

# NYWIFT || New York Women in Film & Television

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **NYWIFT RELEASES DIGITAL COPIES OF NEW YORK WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION CREATIVE WORKFORCE SUMMIT: WORKPLACE SAFETY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, AND PAY EQUITY**

The 68-page publication based on the first annual NYWIFT Summit  
hosted by the Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice

**NEW YORK, NY – September 8, 2020** – New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) is releasing digital advance copies of *New Women in Film & Television Creative Workforce Summit: Workplace Safety, Diversity & Inclusion, and Pay Equity*, a 68-page publication based on the first annual NYWIFT Summit hosted by the Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice. The publication, which was supported by the Ford Foundation, serves as a concise summary of the lessons learned, challenges identified, and targeted next steps from the summit. Given the radical shift in the industry in wake of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement, the publication also acknowledges the new opportunities for inclusion and potential challenges to overcome as the entertainment business prepares for a massive re-hiring as production resumes. Digital and print editions of the publication will be available to the general public in October 2020.

Included in the briefing are a keynote address by New York State Labor Department Labor Commissioner **Roberta Reardon** and insights from panels featuring **Danielle C. Belton** (Editor-in-Chief, *The Root*), **Radha Blank** (Writer/Director/Producer/Star of *The 40-Year-Old Version*), **Beverly Cooper Neufeld** (President, PowHer New York), **Rebecca Damon** (Executive Vice President and New York Local President SAG-AFTRA), **Jericka Duncan** (National Correspondent, *CBS This Morning*), **Christina Norman** (Creative Executive, Creative Advisor to Level Forward), **Leslie Silva** (Actress, Founding Member of TIME'S UP), **Lori Sokol** (Ph.D., Executive Director and Editor-in-Chief, Women's eNews), **Amber Tamblyn** (Author, Actress and Director, Founding Member of TIME'S UP), and **Sharyn Tejani** (Director, TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund).

This is NYWIFT's first official publication in the organization's 43-year history. In addition to highlights from each of the event's panels, the briefing also features a suggested action plan for industry leaders going forward. A key takeaway from the Summit was the importance of women championing one another, and thus the publication includes inspirational profiles of four women from four different parts of the industry, all of whom relied on strategic networking and community support to carve out their own unique paths to career success.

Inclusivity, pay equity, and workplace safety continue to be issues facing all women, including women in the entertainment industry. Because of the media spotlight on them, women in entertainment industry are uniquely positioned to promote change in these areas, not only within their own industry but also in society as a whole. By speaking out, women and members of other historically underrepresented groups within this industry have the exceptional ability to focus press attention on the pay gap, diversity, and sexual harassment.

NYWIFT seeks to foster the creation of strategies and highlight best practices to impact and participate in the movement to create institutional change around the issues of pay equality,

inclusion, and safety, including sexual harassment, in the entertainment industry. The date and theme for the next NYWIFT advocacy Summit will be announced in the coming weeks.

**New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon** said, "NYWIFT is an innovator in bringing women in the film and television industry together to have incredibly important and candid conversations. Talking about workplace harassment, pay inequity, diversity and inclusion through the conduit of this summit is key to changing the dynamic and making progress. This inspires women to stand united and demand a new normal. We are fortunate that we have a Governor in New York State who is proactive when it comes to advancing these issues, and together, with all of you, we will write a script that changes history. I congratulate NYWIFT on its first official publication and for making this valuable resource available as a tool for all women."

**Maria Torres-Springer, vice president for U.S. Programs at the Ford Foundation** said, "We are proud to support the NYWIFT Creative Workforce Summit and deeply value the light their research shines on the state of the industry at large. Bringing women together for honest conversations about pay disparities, workplace harassment, and diversity is a critical step towards creating a media and entertainment sector that is fully inclusive and where women content makers, actors, and crew are truly able to thrive."

"We at NYWIFT are so proud of the women who participated in these important conversations, and we thank the Ford Foundation for their support of our initiative," said **NYWIFT Executive Director Cynthia Lopez**. "For real progress to happen, these fireworks moments must be supported by consistent vigilance, education, and negotiations with industry influencers, membership groups, unions, academics and individuals. By distributing this print and digital publication based on the 2019 NYWIFT Summit: Inclusion, Equality, and Safety, NYWIFT will be able to share and expand on the important work achieved during this convening."

"Following the revelations of Harvey Weinstein's widespread abuse, the ongoing male whiteness of production, and the Hollywood pay gap exposed by the Sony hacks, we at NYWIFT felt compelled to explore the roots of the power imbalance in the entertainment industry. We defined it as a three-pronged issue: a culture of sexual harassment, the lack of representation, and the gender pay gap," said **NYWIFT Board Member Kathryn O'Kane, VP of Advocacy**. "Since all disciplines above and below the line are represented at NYWIFT, organizing a Summit that brings together many different perspectives to share ideas and best practices became a crucial undertaking. Because of its diversity, NYWIFT is the perfect incubator of ideas and solutions to monumental issues facing our industry today. We see this as the first of many such endeavors, and we're excited to share what we've learned. By taking the long view, we plan to build upon that both within the entertainment industry and beyond."

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### **About New York Women in Film & Television:**

New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) advocates for equality in the moving image industry and supports women in every stage of their careers. As the preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York, NYWIFT energizes women by illuminating their achievements, presenting training and professional development programs, awarding scholarships and grants, and providing access to a supportive community of peers. NYWIFT brings together more than 2,500 women and men working both above and below the line. NYWIFT is part of a network of 50 women in film chapters worldwide, representing more than 15,000 members. NYWIFT is a nonprofit 501c3 public charity.

More information can be found online at: [www.NYWIFT.org](http://www.NYWIFT.org)

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