

University of Kansas Department of Theatre



ITT is sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Welcome to the ITT newsletter!

In this issue you will find information about our previous projects and activities from last semester as well as information on upcoming events and more....

Inside this issue:

- 1 Past Events - Spring 2016
- 2 Making Change – ITT members spotlight
- 3 Farewell to our graduated members



KU ITT Students performing to over 500 student athletes.

January 24, 2016. University of Kansas Ballroom

This semester, ITT have performed to almost 1400 students, faculty and staff. Here is a list of some of the major ITT performances over the last semester.

- 1) ITT perform to over 500 student athletes at the University of Kansas Ballroom - January 24th and over 300 staff members of the Athletics department at Hadl Auditorium – January 25th**



The KU Athletics Department are always at the forefront to educate students on equity and diversity in order to insure safe spaces for student athletes and staff. In their ongoing effort to combat microaggressions, they arranged for ITT to perform several scenarios that many student athletes and staff face in their university careers. KU Athletics continue to fight for their students with regularly scheduled talks, events and discussions on diversity and equity.

- 2) ITT perform in the See-Saw festival. A conference set up to present movies and papers on issues of diversity, equality and social change. Divine Nine Room –March 4th**



The See/Saw Festival is a project of KU Professionals for Inclusion and Social Justice in the KU Department of Special Education. The 2016 See/Saw Festival focused on the idea of social justice, pushing boundaries and navigating “borders” and hosts a variety of events from seminars, lectures and film viewings. ITT were asked to give a practical demonstration of how theatre and improvisation can be a strong ground for inciting social change and for educating the public on social issues. “Our overriding intent is to build our local capacity for social change as we further our collective efforts toward equity, inclusion, access, and justice” – See/Saw 2016.

To find out more, go to: <https://seesawfest.com/about/>

3) ITT workshop with the Graduate Teaching Assistants of the English Department. Wescoe – March 9th

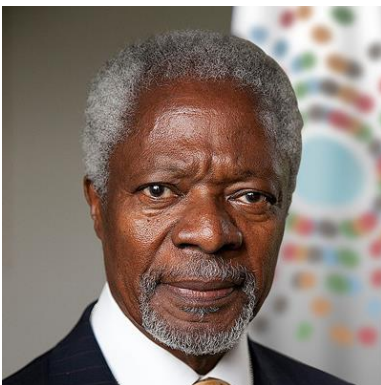
Last year, the English department at KU invited us to do a workshop with their graduate teaching assistants. This year we were invited back to lead our “Nightmare GTA Situations” workshop. Here, using techniques from Boal’s *Theatre of the Oppressed*, we take suggestions from our audience and begin to improvise problematic situations that may arise in the classroom and provide educators a safe space to find a solution. These situations can range from students not paying attention in class to handling controversial social issues that can arise during class time.



4) New ITT “TED style” diversity talk series begin with Jay and Kathy Pryor’s talk “Social Activism Defines Good Citizenship” Murphy Hall – March 9th



As part of ITT’s new series “Free-Styling Change: Improvising solutions for Social Justice” Kathy and Jay Pryor presented their “TED style” discussion: “Social Activism Defines Good Citizenship”. Kathy Pryor, a longtime activist for the LGBTQ community, and Jay Pryor, a life coach and advocate for the Transgender community, talked on Jay Pryor’s own experience as a transgender person, Kathy Pryor’s experience as an activist in Lawrence and most importantly how we can all strive to be good citizens. It was an honor to have Kathy and Jay speak as part of our series. This semester plan to have grad student Gina Sandi Diaz and faculty members Leslie Bennet and Jane Barnet talk about how they work to make the world a more inclusive place.



“Ignorance and prejudice are the handmaidens of propaganda. Our mission, therefore, is to confront ignorance with knowledge, bigotry with tolerance, and isolation with the outstretched hand of generosity. Racism can, will, and must be defeated.”

— Kofi Annan

5) ITT perform for the Center for Teaching Excellence – April 8th



The Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) dedicates itself to the improvement of education for all students by offering university educators the chance to maximize their teaching ability, effectiveness and skills through many different resources and events year round. These events include discussion groups, individual meetings, seminars and workshops. As part of their workshop “Turning “Hot Moments” into Teaching Moments in the Classroom” ITT were asked to come and perform a few sketches, opening a conversation with the participants of the workshop to discuss strategies to take problematic moments in the classroom and turn them into moments that improve education. For more information about the work of the CTE, visit: www.cte.ku.edu

6) ITT perform as part of the diversity symposium. Kansas Union – April 12th



At our most recent event, ITT were invited to kick off the 4th Annual Diversity Symposium. The symposium was created to highlight best practices among the KU community and discuss how collaboration and diversity initiatives can benefit faculty, staff, and student success. We performed for many of KU's Provosts, Deans, and Directors with pride.

Acting Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Stuart Day said “I can't tell you how impressed and inspired I was by you and your students at the Diversity Symposium. This type of performance can't work without amazing, talented, dedicated students. What also became clear to me is the (now) obvious fact that facilitation is crucial. In this area you did a brilliant job. Thank you” – Stuart

Making Change: ITT Members Spotlight

1) Andrew Stussie, ITT's longest serving member, looks back on the last 4 years:

When I first joined the group that would become ITT, it mainly consisted of me and two other freshmen. While I had a fun time, we didn't really get a chance to perform in front of people or be heard around campus. Over the years, the group has grown and I've not only gotten to become a better performer, I've gotten to meet many great people and learn a lot about social justice as well. Now, we actually need to turn down an occasional invite to perform because we can't find enough time on our schedule. Art has the ability to profoundly effect how people think, and I feel like ITT has been doing a great job at helping professors and students understand some sensitive issues that may have been traditionally ignored on campus. Art is a versatile medium and cannot just entertain, but it can also help promote understanding as well. As I end my time as a college student, I can only hope that I've helped to ensure the further growth of such a great program while also helping bring awareness to some of the issues that are present on campus

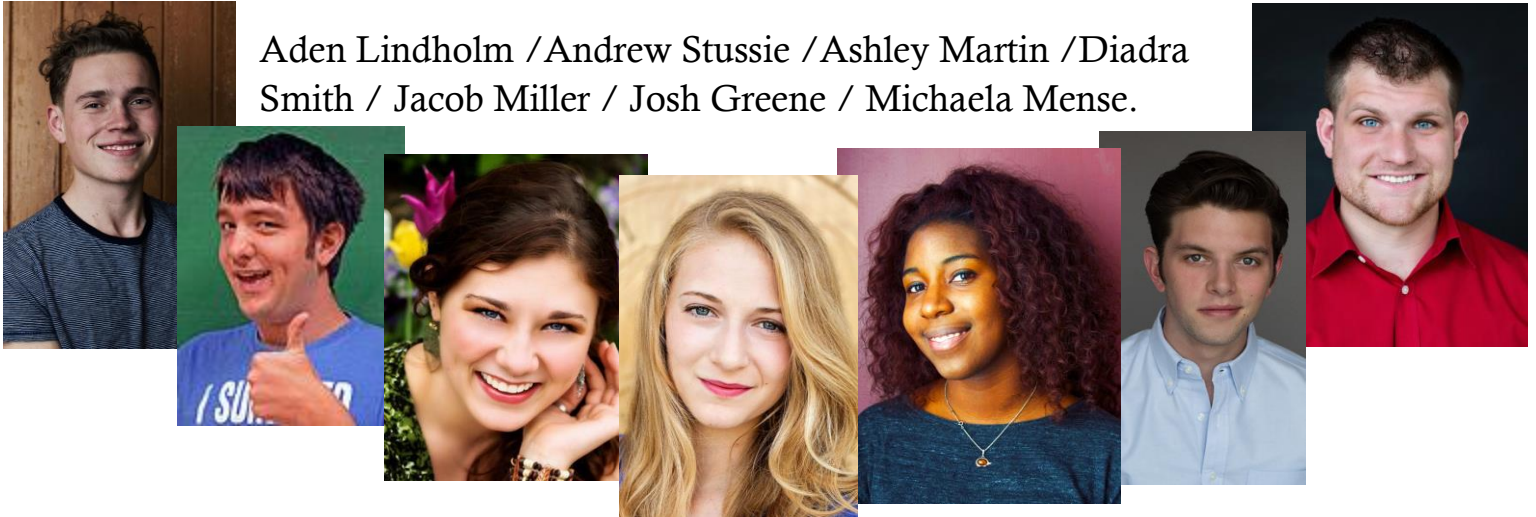


2) Ashley Martin looks on her work with environmentalism and The Willow Domestic Violence Centre in Lawrence.

I have always had a strong desire to change the world. My time at KU has only made this hope stronger. I have learned so much during my time here and I truly think that I have made a positive difference. I joined ITT after taking Delores Ringer's Applied and Interactive Theatre course. It was then that I realized how passionate I am about Theatre for Social Change. It is an amazing feeling to discover that you actually can make a difference doing what you love. I have always been fervent about the environment and I do my best to show Mother Earth my appreciation by frequently picking up litter and recycling. I try to advocate wildlife conservation and preservation through a multitude of outlets. Working with survivors of domestic violence is another passion I have discovered during my time at KU. The Willow Domestic Violence Center in Lawrence is an amazing organization and I am proud to volunteer there. It is organizations like The Willow that I plan to continue working with throughout my lifetime. ITT has helped me further improve my theatre and improvisation skills, which in turn, will help me to raise awareness of many social issues, including domestic violence and the environment. Theatre for Social Change is my passion and I am proud that my alma mater has a group like ITT that has allowed me to use my education to enlighten others about the many social issues on our campus.

Farewell to our graduating members. ITT Hall of Fame...

This year we say goodbye to students who have given their time to the work that we do. Their talents and skills have been invaluable to ITT and we wish them the best of luck!



Aden Lindholm / Andrew Stussie / Ashley Martin / Diadra Smith / Jacob Miller / Josh Greene / Michaela Mense.

...and Welcome to our new members joining us this semester.

We would like to welcome our nine new members. We're looking forward to working with them as we strive to make our world a better place.

Elissa Bowen / Christian Clark / Logan Duck / Nitin Kanukolanu / William Lea / Taylor McTague / Kanad Sakhadeo / Cody Siemiatkowski / Stacia Whittecar.

Changing the world one performance at a time...

ITT is updating its website regularly to give you the most up to date information about what we're doing, where we're going and who our people are. For this information, videos, pictures and more please don't hesitate to visit our site:

<http://ittkansas.wix.com/awareness>

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