

Community Theatres - April 18

Our second convening of community theatres took place **April 18, 2023** at Curtain Call, Stamford. Twelve representatives from 8 theatres attended. The conversation had two related parts: how to re-build both audiences and crew members after COVID (“the tide went out and is very slowly returning”) and how to rebuild them with as much diversity as possible. A key point was that both patrons and crew need to see themselves represented in the make-up of the theatre.

Related was a conversation about how theatres can best truly engage with their communities to find out what they cared about and which issues should be represented and engaged in by the theatres.

A decision was made to share casting lists and audition calls to monitor how each theatre was addressing diversity in the way they shaped their calls and the language they used. While some theatres have been working with DEI consultants, there was a call for some concerted action by CAFC to pull together some DEI conversations and possibly trainings for the board, staff and crew of these theatres. We are collecting information about consultants that members have used and are making a start by having **Erika Wesley**, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the Westport Country Playhouse, speak and answer questions at our next meeting, scheduled for August 1 at Center Stage Shelton.