

## Media Advisory for June 19, 2012

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### **Playbill.com Responds to OWS Letter; Revises Terms of Service for Postings of Internships**

#### **#OWS Arts& Labor Issues New Text for Job Board “Best Practices”**

[New York, New York] June 19, 2012 - Playbill.com, the theater industry website, has responded to a call by Occupy Wall Street, Arts & Labor to end Playbill.com’s practice of posting classified ads for unpaid internships at for-profit companies by revising its Terms of Service. On April 19, 2012, Playbill.com declared its plans to “amend its terms of service informing all posters of all jobs of the NYS regulations that apply to internships.” Those changes have now been made and can be read here: <http://www.playbill.com/jobs/job-policy/>.

#OWS Arts & Labor welcomes Playbill.com’s decision to amend their Terms of Service. The decision is a step forward in the creation of a new set of “best practices” for the advertising of internship opportunities in the arts on internet job boards like the one hosted by Playbill.com.

The campaign for intern labor rights is international in scope. For example, Arts Council England has adopted an [approach on its job board](#) that is clear and prominent. It offers a good model for job boards in the United States to alert users to concerns and best practices regarding unpaid internships.

As an example of job board text that would likely be useful to both internship advertisers and seekers, Arts & Labor offers the following:

While an educational internship can provide an extraordinary hands-on learning experience for anyone entering a profession, this experience should not be used to circumvent the Fair Labor Standards Act (<http://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/>). The Department of Labor has published guidelines (<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>) to clarify the legal obligations of organizations or individuals offering an internship program. An unpaid internship at a for-profit institution must be similar to training given in an educational environment; the experience must be for the benefit of the intern; the intern must not displace regular employees; and the employer must derive no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern.

When submitting a post, please ensure that any unpaid position is in compliance with these guidelines. We reserve the right to remove any posting without notice that we feel does not uphold these standards.

#OWS Arts & Labor encourages all internet job boards to post this or similar text in a prominent location adjacent to their postings and to exercise the right to remove any posting that violates a job board's policies, terms of service or any state or federal laws relating to employment opportunities.

In addition to calling on Playbill.com, #OWS Arts & Labor sent similar [email letters about internship advertising](#) to job boards at the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), the Association of American Publishers, mandy.com, internships.com and entertainmentcareers.net. #OWS Arts & Labor calls on these job boards to inform internship advertisers and seekers of the laws concerning these opportunities and to remove classified advertisements that fail to meet the Department of Labor's guidelines for unpaid internships.

***Intern Labor Rights**, a sub-group of #OWS Arts & Labor, aims to raise awareness to the exploitation of unpaid laborers. We are artists and art workers who have experienced firsthand the detrimental effects of the culture of free labor. From our collective experience we know that many internships do not meet the stipulations required by the Fair Labor Standards Act. Business owners and shareholders are thus profiting from the uncompensated labor of others, which is a violation of basic labor rights and contributes to income and wealth disparity. In this era of historic inequality, class divide, skyrocketing student debt and intractable unemployment, we call for an end to this opportunistic and exploitative practice: **Pay your interns!***