Solidarity Statement of Civil Rights Organizations and National Supporters of the Costume Designer Guild’s Pay Equity Campaign #NakedWithoutUs

We, the undersigned civil rights organizations, coalitions, individuals, and fellow workers in gender-segregated professions and industries, join the Pay Equity Now / #NakedWithoutUs Solidarity Campaign which advocates for pay parity for the Costume Designer’s Guild (CDG), Local 892 International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). We strongly support the CDG’s demand for pay equity that will resolve the current gender pay disparity within a union local of 87% female-identifying members.

The Costume Designers Guild, is a union of professional costume designers, assistant costume designers, and costume illustrators working in film, television, commercials, and other media. At 87%, the CDG has one of the highest populations of female members amongst the creative departments behind the camera. Studies show that the craft of costume design is substantially similar to other guild crafts with male membership at up to 84% (Smith, Choueiti, Choi & Pieper, 2019). This long-standing wage disparity adversely impacts costume designers’ lifetime earning potential and pensions and hampers their ability to adequately prepare for their financial future when compared to their creative counterparts. Recognizing the indispensable contribution of the costume designer and their teams to the overall artistic vision and the economic success of a project, it is unconscionable to advocate for anything less than fair and equitable pay for costume designers, assistant costume designers and costume illustrators. The time is now for the AMPTP to rectify this unfair practice of paying women less for the same work once and for all.

When calculated based on a 60-hour work week, costume designer scale rate in the IATSE Basic Agreement is about 30% lower than the nearest creative department-head and 45% lower than that of the highest scale rate. Remarkably, the scale rate of the costume designer also falls far below many assistant positions in those same male-dominated crafts. Indeed, costume designers are the lowest paid department head of all the creative department heads working on film and TV sets.

We applaud the recent AICP contract negotiations that resulted in pay equity with their creative production design peers. This precedent proves that a more equitable future is possible.

As civil rights champions, pay equity experts, fellow workers in other male-dominated industries, professional colleagues of costume designers, and beneficiaries of their extraordinary contributions to the industry, we call on the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers to prioritize the pay equity demands of the Costume Designers Guild. We call on all negotiating parties to finalize a contract ensuring pay parity for costume designers equal to their male creative peers.
List of Individual Signatories:
Alex Ellis
Arianne Phillips
Matt Coatsworth
Mira Sorvino
Rosanna Arquette

List of Organizational Signatories:
Equal Rights Advocates
A Better Balance
Asset Building Strategies
Beeman & Muchmore, LLP
Black Feminist Future
California Women’s Law Center
California Work & Family Coalition
Center for Advancement of Public Policy
Center for WorkLife Law, UC Law SF
Clearinghouse on Women’s Issues
Eastern Talent Agency
ERA Coalition
Feminist Majority Foundation
Florida National Organization for Women (FL NOW)
Gender Equality Law Center
Greater Orlando National Organization for Women (Greater Orlando NOW)
IATSE Local 80
Independent Artist Group
Innovative Artists
Institute for Women’s Policy Research
Justice for Migrant Women
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Legal Aid at Work
Lollipop Theater Network
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Metro DC Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women
Michigan Pay Equity Network
Mississippi Black Women's Roundtable
MomsRising
National Black Worker Center
National Center for Law and Economic Justice
National Employment Law Project
National Organization for Women
National Organization for Women Foundation
National Partnership for Women & Families
Philly CLUW
Public Justice Center
Sonoma County Tradeswomen
Southwest Women's Law Center
The National Taskforce on Tradeswomen's Issues
UCLA, David C. Copley Center for the Study of Costume Design
UltraViolet
WIF (Women In Film) Los Angeles
Women Employed
Women In Media
Women's Foundation California
Women's Law Project
Workplace Fairness
Zero Gravity