

## **NEWS RELEASE**

Contact:  
Kelly Blithe  
Director of Communications  
732-247-7200, ext. 542  
[kbliithe@StateTheatreNJ.org](mailto:kbliithe@StateTheatreNJ.org)



15 Livingston Ave | New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
732-246-SHOW (7469) | STNJ.org

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Leaders from Johnson & Johnson, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey join panel discussion on Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts at State Theatre New Jersey's Partners' Breakfast**

**New Brunswick, NJ (July 25, 2017)**—State Theatre New Jersey recently hosted a **Partners' Breakfast** on July 11. Attended by a crowd of over 100 people from the arts, local businesses, community groups, and arts enthusiasts, the free networking event featured a panel discussion on **Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts, Partnering Across Organizations, and Building a Creative Workforce.**

The speakers on the panel included: **David L. Gonzales, Head of Global Diversity & Inclusion, Bristol-Myers Squibb; Wanda Bryant Hope, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Johnson & Johnson;** and **Carlos Medina, Chair, Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey.** The discussion was moderated by **Dale G. Caldwell, CEO of Strategic Influence, LLC and author of *Intelligent Influence: The 4 Steps of Highly Successful Leaders and Organizations.***

When asked by moderator Dale Caldwell what arts organizations can do in an effort to build more diverse audiences, **Wanda Bryant Hope, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Johnson & Johnson** said “[Arts organizations] have to have things that draw in diverse audiences. Therefore [organizations] have to find a better way of connecting with those diverse audiences. By having a board of directors and staff that really understand the different diverse and multicultural customers that they are serving every day is one of the key ways of doing that. The more they can do that, the more insights and perceptiveness that will help us understand what kinds of performers should we be bringing in? What kinds of activities should be happening in [our] arts venue?”

Caldwell kicked off the discussion by asking the panelists, “What are some of the innovative diversity initiatives happening at your company?” **David Gonzales, Head of Global Diversity & Inclusion at Bristol-Myers Squibb** said, “We feel so strongly about changing the business paradigm around how we engage our employees worldwide that we have actually put two full-time leaders in place to lead two of our People and Business Resource Groups. Our women's group represents nearly 4,000 women worldwide. So it is less about the social networking and more about driving business performance by mobilizing 25,000 people around the world.”

**Chair of the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Carlos Medina** agreed with Hope and Gonzales, adding “I would say [diversity] is in our DNA! Our challenge is presenting the value of diversity to our corporate partners. So as a business chamber we try to do it more as less [about] philanthropy and more about business...by constantly showing there is a value to diversity true dollars and cents. There are emotional reasons to [be inclusive] but from a business chamber we tell [corporations] it will add value to your bottom line by using diverse vendors, having a diverse board and having senior staff that looks more like your consumers. It’s a bonus that it is the right thing to do!”

Echoing these sentiments, panel moderator **Dale Caldwell** said “The view of diversity has changed! In 2003, diversity was a good thing to do back then. Diversity now is a business initiative. If you want to succeed you have to understand diversity and inclusion.”

The Partners’ Breakfast was sponsored by RBC Wealth Management and media sponsor NJBIZ.

*State Theatre New Jersey—creating extraordinary experiences through the power of live performance. The theater exists to enrich people’s lives, contribute to a vital urban environment, and build future audiences by presenting the finest performing artists and entertainers and fostering lifetime appreciation for the performing arts through education. State Theatre New Jersey’s programs are made possible, in part, by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and contributions from numerous corporations, foundations, and individuals. The Heldrich is the official hotel of State Theatre New Jersey. Magic 98.3 is the official radio station of State Theatre New Jersey. The Star-Ledger is the official newspaper of State Theatre New Jersey. United is the official airline of State Theatre New Jersey.*

**STATE THEATRE NEW JERSEY**

15 Livingston Ave  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Information in this release is current as of July 25, 2017.  
Up-to-the-minute information on events and State Theatre New Jersey news,  
online at [www.STNJ.org](http://www.STNJ.org).

# # #