

For immediate release  
Contact: Gloria Shanstrom  
303-931-7241/Shanstrom@comcast.net  
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**Denver Actors Fund announces The KINDNESS Fund: A new source of relief for Colorado theatre artists – with a call to service**  
*\$65,000 seed money includes record donation from Bonnie Cashin Foundation*

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The [Denver Actors Fund](#) today announced an innovative new emergency COVID relief fund – with a fun, humanitarian twist. The \$65,000 KINDNESS Fund will provide immediate financial assistance to qualified Colorado theatre artists whose livelihoods have been impacted by the pandemic ... when they perform a basic act of kindness. [Applications are being taken here.](#)

The DEAR Fund will be seeded by \$25,000 from The Denver Actors Fund’s reserve; a \$10,000 donation from retiring Cherry Creek Theater Co-Founders Mark and Maxine Rossman; and the largest single donation in Denver Actors Fund history: A \$30,000 gift from the Bonnie Cashin Foundation. The life of this temporary fund will be extended by additional [donations that are being accepted here.](#)

Qualifying Colorado theatre artists will receive recurring \$100 monthly stipends to help defray basic living expenses. But, in an acknowledgement that we live in a scary time when all of our spirits need bolstering, Denver Actors Fund Founder John Moore thought to add an altruistic wrinkle: Why not ask recipients to do a good deed in turn that might encourage others to pay that kindness forward? An acceptable act of kindness will be defined as a good deed, an offer of help or specialized assistance to someone who needs but is not expecting it. Two conditions: These acts of kindness must be socially distanced and not involve money.

“Being kind to others brings out the best in all of us,” said Chris Gibley, President of The Denver Actors Fund’s Board of Directors. “Letting someone go ahead of you in line, giving someone your seat on a crowded bus or making a warm meal for someone in need are but a few examples. We encourage members of our Colorado theatre community to spread creative kindness through their actions and help make this world a better place to live. And we've started The DAF KINDNESS Fund to both support and reward those who do.”

To help qualifying recipients with ideas, we have created this [handy list of suggested, socially distanced acts of kindness.](#)

Qualifying recipients will be encouraged to post their acts of kindness on social media channels using the hashtag #DAFKINDNESS as a way of encouraging others to do their own good deeds.

The Denver Actors Fund, which has made more than \$660,000 available to Colorado theatre artists since 2013, expanded its founding medical mission in April to help artists who lost income from plays and musicals canceled by COVID. Over the next four months, the DAF's DEAR Fund distributed more than \$100,000 in income replacement to nearly 300 affected artists.

That work helped inspire the Bonnie Cashin Foundation to contribute \$30,000 to The Denver Actors Fund's continuing efforts to help Colorado theatre artists. Cashin was a noted fashion designer and Hollywood costumer who died in 1970. Some fashion scholars go so far as to credit Cashin with inventing American sportswear.

"Bonnie changed the face of 20th century American fashion, but in fact she was a free spirit who was fascinated by creativity of all kinds," said Lucia Kellar, Trustee of The Bonnie Cashin Foundation. "She left her estate to support such creativity, and I think she would have been very pleased to know that she was providing help, through The Denver Actors Fund's new Kindness Fund, to those in the acting community who are experiencing hardship in these difficult times. It's a great idea."

Mark and Maxine Rossman, who founded the Cherry Creek Theater in 2010 and announced their retirement in July, also wanted to be part of The DAF's next round of COVID relief.

"We enjoy the arts, and we particularly appreciate the many sacrifices that actors, musicians, artists and dancers make in order to practice their calling and bring joy to the hearts of countless lovers of the arts," the Rossmans said in a joint statement. "As a service to the community, we do what we can to assure that the quality of the arts in Denver, particularly in the theatre, remains high. The mission of The Denver Actors Fund is congruent with our personal mission, and we are proud to support this wonderful organization."

The Denver Actors Fund is a grassroots nonprofit founded in 2013 by longtime local arts journalist John Moore and local attorney Christopher Boeckx specifically as a source of medical relief to the Colorado theatre community. To date, The Denver Actors Fund has provided \$660,000 in direct medical and dental aid to Colorado theatre artists, in addition to practical and neighborly services through a vast network of volunteers.

"But when the COVID-19 pandemic erupted and the entire theatre community was shut down for the immediate future, hundreds of theatre artists not only lost their opportunity to perform, and the income that goes along with it, most of them lost their secondary incomes as well, such as part-time jobs as Teaching Artists and servers in bars and restaurants," Moore said. "That double-whammy has left most of them with no source of income for the immediate future, including unemployment insurance. As the severity of this crisis became plain, we knew The

Denver Actors Fund had to step into the void and do our part to help as many of them as we can.”

Essentially, a qualifying KINDNESS Fund recipient will be any Colorado theatre artist who ....

- Is at least 18 years old by the date of application.
- Has resided in Colorado for at least six consecutive months immediately prior to applying for KINDNESS Funds;
- Has worked for a credible theater company operating in Colorado as a performer, designer, crew member, or in any other position actively involved in the artistic creation of a specific credible and identifiable play or musical opening on or after January 1, 2019. Or...
- Was employed or contracted by a Colorado theater company in a theater-adjacent professional capacity (examples including, but not limited to, box-office worker, house manager, administrative employee, theater-arts educator, or similar) toward the making of a specific credible and identifiable theatrical play or musical opening on or after January 1, 2019. (A qualifying Colorado theater company is one defined as being a current member of the Colorado Theatre Guild.) And who ...
- Has not had a combined gross income from all sources, including unemployment, wages and compensation for services, averaging more than \$3,000 a month for the three months prior to application.
- Can demonstrate to have done one simple, socially distanced, non-remunerative act of kindness within the previous seven days of application. have worked in a creative or theatre-adjacent capacity worked as a performer, designer, crew member, or in any other position actively involved in the artistic creation of a show, for a credible theater company operating in Colorado since January 1, 2019. Or...

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The DAF, Gibley added, “is constantly looking to find new ways to be of service to our theatre community.” That includes its free video urgent-care teledoctoring service through [Hippo Health](#), and its new program to help make affordable mental-health care available through the [Maria Droste Counseling Center](#).

We've come up with a new way to help Colorado theatre artists struggling to make their way through the COVID shutdown. You know we've given out more than \$500,000 in medical relief. You know our DEAR Fund made \$100,000 available in emergency COVID income replacement.

What are we doing next? WE CAN'T WAIT TO TELL YOU. Tune in at noon on Friday, November 6 to see the announcement!

Applications will be accepted and considered immediately, in order of receipt. Stipends will be processed for as long as there are KINDNESS funds to distribute.

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