded a \$704,000 federal grant to produce a documentary on Pulitzer Prize winning playwright August Wilson.

August Wilson (1945-2005) is best known for his cycle of ten



plays, each set in a different decade (primarily in Pittsburgh), to depict the African American experience in the 20th Century. The documentary will be called "August Wilson: The Ground On Which I Stand" and will air on a future installment of the **Public Broadcasting System** series "American Masters."

"This documentary will be the definitive story of the most prolific playwright in the last half of the 20th Century," CEO Deborah L. Acklin says in a press release.

In other news, WQED-TV again leads in nominations for regional Emmy Awards including one by popular documentary producer Rick Sebak. QED has also released a report on learning and parenting in the age of digital media. To learn more, visit <http://wqed.org/smartparent>

Symphony Names Pops Conductors

The sudden death of composer and conductor Marvin Hamlisch has forced the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** (PSO) to make changes in its pops program.



Hamlisch died suddenly on August 6 after a brief illness. He is one of only seven people to win all four major entertainment awards --- Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony. He also won two Golden Globes and a Pulitzer Prize.

The PSO has announced that the pops season Hamlisch planned will go forward without him. In his place, four conductors --- Lu-

cas Richman, Daniel Meyer, Michael Krajewski and Lawrence Lob --- will lead the orchestra for these concerts. The first of these is scheduled for September 29 and features actor/singer Matthew Morrison.

Ironically, the PSO suffered another loss that same day when long-time violinist Linda Fischer died after a bout with cancer. A press release described her as "a vital part of the PSO family" and how the orchestra "will sorely miss the warmth, vitality and joy she brought to all us of."

In other PSO news, the orchestra is expanding its annual call statewide for new works by composers in the early stages of their careers. Young composers from area universities are invited to submit

their compositions for consideration. The deadline is November 12. For more information, call (412) 392-4828.

ShowClix Adds Tool

Local ticketing company **ShowClix** has added what they call "the industry's easiest online event ticketing" tool.

That tool is called Select My Seats. It is an interactive seat map for reserved seating venues. Reservations are also processed in real time. To see it in use, visit <http://www.showclix.com>

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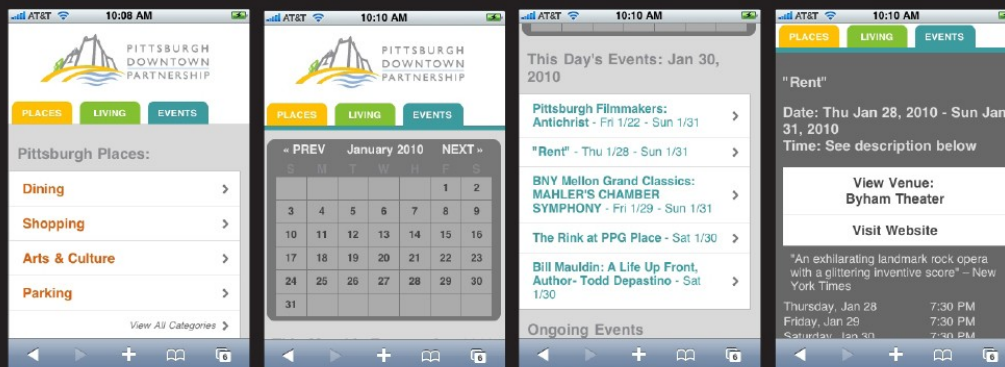


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www.DowntownPittsburgh.com/events/suggest

Kimmel To Take On Leno

The late-night wars are getting interesting with ABC announcing that Jimmy Kimmel's popular talk show is being rescheduled to go head-to-head with the legendary "Tonight Show" on **NBC Universal's** flagship network.



NBC Universal is primarily owned by **Comcast**, which operates Pittsburgh's cable television franchise. ABC is owned by the **Walt Disney Company** which also owns a radio station in Pittsburgh.

ABC is basically swapping the time slots of "Jimmy Kimmel Live" with that of the prestigious news program "Nightline" starting in January. This has surprised some observers since "Nightline" is winning its timeslot.

The news comes at a bad time for "Tonight" host Jay Leno. Once a powerhouse in late night under

earlier hosts Jack Paar and Johnny Carson, the talker has since dropped to second place. It once generated \$100 million in annual profit for NBC. But the *Los Angeles Times* has reported that the show is now "barely breaking even" as the result of a process begun with the 2009 debacle involving host Conan O'Brien. To compensate, at least 20 staff members are being laid off and Leno has agreed to a sizable pay cut.

Meanwhile, *Advertising Age* reports that Kimmel's "overall audience has been getting a little larger. His show attracted 3% more viewers in the 2011-2012 season" and points out that his late-night rivals Leno and David Letterman "are growing long in the tooth."

Other Comcast/NBC news: a new cable network being started by an African-American woman in Harlem will soon be appearing. Peggy Dodson is a former jazz singer who founded the **Urban Broadcasting Company** (UBC)

with a mere \$600,000 --- mostly her own money. The channel will begin with four hours of original programming each day that celebrates "the urban lifestyle, culture and experience." More information is available at <http://www.ubctvnetwork.com/>

Actor Michael J. Fox has announced his return to series television with a new sitcom on NBC. Scheduled to debut in the fall of 2013, the show will, in part, reflect his life with Parkinson's disease. Shortly after that announcement was made, a television station in Salt Lake City has decided not to air NBC's upcoming new sitcom "The New Normal". The show is about a same-sex couple and their surrogate having a baby together. The station, KSL-TV, is owned by a company controlled by the conservative **Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter Day Saints**. Another station will air "Normal" as it does "Saturday Night Live," which KSL also doesn't carry.

New Survey Values Local Arts

A new survey conducted by Pittsburgh Today reveals the region's quality of life and the important role the arts play.



Pittsburgh Today is an initiative run by the **University**

Of Pittsburgh's Center For Social & Urban Research. Their mission is to compare the Pittsburgh region with other regions to determine strengths and weaknesses.

The Pittsburgh Regional Quality Of Life Survey is most extensive survey in more than a century. (A survey was published in 1908). According to the report's introduction, the "120-question survey focuses on 10 major areas: arts & culture, economy, education, environment, government, health, housing & neighborhood, public safety, transportation and overall quality of life. [It] is based on telephone interviews with more than 1,800 residents of a region that comprises 32 counties in four states".

It goes on to say that "attendance at museums, galleries, and other cultural events by residents of the region is fairly high with over three-fourths attending at least once in the year prior to the survey" and that "a significant majority" think arts education in schools is important.

Read the full report online at http://www.pittsburghtoday.org/specialreports/QOLreport_PT.pdf

CBS Promotes Olser To Music VP

Amy Olser has been promoted by **CBS Corporation** to a senior vice president in charge of music.



In Pittsburgh, CBS Corporation owns two television and four radio stations, mostly notably KDKA. The promotion strengthens Olser's role as a liaison between the company and the music industry. According to a CBS press release, she "is responsible for indentifying new and established performers whose music or personal experiences can be integrated into programming across all [CBS-TV] series."

"It's always about creating and finding that perfect musical mo-

ment," she told *Variety's* Andrew Barker. "Music has become such an exciting character on TV and I'm fortunate to get to work with such great shows."

Since Olser is looking for new artists, *Pittsburgh Applause* has found what appears to be her office address for the benefit of local musicians and singers: 7800 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90036. The main phone number at this address is (323) 575-2345. Although we could not confirm her email address, it probably follows that of others at CBS and may be amy.osler@cbs.com

In other CBS news, the company has signed a new agreement with Chellomedia to create CBS-branded channels in 83 territories

across Europe. A division of **Liberty Global**, Chellomedia is a leading international media company & distributor of channels, content and video services reaching over 350 million homes.

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Mayor Launches Public Art Program

On August 7, Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl announced the city's first formal public art and urban design programs.

One is being called ARTPGH and it will create a strategy to engage local, regional and national artists to create new public art and facilitate care for existing public art. The other is called DESIGNPGH and will examine existing types of urban design and develop guide-

lines for future development. The work is expected to be completed sometime in 2014.

In a press release, Ravenstahl explains that by "engaging residents in the planning process, we're ensuring that Pittsburgh

continues to grow as a wonderful city with a great quality of life for everyone."

There will be various public meetings and workshops. For more information on ARTPGH, call Morton Brown at (412) 255-8996



GPAC Names Speaker

Robert L. Lynch, President and CEO of **Americans For The Arts** has been selected as the keynote speaker at the **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council's** (GPAC) annual meeting on November 30.

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Founded in 1996, Americans For The Arts (AFTA) is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts.

GPAC made the announcement in an August 24 eblast. The location is still being determined.

Area Girl On "The Top"

Sophia Lee, a local 13-year-old harpist, will be among the artists performing on an installment of "From The Top".

"From The Top" is a series of radio and television programs hosted by pianist Christopher O'Riley that air on public broadcasting showcasing young musicians. It airs in Pittsburgh on WQED-FM every

Saturday at 5:00 p.m.

This installment will be taped at the Palace Theatre in Greensburg on October 21. Lee attends Carson Middle School and a student of music teacher Gretchen Van Hoesen. The episode will air in late December. For more information, visit <http://www.fromthetop.org>

Images

Photos Celebrating Pittsburgh's
Arts/Entertainment History & Community



This isn't your mother's Tupperware Party. Instead, it is a wildly funny new interactive show opening up this month at the CLO Cabaret.

To have an image considered, email Jim Richards at jim@james-richards.com

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>SAT
1</p> <p>The Pittsburgh Panthers are at Heinz Field for their season opener.</p> | <p>FRI
7</p> <p>Leap into the Mattress Factory for the opening of their new exhibit on feminism.</p> | <p>WED
26</p> <p>The Penguins take on the Detroit Redwings at Consol Energy Center for a pre-season game.</p> |
| <p>SAT
1</p> <p>Stop by Frick Park for a free performance of “The Tempest”.</p> | <p>WED
12</p> <p>One of the greatest films ever made in the Soviet Union — the silent classic “Strike” — gets a special screening at Big Idea.</p> | <p>THU
27</p> <p>The smart and funny play “Born Yesterday” at the O’Reilly Theater is the tale of a ditsy showgirl’s transformation into a solid citizen.</p> |
| <p>MON
3</p> <p>Be sure to check out the calendar’s events for Labor Day!</p> | <p>SAT
15</p> <p>Check into the glittering new Fairmont Hotel for a terrific Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra fundraiser.</p> | <p>THU
27</p> <p>The sexy actor and singer joins the Pittsburgh Pops at Heinz Hall tonight.</p> |
| <p>TUE
4</p> <p>Enjoy the rich harmonies of “The Jersey Boys” at the Benedum Center.</p> | <p>SUN
16</p> <p>Heinz Field is really hopping with the Pittsburgh Steelers’ home opener.</p> | <p>FRI
28</p> <p>The controversial play “Rope” opens up the Pittsburgh Playhouse’s new season with its compelling tale of college friends who murder a classmate — simply because they can.</p> |
| <p>WED
5</p> <p>The great rock duo Hall & Oates shine at Stage AE.</p> | <p>TUE
18</p> <p>Canadian band Metric is at Stage AE.</p> | <p>SAT
29</p> <p>Jazz trumpeter Sean Jones performs a fundraising concert to benefit the historic Andrew Carnegie Music Hall.</p> |
| <p>THU
6</p> <p>Preserve your laughs for a trip to the Cabaret At Theater Square for “Dixie’s Tupperware Party.”</p> | <p>FRI
21</p> <p>Back to Stage AE for Minus The Bear.</p> | |
| <p>THU
6</p> <p>The Pittsburgh New Works Festival opens at the Father Ryan Arts Center.</p> | <p>FRI
21</p> <p>One of Pittsburgh’s icons, Wholey’s, is welcoming one and all to a weekend celebration of their centennial.</p> | |
| <p>FRI
7</p> <p>Made by local filmmakers, the Documentary “Married In Spandex” at the Hollywood Theater.</p> | <p>FRI
21</p> <p>The Pittsburgh Symphony launches its new season at Heinz Hall with a program of music by German composer Richard Strauss and guest baritone Thomas Hampson.</p> | |
| <p>FRI
7</p> <p>Embrace all things Gaelic this weekend at Sandcastle for the annual Irish Festival.</p> | | |



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National/World A&E News Round-Up

GOP Convention Loses TV Viewers

It what could be a sign of growing public fatigue with the current political discourse, television ratings for the 2012 Republican National Convention took a big hit.

Part or all of the convention were covered by at least a dozen television networks. Yet, according to TVbythenumbers.com, total viewership fell by 15 million as compared to 2008. The final night “yielded ratings blows across the board for the networks” according to Tim Kenneally of TheWrap.com. *The National Journal’s* Christopher Peleolazar reports that NBC saw a 56% drop and CNN a 50% drop over the last convention.

In a surprise to no one, the conservative-leaning Fox News won among cable viewers but even they were flat compared with 2008. A tracking poll showed candidate Mitt Romney with a post-convention 2% lead over President Obama --- well within the margin of error.

Media watchers are waiting to see if the Democrats suffer a similar audience drop. If so, it may add to the broadcast networks’ arguments that the national conventions are of little value or interest any more.

Prized Dancing

One of the nation’s preeminent Latino dance intuitions, **Ballet Hispanico**, has announced that one of its members has received the precious Princess Grace Award For Dance.

Founded in 1970, Ballet His-

panico explores, preserves and celebrates today’s Latino cultures through innovative artistic collaborations. The award is offered by the **Princess Grace Foundation**, named in honor of former actress and royal consort Grace Kelly (1929-1982).

Jamal Rashann Callender was among the winners being honored for showing exceptional promise. “We are thrilled,” Ballet Hispanico’s Eduardo Vilaro says in a press release. “His dancing is consistently excellent and inspired.”

Losing Face

As their stock price falls, media and advertising pros wonder about the future of social media giant **Facebook**.

MediaPost.com’s Mark Walsh explains that the focus of concerns is on “Facebook’s ability to make money from mobile ads.” The feeling is that changes Facebook has instituted, such as brand pages and sponsored stories, might not be as effective as they would like. The changes mean “that people have to be a bit more creative on how they are getting traffic” he quotes one social media expert.

Since going public, Facebook has been under growing pressure to prove to investors that it has long-term growth potential. Its market valuation now stands at about half since May.

Making Moves

A pair of important Russian art institutions are reopening in historic locations, reports Anna Malpas of ArtNews.com

Re opening in Moscow’s famous Gorky Park is the **Garage Center For Contemporary Culture**. Opened in 2008 in a former bus depot, the center is dedicated to exploring and developing contemporary culture, especially works by Russian artists. They will be moving into part of a former restaurant in the park once the space is restored.

Meanwhile, the **Artechronika Cultural Foundation** will open a private museum of contemporary Russian art in a former movie theater opposite the Kremlin. The foundation is best known for its arts magazine and for awarding the Kandinsky Prize, one of Russia’s most prestigious awards for contemporary art

A City Stimulates Arts Jobs

Seattle has begun a new program to support local arts, reports Eric Magnuson of *The Art Newspaper*.

The city’s cultural affairs office will distribute \$250,000 to help Seattle’s non-profit arts intuitions stay financially afloat amid the Great Recession.

A spokeswoman tells Magnuson that the funds will primarily go to administrative jobs especially those in museum workshops.

General Film News

On Friday, September 7, local filmmakers Allison Kole and Devin Gallagher bring their award winning documentary “Married In Spandex” to the **Hollywood Theater**. The film is the love story of two women and their road to marriage. More information is available at <http://www.marriedinspandex.com>

Local author John Tiech has written a book called *Pittsburgh Film History: On Set In The Steel City*, which traces Pittsburgh’s involvement in the film industry since the silent era. It includes everything from the first nickelodeon to “Dark Knight Rises.” In an interview with the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette’s* Barbara Vancheri, Tiech explains that he has been working on the book on-and-off

for a decade. “I started just by interviewing people.” He was also interviewed by KDKA-AM on August 6 and you can hear it by logging on to <http://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2012/08/07/qa-tuesday-john-tiech-on-pittsburgh-films/> The book can be ordered by clicking <http://www.amazon.com/Pittsburgh-Film-History-Steel-City/dp/1609497090>

Meanwhile, “The Dark Knight Rises” has become a top money-maker at the foreign box office and in just a few weeks out grossed its predecessor, “The Dark Knight”. The Wrap.com has reported ticket sales of roughly \$500 million.

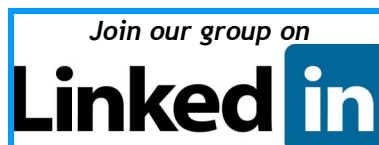
A&E Union Updates

Here is some recent news involving the major entertainment unions.

The merged **SAG-AFTRA** has received its formal charter from the AFL-CIO. In a press release, union co-president Roberta Reardon says “we are delighted to join with workers across the nation and reaffirm the mission we share with the AFL-CIO to ensure workers are treated fairly.”

The **Writers Guild Of America** (WGA) is welcoming submissions for their 2013 WGA Documentary Screenplay Award honoring outstanding achievement in documentary feature writing. To learn about the eligibility requirements and related information by logging on to <http://www.wgaeast.org>

The **Directors Guild Of America** (DGA) has named labor attorney Daniel Bush as assistant executive director. His primary job will be contract enforcement and organizing. TheWrap.com quotes DGA national director Jay Roth as saying “Danny’s labor relations experience and his knowledge of contracts and organizing will be in high demand as the DGA expands its coverage of these areas and prepares for major contract negotiations next year.”



SBG Deal

After much saber rattling, a carriage deal has been reached between **Sinclair Broadcast Group** and **EchoStar’s** Dish Network.



Sinclair operates two television stations in Pittsburgh. Dish was threatening to pull Sinclair stations from its subscribers in 45 markets, including Pittsburgh.

The main issue, of course, was how much Dish would pay Sinclair for retransmission. Such a blackout would have cost Sinclair millions in lost advertising revenue, especially during this election season. Just hours after the deadline, Sinclair released a statement that an “agreement in principal” had been reached.

CMU & Tech Biz

A professor at **Carnegie Mellon University** (CMU) has been named Chief Science Officer for start-up music firm **Music Prodigy**.

Music Prodigy is a Los Angeles-based start-up that uses technology to enable any aspiring musician to learn any instrument, at any level of expertise, anywhere. Their signature product is Rock Prodigy, a Cloud-based software that teaches guitar playing. Dr. Roger Dannenberg, who will apparently continue working at CMU, co-invented Music Prodigy’s patent-pending teaching system. Visit <http://www.musicprodigy.com/>

A&E News In Brief

Pittsburgh poet Judith Sanders has won the annual Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest, one of the most important prizes in humor poetry. Her winning entry is the satirical poem “Shoppin’ Spree” the tale of a woman piling up a list of extreme and ridiculous wants that she considered entitlements and necessities. Log on to http://winningwriters.com/contests/wergle/2012/we12_sanders.php to read her winning poem. Submissions are being accepted for the 2013 prize. To learn more, visit http://winningwriters.com/contests/wergle/we_guidelines.php

The Opera Theater Of Pittsburgh is welcoming submissions from both professional and amateur singers for their annual voice competitions. For more information, click <http://www.otsummerfest.org>

The beloved local country music band Povertyneck Hillbillies, which disbanded in 2008 after a almost a decade of success, has reformed. The band is now calling itself The Hillbilly Way. They began performing again in late August. *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Scott Mervis reports that they are playing both classic Povertyneck songs and composing new ones.

Cox Communications, which owns WPXI-TV, is debuting a multiplatform campaign for the cable systems it operates in 26 markets including Cleveland. MediaPost.com's David Geotzl reports that the company hopes to lure subscribers from competing satellite services.

Volunteers are still needed by **City Of Asylum** for their annual Jazz Poetry Concert. For more information, email Laura Mustio at lauramustiocoap@gmail.com

Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre is accepting plays for their annual Theatre Festival In Black & White. The annual program features 4 plays written by white playwrights and directed by black directors, and another 4 plays written by black playwrights and directed by white directors. For more information, visit <http://www.pittsburghplaywrights.com/submissions>

Local media company **Apple Box Studios** has been chosen by the venerable 50-year-old real estate firm **Northwood Realty Services** to modernize its public image with a campaign called “New Face of Northwood”.

The pilot for a possible new cable series is being shot in Pittsburgh, reports the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Rob Owen. That series is a scripted drama called “Those Who Kill” about a female detective and a forensic profiler who investigate serial killings. If the series is picked up by the network A&E, it will probably be produced locally as well.

Clear Channel Communications, which owns several radio stations in Pittsburgh, is buying one of the most storied names in broadcasting. They are buying WOR-AM, the oldest continuously operating radio station in New York City. The station began in 1922, just two years after the launch of KDKA-AM.

The local **AlphaGraphics** franchise in the Pittsburgh Cultural District has been honored by **UPMC** for fostering an inclusive environment. In a press release, franchise owner Clare Meehan says “we are proud to be a valued partner in promoting inclusion and social responsibility.”

The \$3.99 Book Buy

A deal is a deal, especially if that deal is 75% off.

Local author and arts entrepreneur James A. Richards' debut novel, *Summer Club & The Creatures*, is now available through an online retailer for just \$3.99. Richards is the publisher and editor of *Pittsburgh Applause*.

It seems that when his publisher, **GLB Publishers**, went out of business, Philadelphia-based **TLA Entertainment** acquired much of its remaining stock at a bulk price. This includes *Summer Club*, which was nominated in two categories in the **Lambda Literary Foundation's** annual literary reward. You can learn more by clicking <http://www.tlavideo.com/gay-summer-club-and-the-creatures/p-336620-2>

Currently Richards is completely a trilogy inspired by network television's first soap opera, “Faraway Hill,” which ran for three months on DuMont in 1946.

Pittsburgh Applause Editorial

Relying Too Much On Interns

By James A. Richards

Despite the best efforts of President Obama, the Great Recession that began before he took office continues to stumble along. Everyone has been hit in some way. So even though Pittsburgh is largely out of the worst, companies and organizations are still understandably looking for ways to save a buck.

However, at least one of those ways isn't very smart: the overreliance on unpaid interns.

A good internships program can be extremely valuable to both the intern and the company hiring him or her. But it is important to remember that this is a learning program. When you select interns,

you are selecting students and you are not merely their employer but their teacher.

Unfortunately, too many company and organizations --- especially in arts/entertainment --- have been using interns more and more as unpaid employees, often putting them in jobs or in charge of projects for which they are unqualified. This is especially so in the areas of marketing, promotion and media relationships. Most of these young people --- no matter how smart --- lack important skills, like writing copy. But instead of an internship program where they learn these skills, employers are doing little more than plopping them in a chair and telling them "do it."

This is a mistake on so many levels. First, it hurts your organization because it weakens marketing efforts at a time when you must rely heavily on earned income. Second, it does a disservice to the intern who is there to learn rather than just be used as free labor.

Spend a little money and hire pros; it's in the best interest of your organizations --- and your interns.

Letters to the editor are welcome via email to jim@james-richards.com

They may be edited for publication.



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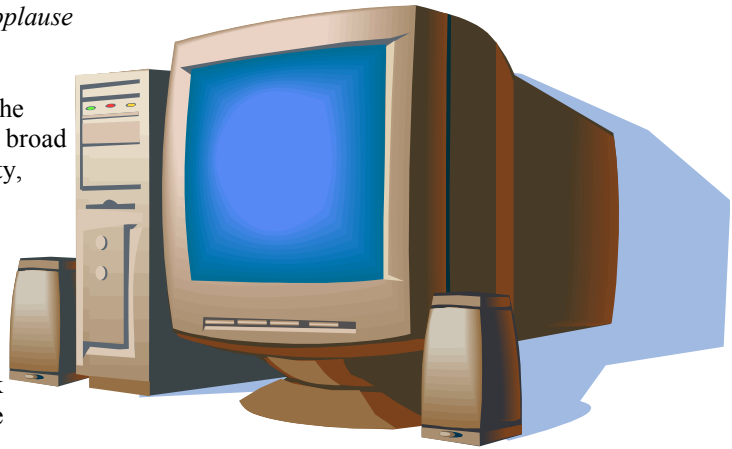
Keep The Applause Coming!

Advertise in the digital version of *Pittsburgh Applause* and reach over 1,000 readers each month!

The list of subscribers is culled primarily from the *Pittsburgh A&E Book* database and represents a broad swath of the area's arts/entertainment community, both non-profit and commercial.

Full page (8" wide x 10" high): \$100
Half-page (8" wide x 5" high): \$75

Each ad should be built to size and be in a JPG format. All ads must be pre-paid, with the check payable to the Pittsburgh A&E Group. For more information, contact Jim Richards



Jim hopes to eventually bring *Pittsburgh Applause* back to the real world!

The goal is to produce 10,000 full-color print copies each month distributed primarily through Crazy Mocha coffee shops.

But Jim needs a collection of advertisers willing and able to commit to at least six months of advertising. For more information, contact him at jim@james-richards.com

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