



GEORGIA THESPS LINE UP for 'Get Your Act Together'

THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE AND STAFF OF THE GEORGIA BRANCH RECENTLY ISSUED A FRIENDLY INVITATION TO ACTORS TO "GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER."

The June 23 career day educated members about getting work in today's market. At the same time, with Georgia being a right-to-work state, the committee did not miss the opportunity to showcase the benefits of membership to the substantial pool of non-union talent in the area.

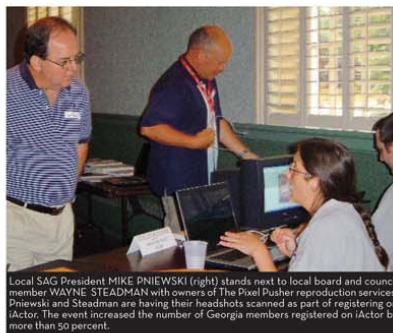
"I posted about the great day in my blog,"

—LISA NANETTE ALLENDER
GEORGIA BRANCH MEMBER

The campaign to get the word out involved e-blasts, mailings and announcements posted at the offices of agents and casting directors. The numerous inquiries we received about the event from non-members proved the effectiveness of this outreach as an organizing tool. A line even formed before the doors officially opened!

Of course, we didn't miss the opportunity to promote iActor. The first stop for members was the Pixel Pusher's booth, where members got their headshots scanned to CD. Then, with CDs in hand, members went on to President Mike Pniewski's booth, where he uploaded their headshots and got them registered on the iActor site.

As a related benefit of attending, actors got their headshots critiqued by Kathy Hardegee, owner of Georgia's oldest agency, Atlanta Models & Talent. They had their voiceover demos critiqued by



Local SAG President MIKE PNIEWSKI (right) stands next to local board and council member WAYNE STEADMAN with owners of The Pixel Pusher reproduction services. Pniewski and Steadman are having their headshots scanned as part of registering on iActor. The event increased the number of Georgia members registered on iActor by more than 50 percent.

Susan Blaine of Captive Sound Studios. Actors even got a cosmetics brush up thanks to consultations with the highly sought after film and commercial makeup artist Jaye Pniewski.

Perhaps the most eagerly received portions of the day were the Q&A sessions. The expert panel covered topics including the impact of new media on contracts and how to organize union work.

Providing answers for the first session, entitled "Get Me in Front of the Camera," were producer Lee Davis of Paul French & Partners, independent producer Linda Burns and producer/director George Watkins of Synergy Films. Georgia Branch Executive Director Melissa Goodman hosted and joined in the talks.

All three guest panelists expressed great interest in having iActor available to use as a casting tool in the near future.

The second Q&A session, "Voices of the 21st Century," included Susan Blaine of Captive Sound, voiceover artists Dick Klingner and Susan Bennett, and voiceover agent Richard Hutchison of RSH Management. The panel fielded questions regarding industrials, commercials, phone messaging, computer games and animation.

Judging from responses, members who attended "Get Your Act Together" got a lot out of the event.

"I want to thank all who helped set up and run the career day," said actor William Colquitt, who performed in the feature film

29 Reasons to Run. "The panels were excellent and the individual consultations were very helpful."

Lisa Nanette Allender, who appeared in the TV movie *Joshua's Heart*, agreed the information was invaluable, as was the opportunity to network.

"I posted about the great day in my blog," she said.

A SAG shop, manned by National Board Member Debra Nelson, gave members a chance to buy SAG caps, t-shirts, water bottles and more to demonstrate their union pride wherever they go.

So where do we go from here? The Organizing Committee (co-chaired by Pniewski and Nelson, and including Marianne Fraulo, Karen Beyer, Mark Gray and Robin Bittman) is already hard at work on the next event aimed at bringing producers, casting directors and other decision-makers together to promote the benefits of using union talent.

Contributed by National Board Member Debra Nelson, SAG Georgia Branch.