

Unusual Times

Last year, Program Director Melissa Denton and I represented the Unusual Suspects at a meeting at Camp David Gonzales to discuss transitioning youth back into their neighborhoods when they're released from probation camp.

Transitions: Support for Re-entry Services

By JENNIFER LISLE, BOARD MEMBER



An alumni from Camp David Gonzales shakes hands with a Teaching Artist after the graduation ceremony.

At the meeting different voices – from community-based organizations to therapeutic arts programs (like *US*) to Camp Gonzales probation officers to staff and parents of the youth – spoke about the challenges of supporting kids at this crucial time.

At Camp G, one of only a few camps which integrates alternative programs like theatre arts, journalism, and yoga into the youths' schedules, many of the youth learn new skills and undergo significant behavioral changes during their time there. But many then find it hard to sustain a new lifestyle when confronted with the pressures and peers of their former lives.

"He's great for about a week then he's back to his old self, hanging out with his old friends," is a common refrain among parents of youth in the system.

During the meeting, we were seated in a

cabin-like conference room in the middle of the campus, an austere ring of dorm and classrooms surrounded by high walls that stands in stark contrast to its lush Santa Monica moun- [continued on page 5]

ALUMNI updates:

Where are they now?

Mandy Archuleta



Mandy Archuleta participated in the Narbonne High School Fall 2008 program with The Unusual Suspects. She knew from the first meeting that she wanted to continue working with the company.

Living in a single parent home, she had to grow up fast and take on the responsibility of taking care of her younger brother. Despite those hardships, Mandy strives to do well in school and receives much of her determination from her mother. Mandy

the weekends so that they can have a place where they can go and stay out of trouble and learn to do something greater.

Aubrey Prince



Aubrey was a participant in The Unusual Suspects program at Camp David Gonzales until just a few weeks ago when he was released. So far, Aubrey's future is looking very bright. He

was slightly skeptical when he began with *US* because he had never before participated in anything like the theater workshops, but he quickly felt excitement as he realized his creative potential.

Aubrey gained more self-confidence. He also noticed a change in some of his fellow participants, pointing out that people whom he would normally see getting into

"They don't only educate us on theatre, but...they teach us good skills to take out into the world...and most importantly, they can change someone's life for the better."

continues to work in the theater; she is currently rehearsing for a musical. She is also part of the school's debate and speech team.

When asked to talk about the importance of The Unusual Suspects, she stated, "they don't only educate us on theatre, but ... they teach us good skills to take out into the world ... and most importantly, they can change someone's life for the better." Mandy hopes that one day The Unusual Suspects will open a center for students on

trouble or not getting along were much more supportive of one another as a result. He also described his work with *US* as, "a lot of fun."

Now that Aubrey is getting back into the swing of things at home, he is looking forward to finding a job and focusing on the good parts in life. His advice to future *US* participants is: "Try it! You won't know until you try it."

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

US ANNOUNCES TWO NEW PARTNERS FOR SPRING 2009

👑

Maclay/GRYD Program

Maclay Middle School in partnership with the Pacoima chapter of the Gang Reduction Youth Development Program
February – April 2009

👑

The Prevention Initiative with Friends of the Family

a show written and performed by parents
March – June 2009

Letter from the Executive Director

“We believe that every person wants to succeed.” – TIM DECKER, Director of Missouri Division of Youth



In February, The Children's Defense Fund hosted more than 400 key partners, youth, and adults from across the country in Sacramento for their *Cradle to Prison Pipeline*

Summit: *Dismantling the Pipeline to Prison*. At the summit, I learned that that our state uses 2nd & 3rd grade test scores to project how many prisons we will need to build. They do this because they know that education is one of the biggest factors in determining whether someone will end up in prison: 75% of adult inmates did not graduate high school. I also learned that in some California neighborhoods the rate of youth incarceration is as high as 4000 out of 100,000. (The national average is 700 out of 100,000, which is still way above the international average of 50-100 per 100,000.)

The need is urgent to educate instead of incarcerate. The summit presented best practices and strategies, including the "Missouri Miracle," a model for transforming State Juvenile Justice practices. Missouri Division of

Youth Services' (DYS) Director Tim Decker commented that children do the best they can with what's available. He believes that all behavior has purpose and is symptomatic of unmet needs, such as love, respect, and a safe environment. If we understand this, he says, these youths' behavior may even seem reasonable.

The Missouri Model practices a group approach, where the kids have a chance to share their feelings, work out conflicts and build social skills. The staff receives extensive training and works in a ratio of 8-10 staff for every 10-12 kids in small treatment centers rather than a boot camp setting.

The model is expensive, Decker admits, but he says the payoff is worth it. Fewer than 8% return to the system. This is compared to rates of 25% to 55% for other states, such as Florida, New York, and Virginia. Reliable statistics were not available for California, though some claim a recidivism rate as high as 70%.

We know there is a better way to care for these young people. We see it every day in our workshops where youth from the most difficult

backgrounds discover their gifts and talents as story tellers and know, often for the first time, that they are valued and respected. Like in the Missouri Model, this group approach is critical to The Unusual Suspects' success. Guided by caring adults, youth from diverse skill levels work in ensemble to create original plays. Like the Missouri kids, Unusual Suspects' youth share feelings, work out conflicts, and build social skills. Thank you for joining us in the fight to care for and nurture our children. As James Baldwin said, "For these are all our children, and we shall all profit by, or pay for, whatever they become."

Sally Fairman

"That a Black boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance and a Latino boy a 1 in 6 chance of going to prison in their lifetime is a national disaster and says to millions of our children and to the world that America's dream is not for all."

– MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN, PRESIDENT,
CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND

"They asked me to talk about my feelings so they could help me." – Former Missouri DYS Youth & Beat the Odds® winner

Legislation Affecting Our Youth

BY FRANCES CARLEY

In an effort to keep our supporters updated on public policy and legislation concerning arts education and the juvenile justice system, *US* has decided to devote one corner of the newsletter to these issues.

I. The Creative Industries & Community Economic Revitalization Act 2010, AB 700

Assistant Majority Leader Paul Krekorian (D-Burbank) introduced California Assembly Bill 700 on February 26, 2009. The bill would restore funding for the California Arts Council (CAC) back to its 2003 level of \$35,000,000, increasing funding to nonprofit arts organizations throughout the state. Since 2003, California has ranked last among all the states in per capita investment in the arts—allocating just three cents per person from the General Fund. The bill would not require a tax increase.

The nonprofit arts sector is a proven economic driver for California's economy, as a \$5.4 billion industry that generates \$300 mil-

lion in state and local taxes a year and supports more than 150,000 jobs. Supporters of AB 700 see the bill as an investment in California's creative economy, which includes art, tourism and the entertainment industry.

The bill was scheduled to go to committee for review as of print time. Please visit www.californiaartsadvocates.org/ab700.html for more information.

II. Youth PROMISE Act, H.R. 3846

Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va) introduced the Youth PROMISE Act on October 16, 2007. The legislation would develop prevention and intervention services to address youth crime and delinquency, rather than depend on the suppression and incarceration tactics that have created a "cradle to prison pipeline." On February 20th, Rep. Scott stopped in Los Angeles for a public hearing on the bill hosted by Councilmember Tony Cardenas, which was attended by hundreds of community members, including *US*'s Executive Director Sally

Fairman and Development Director Frances Carley.

The Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education Act (Youth PROMISE Act) builds upon evidence-based methods proven to reduce youth violence and delinquency at the community level. Under the Youth PROMISE Act, communities facing the greatest youth gang and crime challenges will come together – via a local council that includes law enforcement, community-based organizations, schools, faith organizations, health, social service, and mental health providers – to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for young people and their families. This strategy will make our communities safer and help at-risk young people to lead law-abiding lives.

At print time, H.R. 3846 had not yet gone to a vote. Please visit www.opencongress.org/bill/110-h3846/show for updates on the bill's status.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS

BY ADAM KALESPERIS

VISTA DEL MAR

"Doing the improv was like trying to plant trees. You have to take care of them and water them every day," said Gabe, a Vista Del Mar participant in *The Abandoned Hotel*, performed on March 28th at Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services.

Starting on January 5th, 21 Vista high-schoolers met 4-6 hours each week after school to rehearse, revise and perform in *The Unusual Suspects'* first full production of the year, an original play written by Vista middle school students last spring.

In the play, Detective Cliff and his nephew Billy meet Giselle at a run-down hotel in Death Valley. Together, they investigate clues to reveal the murderer of their parents and the other victims in the abandoned hotel. Colorful characters included a ghost bellhop, a pet rat, and a supervillain.

A few weeks prior to the performance, we asked some of the youth participants how they felt about the upcoming show. "As it gets closer to the end, it gets more intense and you get nervous," said Breana, and Gabe said, "I'm studying every night...I'm thinking of it in my dreams!"

In the end, the participants walked away with a sense of accomplishment at what they had created. "I felt proud," Breana told us. "I never thought of things like this before... I'm also proud that I stayed in it."

Congratulations to the Vista team and alumni for a wonderful and memorable production! Special thanks to Teaching Artists Maria Pasquarelli, G. Scott Brown, and Dawn Lyen-Gardner, along with Technical Coordinator René Garcia, Costume Designer Tina Zarro, Videographer Brian Jonason, and volunteer mentors Amie Farrell, Nicole Paggi, Maya Parish, Courtney Elkin, and Stephanie Potter (who is herself a former Vista resident).

CAMP DAVID GONZALES

Starting from scratch, over 30 teen-age probationers at Camp Gonzales took an intensive journey to collaboratively write their own play in a 12-week playwriting workshop meeting on Thursdays after school and Saturday mornings.

"It was exciting because I got a chance to write something. It was like an alternate reality. What would happen if I was in a different life, and this is how it happened?" said Dashun. "It was like something I wish I could

be...things I couldn't do."

During the first few weeks of the program, the participants built character profiles, hashing out their most important relationships, occupations, and greatest wishes and fears.



Youth participants in costume for "The Abandoned Hotel" at Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services. [Photo credit: Angie Chupek]

Then, they started writing stories for their characters, gradually merging them into a single narrative. 10 teaching artists and volunteers guided the youth in story structure, the hero's journey, and play format, which the youth then used to flesh out their script by improvising the dialogue for each scene.

On Sunday, April 26th, Hollywood actors took the stage at Camp G, talking and rapping their way through the world of Sammie and Bobby, two cousins who've lost their parents, but realize they are musical soul mates and decide to take their chances at a career in the music industry.

Taking his bow, Dashun said, "I feel great, ecstatic. This is something I always wanted to do, and I never thought I'd do this in my life."

We can't wait to see their play come to life in the full production this summer when *The Unusual Suspects* return to Camp G for the 12-week performance workshop. Special thanks to Script Supervisor Zachary Barton, Teaching Artists Matt Orduña and Hilary Ward, mentors L. Trey Wilson, Raul Cardona, Lana Walling, Maria Pasquarelli, Anya Warburg, and Technical Director René Garcia.

Alumni Perspective

BY RICHARD MORGAN

Richard Morgan came to US as a participant, and continued to grow with us from volunteer to Teaching Artist. His participation and leadership were integral to our programs for almost ten years. Recently, Richard moved to New York City to pursue a career in acting and modeling. We know that he'll find enormous success wherever he goes in life, and are proud to have been able to work with him.



I was involved with The

Unusual Suspects for ten years, participating, volunteering, or teaching in a total of nine workshops. As a participant, I was involved in workshops at Art Share LA and Eagle Rock. I was eighteen years old when I first got involved in the Art Share LA program. I then worked as a volunteer at several sites before becoming a Teaching Artist, where I worked with kids at Pacoima Elementary and Narbonne High School. All of the sites I worked at are special to me, but the one thing they all had in common were awesome, open-minded participants who were willing to learn new things and work together to put on incredible plays.

As a participant, I remember having fun and feeling safe. The environment was very supportive and even though I always enjoyed writing and dance, I didn't take them seriously until I became part of this program. After coming to the workshops and playing theatre games, I soon realized that we were actually writing a play that we would perform in front of an audience. I hadn't had much experience doing that so I was very nervous, but I

[continued on page 4]

knew that I was part of an ensemble and had a responsibility.

Before getting involved with *The Unusual Suspects*, I had never done theater or any arts before. *US* allowed me to be creative and explore acting, writing, choreography, and performing. I have since auditioned for major films and worked with some incredible actors and directors in entertainment.

To cynics who might dismiss the idea of having theatre as a program that can generate positive, long-lasting change in the lives of youth, I would say the youth in our programs are living hard lives. They enter our program with worries and hopelessness, but they leave knowing they can do anything. A lot of youth in the program discover things about themselves and what they want to do in life; theatre helps facilitate this growth. My personal experience as a participant and Teaching Artist helped me contribute to my community by showing youth positive alternatives to violence and street life.

A Florida investigation found that 83% percent of students who were at risk of dropping out of school stated that participation in an arts course affected their decision to remain in school" (Florida State University, 1990).



Bridging the Gap

A conversation with Melissa Denton and Matt Orduña

By BRITTNEY KALMBACH



Teaching Artist Zachary Barton leads participants at Camp David Gonzales in a writing exercise.

If you have ever seen an Unusual Suspects show, you are likely to describe the experience as uplifting and maybe even magical. That's how it was for me the first time I saw a *US* show. It was a play titled *For Family, Fortune or Fame* that I saw at Narbonne High School. I was brought to tears by the heartfelt outpouring of gratitude, and each student's shining face, filled with pride for the show they had written and performed together. I was hooked.

How does the Unusual Suspects have such amazing success with at-risk youth? I asked Melissa Denton, Program Director, and Matt Orduña, long-time *US* Teaching Artist, a series of questions to find this answer. Along the way, I came to understand it's simply holding the space for transformation. It's bridging the gap between art and life, between students from different backgrounds, and between teacher and student.

How do the students write the scripts?

Melissa: "Improvitational theatre has been a valuable tool for creating the core curriculum of the program because the rules of improv promote ensemble, encouraging students to work together and build trust. It's storytelling on your feet and taking it to the written word."

What does The Unusual Suspects hope to achieve through their workshops?

Melissa: "Having the youth accomplish working together as a group towards one single goal. If we can get them through that, and in the process they can find discoveries in themselves that they didn't know – skills, talents, or something that surprised them in themselves – that's a success for us."

Matt: "Especially with the young men in the probation camps, a lot of them have an idea of what they are and who they will be. And through our program they are able to expand that idea. We also will have lots of different backgrounds in a group. They will get to see things [skills, talents] from someone, that in a different situation, they would consider a threat. Then maybe they can bridge a gap that they never would have tried to bridge before."

How do you get the students from such diverse backgrounds to cooperate and work together?

Matt: "Within the second week, there is usually a 'norms' discussion, where the students decide the rules for the workshop, as well as the consequences. We ask them, what do we need and what don't we need for this to be successful? Almost immediately, as if it's a relief, they will say, we don't need any gang signs, we don't need any outside distractions, we need to treat everyone with respect."

"The youth in our programs are living hard lives. They enter our program with worries and hopelessness, but they leave knowing they can do *anything*."

What resources does *US* provide for students who have finished a program?

Melissa: "At the final performance, *US* asks the youth stay in touch and call us when they get out of the facility. When a student contacts us, we take them to lunch, and remain a resource for them to continue pursuing other avenues. We are currently in the stages of developing Alumni Services to include connections to job training, industry job contacts, and field trips to theatre performances. A huge challenge is being able to have transportation needs met for the students, so that we can ensure their ability to take advantage of our services."

tains setting. From here, we saw firsthand the strict discipline of camp life. There were no boys walking outside, but, intermittently, small groups of youth in baggy standard-issue khakis were jogged around the grounds by supervisors.

We also saw evidence of the positive influence of the camp's alternative programs when youth enrolled in the camp's culinary arts program catered lunch for our group. The ones who cooked brought in steaming dishes of chicken cacciatore and pasta and beamed with pride when Ed Anhalt, camp director, introduced them. Having seen *US* performances here, I've also witnessed the pride youth feel as they grandly take the stage in front of their peers and play characters they've developed on their own.

But camp is a rarefied place. Stern black and white signs at the entrance announce: "No firearms, knives or gang insignia. No baseball caps." Visitors are closely screened and youth are closely monitored.

When they return home, there are no screens or barriers between them and the violence in their neighborhoods. At the meeting community leaders described the enormous challenge of providing the right transition services as well as access to these services. Making parents feel comfortable with the

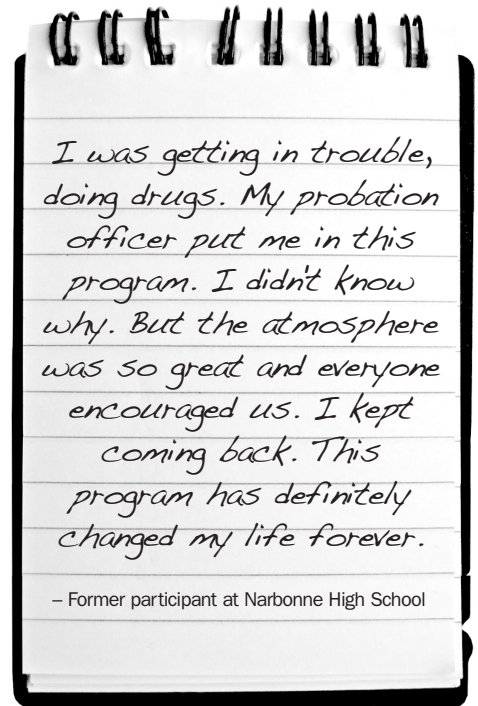
heavily bureaucratic system itself, some said, was possibly the biggest challenge.

"No one is there to guide parents through the morass of follow-up services and appointments and there's no continuity of services. Probation officers in the field carry caseloads of 70-200, so it's hard for them to even know anyone's name," said one of the camp's probation officers.

One of the mothers wept as she described her Kafkaesque struggle to find badly needed mental health services for her son. She, like many parents, also had younger children to care for on her own and had no idea how she would pay the hefty bill for her child's time in camp.

Another mother spoke about the difficulty she had finding any kind of school for her child after camp because youth on active parole are not allowed to attend LAUSD schools. If they are lucky to find one that can take the child, it's usually in a location that's difficult to get to.

While there is much to cheer about every time a child is touched by one of our programs, this visit made it obvious that there is still so much to do and so many children to reach. Hearing these struggles reinforced my resolve and belief in the need for The Unusual Suspects and programs like it if we expect to reduce recidivism and create possibilities for these youth and our own communities.



Paula Litt has a long history of supporting change-makers like The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company. As a member of the Board of Directors at the Liberty Hill Foundation, she has been a key component to the growth and development of *US* over the

Since then Paula has helped The Unusual Suspects by consulting with the staff on fundraising and board development issues. In addition to becoming a donor herself, she has encouraged others to give to the organization privately and through the Liberty Hill

in general and theatre in particular can provide an important outlet for youth to achieve direction and build self-esteem. *US* is a model organization that other groups in Los Angeles and across the nation can learn from."

Paula is being honored for her service to

15 Years
Voices

Interview with Paula Litt

By AMY ELLENBERGER

last 15 years.

Paula was first introduced to The Unusual Suspects when she did a favor for a friend. She was put in contact with founder Laura Leigh Hughes, who at the time was seeking advice on how to set up a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Paula was immediately inspired by Laura Leigh's commitment and dedication to working with at-risk youth in response to the 1992 L.A. riots. Paula commented, "The minute I met Laura Leigh, I was incredibly impressed and wanted to help her in whatever way I could." That meeting was the beginning of an important journey with *US*.

Foundation.

The Unusual Suspects and The Liberty Hill Foundation share a common goal of advancing social justice in Los Angeles. Liberty Hill has been a progressive voice in supporting change since it opened its doors in 1976 by giving away nearly \$23 million to community organizations in L.A. County. Paula has been an integral part of bringing Liberty Hill's expertise and passion for equality and opportunity to the Unusual Suspects over the years.

"*US* provides important programming for at-risk youth, which in turn benefits L.A. Art

The Unusual Suspects at the Inaugural Spring Gala "Speak Easy, Do Good!" on May 28, 2009 at the Oviatt Penthouse in downtown Los Angeles. *US* will recognize her contributions at the event, along with an Unusual Suspects alum and David Henry Hwang, playwright and finalist for the 2008 Pulitzer Prize.

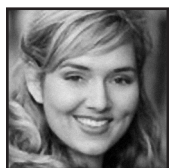
"When my memory takes me back 15 years to when I first met Laura Leigh, I get a smile on my face thinking of how far *US* has come!"



MEET OUR NEW staff members

BY CHANNING SARGENT

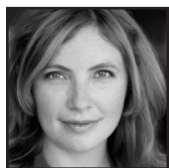
STAFF



Rebecca Sigl

Administrative Program Assistant

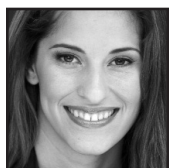
Rebecca Sigl is an actor and company member of Theatre of NOTE in Hollywood. She holds a B.F.A. in Acting from Boston University. While in Boston she directed a program with high school students in which they wrote and performed their own one-act plays. She believes wholeheartedly in the power of theatre and the mission of The Unusual Suspects and is honored to be a part of the administrative Unusual Suspects' team.



Amy Ellenberger

Outreach Coordinator & Executive Assistant

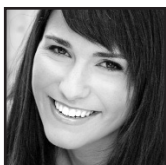
Amy Ellenberger has performed with various theatre companies on the east and west coasts, is a member of the improv comedy group, the Mutiny, stars in the web series, *Lost Angeles*, and co-hosts the internet radio show, *Worst Show on the Web*. She received her B.F.A. from Otterbein College and recently her M.F.A. from the University of California San Diego. Amy is a founding member of Chalk Repertory Theatre.



Angie Chupek

Intern

Angie Chupek attends California State University — Los Angeles, where she is a candidate for their multiple subject teaching credential. She has worked as an arts educator through ArtsBridge America, where she was able to integrate arts into elementary classroom curricula. She also performs with a repertoire theatre company called Masquer Ministries.



Anya Warburg

Intern

Anya received her B.A. in Theatre Studies from Emerson College. She is an actress and dancer who works in film and sketch comedy, and has performed with the Outlaw Style Thrance Company. She also teaches after school enrichment classes in theatre and dance for Star Education at Warner Avenue Elementary School.

TEACHING ARTISTS



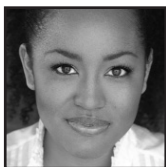
Hilary Ward

Hilary Ward holds a B.S. in Education from Indiana University and an M.F.A. from the University of California San Diego (UCSD). With Off-Broadway's Obie-award-winning company, Classical Theatre of Harlem, Ms. Ward appeared in *Medea*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*. Other New York credits: *The Quick* (New Dramatists), *The Tempest* and *Henry V* (Judith Shakespeare), *Subway Series* (tangent theatre co.), *Richard II*, and *Marisol*. TV: *Numb3rs*, *Brothers and Sisters*. Ms. Ward is a proud member of SAG and AEA.



Brittney Kalmbach

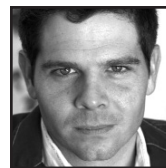
Brittney Kalmbach saw her first Unusual Suspects show at Narbonne High School, *For Family, Fortune, or Fame* in 2007. She then began to volunteer at Camp G, and has been hooked ever since! Originally from Pennsylvania, she received her B.A. in Theatre from Cal Poly Pomona University, and also studied at Oxford University in England. She has acted with Shakespeare by the Sea, and is now a part of Theatricum Botanicum in Topanga Canyon. Brittney also teaches theatre enrichment classes for elementary to high school aged children.



Dawn-Lyen Gardner

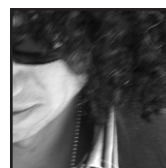
A native of LA and recent Juilliard grad, Dawn's recent theater credits include work at Center Theater Group, South Coast Rep, and Shakespeare Festival/LA. TV and film credits include *Cane*, *Crossing Jordan*, *Summerland*, *ER*, and *Art School Confidential*. Her voice can

be heard in spots for Hallmark, Fox, Blue Cross, and several animation and video game roles, as well as in various cabarets around town. In addition to performing and teaching at The Unusual Suspects, Dawn teaches at Shakespeare Festival/LA and is currently training as a Teaching Artist at Inside Out Community Arts.



G. Scott Brown

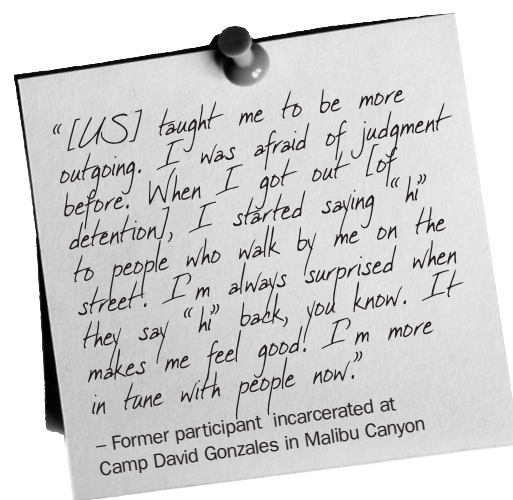
G. Scott Brown received his MFA in Acting from Northern Illinois University and has worked on several independent films including: *Ding!*, *The Greeters*, and *Finding Chance*. Favorite theatrical credits include: *Oscar/Little Foxes*, *Mansky/The Play's the Thing*, and *Uriah Shelley/A Man's a Man*. Most recently, he received critical acclaim for his portrayal of Curly in *Of Mice and Men*. He is currently appearing as Phil Granger in the LA premiere of *Six Years* at the Lex Theatre.



Rene Garcia

Technical Coordinator

René Garcia has a BA in fine art at San Francisco State University. His work incorporates elements of conceptual art practices constructed around performance, video, audio and installation art. His works explore the expanding nature and evolving convergence between bio-forms and digital technologies. Mr. Garcia has been presented at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, CU Art Museum in Boulder, MIT, the Studio Museum Harlem and universities across the United States.



— Former participant incarcerated at Camp David Gonzales in Malibu Canyon

15 Years Voices

The Unusual Suspects (US) continues to celebrate its birthday by spotlighting 15 voices from the last 15 years in our 15 Years, 15 Voices fundraising campaign. These voices represent the community of youth, artists, staff, volunteers, funders and partners that have been such an important part of our history. Look for our next 15 Years, 15 Voices spotlight and make the next 15 years as transformative as the last by helping US reach our goal of raising \$150,000 from individual donors!

Help us bring more in-depth services to more youth. We need your financial support to provide matching funds for each of our 15 programs in 2009-10. We met 89% of our \$150,000 fundraising goal, reaching over \$133,000 this past March!

Paula Litt

Longtime US supporter **Paula Litt** is featured in this issue's 15 Years/ 15 Voices campaign. Litt has been a key component to the growth and development of US over the last 15 Years.



www.theunusualsuspects.org/15voices.htm



THANK YOU THANK YOU

Gifts from March 2008 to March 2009

TOP SUSPECTS

GIFTS OF \$50,000 OR MORE

The James Irvine Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
The Weingart Foundation

SUPER SUSPECTS

GIFTS OF \$20,000 - \$49,999

The Ahmanson Foundation · The Angell Foundation · Alison Cardoso
Carl and Roberta Deutsch Foundation · Dwight Stuart Youth Foundation
Herb Alpert Foundation · Lia Fund · The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
The Rose Hills Foundation · The S. Mark Taper Foundation
Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman of the Board, Supervisor, 3rd District

#1 SUSPECTS

GIFTS OF \$10,000 - \$19,999

The Bancroft Family Foundation
City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
The Carol and James Collins Foundation
Los Angeles County Arts Commission

PRIME SUSPECTS

GIFTS OF \$5,000 - \$9,999

Carol & Frank Biondi · California Arts Council · The John W. Carson Foundation
Joseph & Jacqueline Kirshbaum Memorial Fund of the Liberty Hill Foundation
Larson Charitable Foundation · Provident Financial Management, Barry Siegel
Rhino Entertainment Fund of the Liberty Hill Foundation

SUSPICIOUS CHARACTERS

GIFTS OF \$1,000 - \$4,999

The Bernstein Family Foundation, Inc. · Donna & Russ Cashdan
George Clooney (in honor of Tommy Hinkley & Tracey Needham)
Ed Coghlan · Susan Devlin & Bruce Greenwood · FamilyHelp Fund of the
Liberty Hill Foundation · The Fletcher Jones Foundation · Paul Hudson
Molly Hughes & John Butler · Jennifer Lisle & Mike Revy
New Roads Community Partners and New Visions Foundation
Leslie & Tom Reed · Kevin M. Smith Foundation

COLORFUL CHARACTERS

GIFTS OF \$500 - \$999

David Hughes · Kathryn Layng Hwang & David Henry Hwang
Deborah Lintz · Leslie Neale & Chance Films

UNUSUAL CHARACTERS

GIFTS OF \$1 - \$499

Matt Adler · Clare Baren · K. Megan & Colin Barr · Carole Alexandra Brogdon &
Kevin Tent · Garrett Brown · Elisa & Eric Callow · Patricia Carroll &
Mark Van Amringe · Melanie Ciccone & Joseph Henry · Silvia Comparini
Mary Jo Coveny · Cynthia Crawford & Rande Gerber (in honor of Tommy Hinkley
& Tracey Needham) · Wende Dasteel & Neil Cuthbert · Luciana DeLulius
Dino DeLulius · Daniel Donahoe · Kerry & Linda English · Anita & David Fairman
Mary Fairman · Dana Farmer · First/The Intimate Opera Company
Zachary Foulkes · Wendy & Bo Foxworth · Benita Garvin · Goldsmith Family
Foundation · Jessica Goodman · Melissa Hall · Fern Hayes · Carol Herron
Laura Leigh Hughes · Sirena Irwin · The Isenberg Family (in honor of the
Hughes-Butler Family) · The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation · Jai Khalsa
Cami & Brian Kinahan · Larissa Kokernot & Karl Cajdusek · Daniel Kuramoto
Doris Vartan La Frenais & Ian La Frenais · Helen & Jack Lassley
Carol & Donald Lisle · Tanya & BJ Markel · Susan Edwards Martin
Carolyn Mathis · Loretta McNair · Angelita Moraga · Susan Munson · Denise Nicks
Anthony Osborn · Catherine & Kenneth Osleger · Joe Quintero · Jaime Ramirez
Mary Ann & Mark Rauter · Karen Robinson · Sara Rose · Stacey Savelle
Cathy Scanlon · Sara Scott · Susan Simon · Donna & David Singer
Michael C. Small · Gary Stewart · Susanna Styron & Darrell Larson · Kerry Toolan
Virtud & Jose Torres · Nina Treadwell & Jeanne Jackson · Nicolette Vajtay
Shirley & Walter Wang · Albert Wolsky · Jennifer Wood & Jim Barry
Carolina & Jimmie Yuen

IN KIND DONATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES

The Affiliated Group · Alison Cardoso · Shawn Amos · ANEW · Center for the Arts,
Eagle Rock · Lydia Chung · Cirque du Soleil · Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf · Ed Coghlan
Susan & Robert Emmer · Sean French · Laura Lyn Greene · Robert Greenwald
Tommy Hinkley & Tracey Needham · Priscilla and David Jaworski · Brian Jonason
Karen Kay · Kaye Scholer LLP · Kroeger/Rappaport Casting · Deborah Lintz
Jennifer Lisle · Garry Margolis · Abby Markward · Max Miller · Monarch Print &
Copy & Design Solution · Tim Owen · Maria Pasquarrelli · Rick Pinon &
The New Post Group · Gelfand Rennert & Feldman, LLP · Gisele Sanchez · Rochet
Savitsky, Satin & Company · Warner Brothers

ACTIVE PARTNER AGENCIES

Camp David Gonzales, Calabasas · Camp Glenn Rockey, San Dimas
City of Los Angeles, GRYD partnership · County of Los Angeles Probation
Department · El Nido Family Centers · Friends of the Family (Department of
Children & Family Services - Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project)
Healthy Start Office, Narbonne High School · Heman G. Stark Youth Correctional
Facility, Chino · New Roads Community Partners & New Visions Foundation
Pacoima Charter Elementary School, Pacoima · San Fernando Gardens Resident
Management Corporation · Star View Adolescent Center, Torrance · Vista del Mar
Child & Family Services, West LA · Weed & Seed/LAPD (Narbonne High School),
Harbor Gateway

The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company
Is Pleased to Announce our Inaugural Gala in
Celebration of Our 15th Anniversary

SPEAK EASY
DO GOOD!

THURSDAY, MAY 28 2009

In honor of playwright David Henry Hwang, philanthropist Paula Litt, and one of our youth alumni
For more information, visit our website or call Frances Carley, Development Director at 213.488.8488 ext. 205

WAYS U
CAN
HELP US!

- **Be a Mentor Artist:** assist at one program workshop a week, working directly with the students and our teaching artists.
- Help with **design elements** of shows: *set, props, costumes, sound, lighting.*
- Assist during **production week** of shows: *run lines with students and support front of house.*
- **Newsletter services:** photography and/or article writing.
- **Graphic design** services for our printed materials.
- Make a donation towards our **15 Years, 15 Voices** campaign.

Please contact **US** at admin@theunusualsuspects.org or **(213) 488-8488** and let us know how you can help out!

**OUR
mission**

The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization of professional artists. We exist to bring theatre arts to youth from the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Our programs cultivate pride, racial tolerance and social consciousness.

Founder
Laura Leigh Hughes

Board President
Edward Coghlan

Board of Directors
Alison Cardoso
Russ Cashdan
Howard Deuteh
Remy Greeno
Deborah Lintz
Jennifer Lisle
John Mason
Thomas Reed
Gisèle Sánchez
Rochet

Advisory Council
Shawn Amos
Edward Asner
Carol Biondi
Lena Bryant
Solomon Burke
Leigh Curran
Gary Erickson
Judge Terry
Friedman
Robert Greenwald
Tom Hayden
David Henry
Hwang

Sarah Key
Lisa Lindstrom
Mwitu Ndugu
Connie Rice
Luis J. Rodriguez
Cheryl Silver
Adam Simon
Susanna Styron
Steve Tisch
Julie Tugend
Zoot Velasco

Executive Director
Sally Fairman

Program Director
Melissa Denton

Development Director
Frances Carley

Outreach Coordinator/ Executive Assistant
Amy Ellenberger

Program Associate
Adam Kalesperis

Communications Coordinator
Channing Sargent

Administrative Assistant
Rebecca Sigl

Interns
Angie Chupek
Anya Warburg

Teaching Artists
Antonio Anagaran
Zachary Barton
C. Scott Brown
Raul Cardona
John Freeland Jr.
Dawn Gardner
Kristin Goodman
David Guerra
Brittney Kalmbach
Larissa Kokernot
Dustin Lehren
Ruth McKee
Pollyanna McIntosh
Loretta McNair
Richard Morgan
Matthew Orduña
Tinia Orduña

Rick Paladino
Maria Pasquarelli
Joe Quintero
Michelle Silver
Dominic Spillane
Hilary Ward

Volunteer Artists
Kimberly J. Ardison
Larry Bates
Robin Borovic
Hiwa Bourne
Elizabeth Bowman
Peter Breitmeyer
Charito Carrillo
Jennifer Chang
Taylor Clearman
Mo Collins
Xiomara Cornejo
Jamie Diamond
Tanner Max Efinger
Courtney Elkin
Patrick Fabian
Amie Farrell
David Fisher
Stevens Gaston
Marion Germond
Marc Gomes
Jerricka Hinton
Sam Jaeger
David Jaworski

Juanita Jennings
Brian Jonason
Yolanda Laverde
Rendal Leatherman
James Liao
Mark Lifrieri
Michael Lopez
Laura Love
Roma Maffia
Jason Mayland
Hannah McDowell
Amber Mellott
Geno Monteiro
Beth Morgan
Louise Munson
A.K. Murtadha
Vivianne Nacif
Cheray O'Neal
Clark Owyang
Calvi Pabon
Nicole Paggi
Maya Parish
Jared Poe
Stephanie Potter
Arnell Powell III
Crystal Robison
Anyia Maria Ruoss
Herbert Siguenza
Brad Smith
Scott Tiler
Heather Upton

Lana Walling
Anya Warburg
Garland Whitt
L. Trey Wilson
Joseph Steven Yang

Technical Coordinator
Rene Garcia

Costume Designer
Tina Zarro

Newsletter Managing Editor
Frances Carley

Newsletter Coordinating Editor
Channing Sargent

Videographer
Brian Jonason

Webmaster
Misha Malis

Graphic Design
Lydia Chung

We want to
hear from you!

Please share your thoughts about any **US** performances you've seen, ideas about the program or comments about the newsletter by emailing us at:

admin@theunusualsuspects.org
or write **US** at:
The Unusual Suspects
617 S. Olive St., Suite 812
Los Angeles, CA 90014
Phone: (213) 488-8488
Fax: (213) 488-8498

www.theunusualsuspects.org