

Resolved: To Organize and Communicate

Happy New Year! It is a time when we make resolutions, usually about losing weight. (As a president who is rapidly morphing from Abraham Lincoln into William Howard Taft, I am right there.) Resolution, in addition to “determination” or “resolve,” can mean “degree of sharpness” or “focus.” I’d like to look at both types of resolution on a macro (the 49,000 of us) and micro (just you) level.

In a process going back a couple years, your governing council has developed a vision of who we want to be as a union and a strategic plan for getting us there. Our determination/resolution is to be a symbol of excellence, creating solidarity and connection that enables us to negotiate the best deals possible; our focus/resolution will be on two areas: organizing and communication. Communication means not only getting useful information across to you (and getting it to you more quickly and effectively, via the website, e-mail, and social media as well as Equity News) but also getting our message across to the rest of the industry and the public at large.

Organizing, in union parlance, can be external organizing or internal organizing. External Organizing is bringing new areas of work under our contract (think cruise ships) or bringing new employers in current areas of employment under contract (think non-Equity tours and fair-compensation non-Equity theatres): we plan to do both. Internal organizing is aligning the membership with the union’s objectives (and clearly communication plays a key role in this.)

So that’s Equity’s resolution. What about yours? Let’s say your determination/resolution is to bring your career to a new level. What’s your focus/resolution? How about organizing and communication? External organizing would be finding new areas of work (industrials, teaching, etc.) and finding new employers within your current work areas. Internal organizing would be aligning your life and your habits with your stated goals: losing weight, getting more sleep, taking a dance class, learning a new audition song, etc. Communication is telling yourself and the world what you want. Write down your goals, your resolution. Share it with friends and family. Share it with your agent if you have one. Put it out in the world. And then: network, network, network.

This is a tough business. Your elected leadership and staff are resolved to create a union organization that supports and champions you with contract negotiation and administration, with services and professional development opportunities, and with timely, useful communication. I hope you are resolved to do whatever you can to create the foundation and opportunity for success. Together, we can make our Centennial year the best year yet. Let us be resolute.