

New Awards Alliance Meeting
2/7/99
Reston Community Players' rehearsal hall

Eight groups represented:	The Arlington Players	John Monnett
	Dominion Stage	Bob Chaves
	Elden Street Players	Todd Huse
	Little Theatre of Alexandria	Al Edick
	Potomac Community Theater	Elie Pisarra
	Prince William Little Theatre	Don Wilson
	Reston Community Players	Sue Pinkman
	Vienna Theater Company	Angie Anderson

Six groups interested, did not attend: Chevy Chase Players, Fauquier Community Theater, Foundry Players, Port City Playhouse, Tantallon Community Players, Springfield Community Theater

Two groups declined: Rockville Musical Theater, Silver Spring Stage

Six groups potential interest: CAST in McLean, Castaways Theater, Cedar Lane Stage, Damascus Theatre Company, Great Falls Players, Montgomery Playhouse

The discussion centered around the purpose of an awards program – basically, hoping to improve attendance at auditions and recruiting tech staff for our shows by creating a recognition program of awards on par with the prestige of Helen Hayes, but for volunteer theaters.

The major concern, naturally, was the feasibility of such a program. Obviously, such a wide geographic area is a concern, as is the number of productions under consideration. Some ideas were bantered about, but it was decided that before working out the nuts and bolts of the judging process, the mission of the group needed to be set so that theaters could know what they were joining.

It was suggested that the goal of a regional community theater awards program may be too ambitious, but perhaps a scaled back version could be started with the goal of expansion. It was agreed that ten might be a good number to start. The attending eight being the most likely candidates and perhaps a couple others from the lists above. Other ideas about scaling back the inaugural season included limiting the number of productions considered and the number of awards given.

Suggestions for creating a judging process (modeled mostly after ACT) included: separate pools of judges for plays versus musicals; not requiring judges to see every production, either having a regional judging process or a two tiered judging process of nominators and senior adjudicators (a la Ruby Griffith and Helen Hayes) or some combination; judges not scoring their home group's productions, thus keeping them available to work on productions without compromising the integrity of their judging; scoring only those performances or technical elements that stood out as exceptional or outstanding; having scores submitted electronically and thus tabulated objectively or having an outside audit agency tabulate the scores (as LTA's internal awards); having non-member judges (paid?).

There was much interest in knowing whether joining ACT was an option. It was suggested that rather than creating a completely new awards system that it would be preferable to join ACT -- if ACT was willing to take on new members. Monnett and Chaves would be meeting with the other ACT presidents to discuss this possibility and hope to have an answer by the 3/7 meeting.

A subcommittee was formed to draft a mission statement and outline the structure of creating this new alliance (Monnett, Chaves, Pinkman, Huse?). Another meeting is scheduled for 3/7/99 to review this document, with the goal for each board being able to make a decision about participation at their respective March meetings.

Concurrently, information about other judging processes (ACT, Ruby Griffith, Helen Hayes, LTA's internal awards, other regional community theater awards) is being gathered (Anderson – RG & HH, Wilson – ACT, Edick – LTA) so that it is available for review as such time as the nuts and bolts start to get worked out. The goal is to have this document ready for ratification by the participating boards at their June meetings.

Al Edick agreed to contact those theaters interested but absent and to coordinate future meetings.