

Actors Theatre of Louisville
Actors Associates
Bright Idea

Project: **Staff Appreciation Luncheon**

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Description:

Artistic and production staff members have numerous opportunities to benefit from Actors Associates' hospitality throughout the season. Because the Administrative & Management staff works behind the scenes, their valuable contributions in keeping the theatre running are often taken for granted. Members of the Development, Marketing, Box Office, Housekeeping, Operations, Finance, and House Management Departments (and others) are essential to Actors Theatre's success, yet they aren't "front and center" as are our artists. Therefore, Actors Associates Hospitality Events Committee chooses 1 or 2 of these departments to "appreciate" each season with a luncheon. The Artistic Director, Managing Director, General Manager and Staff Liaison are also invited.



The luncheon provides an opportunity for volunteers and staff to not only share a meal but to become better acquainted. All staff and volunteers are introduced and each one shares something about him/herself unrelated to Actors Theatre. In that way, participants become known as more than a "staff member" or "volunteer." Everyone leaves feeling that he/she is appreciated.

Tables are decorated to make the event festive. Each guest receives an Actors Theatre mug filled with Actors Associates' traditional "old fashioned" peppermint candy.

Members from the hosted departments are consistently appreciative. When we contacted our Finance Dept. to invite them to a luncheon in their honor, the Director inquired, "Are you sure it's *us* you want to invite?" What better evidence that our hospitality is definitely worth the effort!

Keys to success:

- The Hospitality Event Chair and the committee plan the luncheon.
- Staff are included in setting the date to accommodate busy schedules.
- The entrée is provided by Actors Associates and homemade sides, salads, and desserts are donated by Actors Associates.
- The Associates' reputation for outstanding hospitality makes this a very special treat for the chosen department(s) each season.

Estimated number of hours required from:

Theatre staff: less than 1

Volunteers:

 Planning – 2 hours total

 Shopping/Cooking/Preparing food – 3-4 hours per volunteer

 Event – usually 1 hour to 1 ½ hours

TOTAL Hours: approximately 40 hours

Estimated Cost:

Actors Associates funds the entrée. The rest of the food is donated by the committee members. Other expenses include gift mugs, peppermint, and decorations for a total of approximately \$100 in expenses.



Results:

Increased camaraderie, cooperation and mutual appreciation between staff and volunteers. For some staff, it provides a greater understanding of the work of the Associates. This is just one of many ways that Actors Theatre stakeholders – staff, Board of Directors, and Actors Associates volunteers – build cohesion and foster inclusion, cornerstones of Actors Theatre’s culture.

