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## TRINITY REP ELECTS NEW TRUSTEES AT ANNUAL MEETING

**PROVIDENCE, RI:** At its Annual Meeting on June 21, 2021, Trinity Repertory Company's Board of Trustees elected five new trustees for terms beginning July 1: **Karen Allen Baxter, Michael Évora, Avery Willis Hoffman, Noni Thomas López, Ed.D,** and **Shankar Prasad.** Additionally, retiring Trustee **Joseph Dowling, Jr., M.D.** was elected to the Emeritus Board. Trustees reelected for another three-year term were **Linda Cohen, Doris Licht, Hannah Bell-Lombardo, John Lombardo, Joseph Madden, Marisa Quinn,** and **Sean Redfern.** Vice-Chairs **Kibbe Reilly** and **Ken Sigel,** Treasurer **John Lombardo,** and Secretary **Jonathan Duffy** were re-elected for a one-year term. Board Chair Louis Giancola is about to begin the second year of his three-year term. A complete list of trustees can be found at [trinityrep.com/board](http://trinityrep.com/board).

The class of new trustees brings a wealth of experience that will help guide Trinity Rep as it resumes in-person performances, classes, and events. Karen Allen Baxter brings considerable arts administration experience and is the retired senior managing director of the Department of Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre at Brown University. Michael Évora is a lawyer who currently serves as the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights and a musician and performer who founded the Prism of Praise Community Gospel Choir. Avery Willis Hoffman also brings artistic and administrative experience to the board with her experience as the inaugural Artistic Director of the Brown Arts Initiative. Noni Thomas López, the Head of School at the Gordon School, contributes expertise in education. Shankar Prasad is the Vice President for Academic Innovation and Deputy Provost at Brown University where he is focused on creating access to education for diverse populations.

**Kibbe Reilly,** chair of the governance committee responsible for recruiting new trustees, says of the new board members: "Every year the Governance Committee works to attract the best and brightest volunteers to join our Board of Trustees. This year we welcome five extraordinary individuals who bring an array of expertise to the theater. Their knowledge, experience and enthusiasm will add depth to our already excellent Board.

Trinity Rep extends its thanks to **Joe Dowling, Sergio Gonzalez, Philip Gould, Bill Greene, Clay Pell, Yahaira “Jay” Placencia, and Maribeth Williamson**, who completed their terms on the board.

## NEW TRUSTEE BIOGRAPHIES



### KAREN ALLEN BAXTER

Karen Allen Baxter started her career as an arts administrator at the New Lafayette Theatre in Harlem. Baxter has produced concerts and managed reggae artists Bob Marley & The Wailers, Jimmy Cliff, and Burning Spear. She co-produced the Grammy-nominated album *Reggae Sunsplash - A Tribute to Bob Marley*. From 1987 to 1999, she produced the Annual AUDELCO Awards that honor excellence in Black Theater. Before becoming the Senior Managing Director, Department of Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre, Brown University, Baxter was the executive director of the Frank Silvera Writers' Workshop (FSWW). She came to FSWW at a critical point in its history and, through her management skills, she stabilized and grew the institution. As Africana Studies/Rites and Reason Theatre's Producer/Senior Managing Director, Baxter produced each season's productions and programs. These have included film-stage-veteran Ossie Davis' *Sybil*, *Mule Bone* by Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes (which was produced on Broadway by Lincoln Center, NY) and *The Disappearance* by novelist Rosa Guy, adapted and directed by Ruby Dee and Elmo Terry-Morgan (also produced at CrossRoads Theatre, NJ); the RI, NC and CA tours of *Heart to Heart*, a lifesaving play commissioned by the American Heart Association; *Freshwater Road* by Denise Nicholas; the staged reading of *The Ballad of Emmett Till* by Ifa Bayeza (premiere-Goodman Theatre, Chicago; Fountain Theater, LA, Houston Ensemble Theatre). Baxter also curated and produced The Black Lavender Experience (BLX) – theater and conversation sparked by queer artists of color and she spearheaded the Tougaloo-BLX exchange; and the Africana Film Festival. Her international projects included the *Trilateral Reconnections* - University of Cape Town, SA, Brown and the University of the West Indies; photography exhibition, *The Painterly Photographer* with the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Enlightenment Academy and Brown's CSSJ; and painting exhibition, *Reframing Haiti* at Brown. Baxter's course, Art and Civic Engagement, explores public art, communities, social and cultural identity, democracy and power structures. Baxter sits on many boards and committees. She chaired The New Lafayette Theatre Project, NYC; and is Founding Chairperson, SonEdna, in the Mississippi Delta that supports the literary arts. Currently, she is chair of the Southside Cultural Center of Rhode

Island's board. Baxter holds a BS in sociology from the City University of New York, a Certificate in Arts Management from Harvard University with a scholarship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a MS in Arts Management from Lesley University. Baxter was awarded a 2-year scholarship by August Wilson and completed the Minority Business Executive Program at the Amos Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College.



#### **MICHAEL ÉVORA**

Michael D. Évora, a Pawtucket native, earned a B.A. in English/Drama from Dartmouth College, a Master of Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs (Syracuse University), and a Juris Doctor from Yale Law School. Following law school, he served as Law Clerk to the Honorable Justice Victoria Lederberg on the Supreme Court of Rhode Island and spent a year as an Assistant Public Defender for the Juvenile Division of the Rhode Island Public Defenders' Office. Michael has worked at the Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights for nearly 20 years, first as Associate Legal Counsel, and then, since 2002, as Executive Director. He is the recipient of the Community Mediation Center of Rhode Island's Commitment to Peaceful Conflict Resolution Award, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development's Fair Housing Month Advocate Award, the Rhode Island for Community & Justice's Community and Justice Award, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. State (RI) Holiday Commission's Community Service Award, and the Rhode Island State Council of Churches' Sister Ann Keefe Community and Faith Service Award. Michael is the founder and Director of the Prism of Praise Community Gospel Choir. Prism is a multi-ethnic, intergenerational choir committed to using both traditional and contemporary gospel music to spread joy, peace, and hope as it assists community and religious organizations in their efforts to raise awareness of the needs of the diverse community in which we live, and to raise funds to help address those needs. He has appeared in local and regional productions of *Chicago*, *HAIR*, *A Chorus Line*, *Rent* and *Sweet Charity*. He served as Musical Director for Trinity Rep's 2019 production of *black odyssey*. Married to Sean Nolan, he lives in the Elmhurst section of Providence.



#### **AVERY WILLIS HOFFMAN**

A writer, director, producer, and curator of public programs, Avery Willis Hoffman recently joined Brown University as the inaugural Artistic Director of the Brown Arts Initiative. In her recent role as inaugural program director at Park Avenue Armory in New York, Avery has curated and produced innovative and diverse public programming initiatives, including numerous large- and small-scale cultural events: Artist and Curatorial Talks, a Confrontational Comedy Series (2016-2019), the annual Culture in a Changing America Symposium (2017-2020), Carrie Mae Weems's Shape of Things Salon (2017), the United Lenape Nations' first Manhattan-based Pow Wow (2018), Theaster Gates's Black Artist Retreat 2019, and the recent multi-partner digital initiative 100 Years | 100 Women, marking the centennial of the 19th Amendment (2020). Prior to the Armory, Avery was a senior project developer at Ralph Appelbaum Associates, a museum planning and design firm, where she conducted research and developed content for a number of special projects. Between 2010-2015, her primary project was the development of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, in Washington, D.C. For more than a decade, her professional career has included multiple projects with acclaimed director Peter Sellars, including on his international productions of Shakespeare's *Othello*, Mozart's opera *Zaide*, New Crowned Hope Festival, and Toni Morrison's *Desdemona*. She is currently international tour producer for FLEXN, Sellars's collaboration with choreographer Reggie Gray and the Brooklyn flex community, which premiered at the Armory in March 2015 and has since been presented at the Marseille Festival, Napoli Teatro Festival, Holland Festival, New Zealand Festival, Sao Paulo Brasil Sesc, La Villette Paris, Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival, residencies at Dartmouth College and Princeton University, and The Kennedy Center. Avery earned her D. Phil and MS in Classical Languages and Literature from Balliol College, University of Oxford, where she was a Marshall Scholar, and earned her BA in Classics and English at Stanford University.



**NONI THOMAS LÓPEZ, ED.D**

In July 2021, Noni Thomas López will begin her fourth year as the Head of School of the Gordon School in East Providence, RI. Before joining Gordon, Noni worked for two decades as a teacher, and later a consultant and administrator, in independent schools in New York City. In her twenty-six year career in education, Noni has presented at conferences across the country and consulted at universities as well as public and private schools on curriculum, diversity/equity/inclusion, tuition modeling, governance, and organizational leadership. Noni currently serves on multiple national and regional boards, including the National Association of Independent Schools, the Association of Independent Schools of New England, Community Preparatory School, and Inspiring Minds Rhode Island. In July 2020, she was invited by Sesame Workshop to be a Racial Justice Advisor; this work led to invitations to serve as a script consultant on issues of adolescent development and racial and social justice with Sinking Ship Productions for the Emmy Award-winning television show “Ghost Writer” and the award-winning YouTube series “Locked Down.” Noni holds a B.A. from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, an M.A. from Teachers College, Columbia University, and an Ed.D in Educational and Organizational Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania.



**SHANKAR PRASAD**

Shankar Prasad is committed to creating pathways of access to higher education for a diverse population of learners across the world. As Vice President for Academic Innovation and Deputy Provost at Brown, Shankar leads the Academic Innovation Unit, a skunkworks designed to attract learners across a broad range of professional and personal backgrounds through online education. He also oversees a number of strategic priorities for Brown in support of academic excellence, financial sustainability and operational effectiveness, and building community, including the Brown Arts Initiative, the Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative, and the John Carter Brown Library. Previously, Shankar served as Brown’s senior international officer and developed and led the University’s global strategy. Prior to joining Brown, Shankar served on the faculty of NYU, worked in a health care start up, and began his professional career in finance. Shankar lives in Providence with his wife and two daughters, and serves on the Board of the Wheeler School.



**TRINITY REPERTORY COMPANY**

Rhode Island's Tony Award-winning theater, Trinity Rep has created unparalleled professional theater for and with its community since its founding in 1963. Trinity Rep strives to facilitate human connection and has been a driving force behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region for more than 50 years.

Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally-stimulating live productions that range from classical to contemporary and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities. Its annual production of *A Christmas Carol* has brought families together for more than four decades and made memories for over a million audience members.

**For more information on our 2020-21 Season, call the box office at (401) 351-4242 or visit Trinity Rep's website at [www.TrinityRep.com](http://www.TrinityRep.com).**

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