



The Actors' Fund of Canada
The lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry

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MEDIA RELEASE

**IATSE LOCAL 58 HELPS SET THE STAGE FOR
ACTORS' FUND OF CANADA ANNIVERSARY**

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For Immediate Release

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TORONTO – International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 58 helped to set the stage for the Actors' Fund of Canada's 50th anniversary campaign when President David Baer today announced a \$15,000 contribution to the Fund. Local 58, which represents stagehands and technicians working for some of Toronto's major performing arts companies and entertainment venues is a regular contributor to the Actors' Fund and has increased its 2008 level of support by \$5,000 in recognition of the Fund's 50 years of service to members of Canada's performing arts and entertainment industry.

The Actors' Fund is the lifeline for Canada's entertainment industry and has helped over 10,000 entertainment industry workers recover from illness, injury or other circumstances causing severe economic and personal hardship since it was founded in 1958. Performers and those working behind the scenes in theatre, film & TV, music and dance can apply for emergency financial aid from the Fund, which recently set a new record for the amount of financial aid delivered to the performing arts community in a single year, topping \$500,000 in the 12-month period that ended on March 31.

The Fund marks its 50th anniversary in 2008 with a campaign focused on raising awareness of its emergency financial aid program and uniting Canada's arts community in support of the organization.

According to Mr. Baer, Local 58's support for the Actors' Fund is an expression of his membership's solidarity with the cause: "The vote to support the Actors' Fund comes directly from our members, who recognize the importance of having this resource available to our brothers and sisters in the IATSE and to everyone else whose livelihood is tied to this sometimes unpredictable business and who might fall upon hard times. It's called the Actors' Fund, but we know that all of us who work to produce, perform and present cultural works in Canada are stronger for it being there."

Commenting on the significance of Local 58's contribution, Actors' Fund of Canada Executive Director David Hope said, "The Actors' Fund can continue to serve members of this industry only as long as those members are prepared to support it. We are very encouraged by the fact that so many have done so this year, whether as individuals, through their unions and guilds or through fundraising efforts of the companies they work for. The fact that we have also been able to generate significant support from audience members who appreciate the work they do means that our message is resonating with people. Cultural workers are important and need to be protected when their health, housing or ability to work are jeopardized as a result of the instability of income and wild fluctuations in the availability of employment opportunities that are unique to this industry."

The Actors' Fund of Canada is a registered charity that has paid out over \$3.5 million in rent payments, grocery money, utility payments and other basic living expenses in the last 10 years. Performers, creators, technical staff and other production team members can benefit from the Fund, which receives no government funding and is wholly sustained by support from individuals and entertainment industry organizations.

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