



# IATSE LOCAL891

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, its Territories and Canada • British Columbia and the Yukon

## IATSE Local 891 Statement

### Addressing Recent Anti-Black Racism Incidents and Commitment to Anti-Racism

At IATSE Local 891, we recognize that intersectional forms of anti-Black racism exist within all areas of our society, including the film and television industry. We know that production crew professionals from Black/African descent communities face different manifestations of anti-Black racism in their everyday lives and while working in the industry. Some workers are exposed to microaggressions (e.g. a Black crew member being reprimanded and demeaned for wearing a 'Black Lives Matter' t-shirt), incidents of racial profiling, and other acts of violence. The negative impacts of anti-Black racism in the industry are devastating, traumatic, and lead to unsafe work environments. Our Local condemns anti-Black racism, all forms of discrimination, and we know that Black Lives Matter.

Anti-Black racism can be deadly, as we have witnessed many times before, including the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Clive Mensah and Regis Korchinski-Paquet and too many others.

As a union, we have a responsibility to fight for our members and below-the-line workers. We are also accountable to our members from Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities.

Over several decades, and particularly in 2020, we were called to act by racial justice movements across Canada and globally. We are heeding these calls to action to address anti-Black racism and intersectional forms of racism faced by workers from Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities.

We are in the process of developing and implementing an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. We are also exploring different ways to build sustainable anti-racism practices into our work at the Local and in the broader industry. To date, we are engaged in the following initiatives:

- IATSE Local 891 has engaged MNP LLP, a Canadian business advisory firm, to undertake a study assessing the representation of individuals from Indigenous, Black, racialized, and marginalized communities among our members and permittees. The study focuses on identifying barriers to recruitment, retention, advancement and identifying strategies and recommendations to increase the representation of historically underrepresented and marginalized groups. The study's findings will be used to inform the Local's efforts to increase diverse representation among its membership at all levels. The study commenced in late October 2020 and is expected to be complete by Spring 2021.
- The Local is working with world-renowned EDI consultant Tomee Sojourner-Campbell, who specializes in learning, professional development, anti-racism and anti-oppression in unionized environments. Ms. Sojourner-Campbell has engaged with the Local's management team, as well as the chairs and members of our Human Rights Committee,



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working on short and long-term goals for our organization. Internally, the Local's Communications team has been working with Ms. Sojourner-Campbell on a comprehensive comms plan surrounding EDI issues. She is also developing the Local's detailed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Learn more about Ms. Sojourner-Campbell: <https://tomeesojourner.com/tomeeelizabethsojournercampbellbio/>

- We recognize courses and education on their own do not eliminate racism; however, education generates new pathways to transform and build sustainable culture shifts within our union. To support IATSE Local 891 members, Shop Stewards, Department Chairs, Union Reps, Elected Officers and Officials, we are developing internal educational opportunities focused on reconciliation, anti-racism, anti-oppression, and EDI. We are also participating in training provided by the Motion Picture Production Industry Association of British Columbia (MPPIA) and Creative BC, including
- In October 2020, Local 891's Executive Board and Executive Committee attended BC's Motion Picture Production Industry Association unconscious bias training with facilitator Alden Habacon. Mr. Habacon's training was designed specifically for participants from the film and television industry and provided much-needed insight into decision-making
- In November 2020, our Executive Committee members attended sessions on reconciliation and Indigenous education facilitated by Shelley Saje Ricci, an Indigenous education facilitator.
- The Local is actively engaged in MPPIA's Diversity & Inclusion Committee and Creative BC's Creative Pathways project.
- Currently, we have a Pilot Internship Program that allows for the placement of people from diverse backgrounds under the mentorship of our experienced heads of departments.
- We are also launching our EDI frequently asked questions sheet and glossary of terms.
- In November 2020, we launched our "Focus on REDI" section in our e-bulletin.

In the midst of our current EDI work, we realize that we are on a long journey to uproot intersectional forms of racism, anti-Black racism, the legacies of White supremacy, colonialization, and systemic oppression. It will not be, and it is not an easy journey. It is deeply uncomfortable, and it will require many of us to reach deep within ourselves to work through personal biases, strengthen our knowledge and engage with the intention to generate more inclusive and safer work environments.

In Solidarity,

IATSE Local 891,