



**SAN
DIEGO
MUSICAL
THEATRE**

For Immediate Release
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SAN DIEGO MUSICAL THEATRE Announces New Hires To Leadership Team

San Diego Musical Theatre is pleased to announce their newly appointed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant - Kimberly King, new Academy Director of Education, Robert J. Townsend and new Academy Manager, Shirley Johnston.

King is a San Diego native and 25 year veteran elementary school teacher with the South Bay Union School District's Visual and Performing Arts Program. King is proud to serve in the San Diego theatre community on the San Diego Junior Theatre Board of Trustees as Education Chair, and at the Old Globe Theatre as a Teaching Artist, a 4-time dramaturge for the San Diego Repertory Theatre and Co-Curator for their Black Voices Reading Series, 2021.

As SDMT's DEI Consultant, she will guide the continued education and implementation of Anti-Racist and Anti-Bias strategies to uncover and work to correct any inequalities that exist within the organizational structure now or in the future. "San Diego Musical Theatre and their entire organization are thrilled to be taking the next steps toward active allyship by having Ms. King join our team to continue our growth, introspection and evolution," said Jill Townsend, SDMT Artistic Director.

Townsend has been a professional actor for almost 30 years with appearances that range from Broadway, Off-Broadway, National Tour, and countless regional theaters across the country. Appearing on many of the stages of San Diego's thriving theater community, taking part in productions at The Globe, San Diego Rep, Moonlight, Starlight, and of course his home away from home, San Diego Musical Theatre. Nominated for numerous San Diego Critic Circle Awards, he received the Outstanding Lead Performance award for his portrayal of Georges in La Cage Aux Folles at SDMT.

Townsend's five years plus as the Theater Director and Advisor for Westview High School's Westview Theatre Company (WVTC) combined with his extensive acting career will help the SDMT Academy grow to the next level. "I couldn't be happier to be assuming the role of Director of

Education for the SDMT Academy, where I've already seen incredible work happening, even during the challenge of a pandemic," said Townsend. "I'm bringing years of work in education, along with many more years of professional work on and off the stage, and together with the support of the amazing team at SDMT will provide continued excellent programming, along with some new ideas!"

Johnston is a San Diego based singer/dancer/actor/choreographer/director and dance teacher. She has been teaching tap, ballet, jazz and musical theatre dance for over 30 years in both San Diego and New York City. She has Directed and Choreographed The Most Happy Fella, Pippin, Little Shop of Horrors and Smokey Joe's Cafe. She has also performed at or worked with theaters all over San Diego.

"I am honored to join the SDMT team as their new Academy Manager," said Johnston. "I look forward to working with new and existing Academy students young and old, helping all grow and achieve their Broadway Musical goals and aspirations!"

Kimberly King:

Bio: <https://www.sdmtd.org/meet-kimberly-king-sdmtds-dei-consultant/>

Headshot: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/vluh8sm4phxqykr/Kimberly%20King%20Headshot.jpeg?dl=0>

Robert J. Townsend:

Bio: <https://www.sdmtd.org/meet-robert-j-townsend-sdmtd-academys-new-director-of-education/>

Headshot: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/a8vwmhaee67r0wf/Townsend-11%20Square.jpg?dl=0>

Shirley Johnston:

Bio: <https://www.sdmtd.org/meet-shirley-johnston-sdmtd-new-academy-manager/>

Headshot:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/0rw80lp4jpwuuxf/Shirley%20Johnston%20Headshot%20Reduced.jpg?dl=0>

ABOUT SDMT - Founded in 2006, San Diego Musical Theatre is dedicated to passionately producing and providing musical theatre that ignites the human spirit.

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