

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT VENUE ASSOCIATION (NIVA) ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Esteemed Industry Leaders Join NIVA's Board to Preserve and Nurture the Independent Live Venue Industry Throughout the United States

<https://www.nivassoc.org/board-staff>

(NEW YORK, NY) June 15, 2022 – [The National Independent Venue Association](https://www.nivassoc.org) (NIVA) announces newly elected Board members who will serve as industry and community champions. Incumbent NIVA Board of Directors Grace Blake, Programming Director at City Winery NYC, Pier 57, Audrey Fix Schaefer, Communications Director of I.M.P./9:30 Club, The Anthem, and Merriweather Post Pavilion, and Andre Perry, Executive Director of Hancher Auditorium, have been reelected and will be joined by a new slate of industry professionals, Kira Favro, COO of Newport Festivals Foundation, Jesica Gerbautz, CEO and Senior Event Producer of PNK Moon Productions, and Brad Grossman, COO of Helium Comedy Club.

(Editors' note: photos of newly elected board members can be found [here](#)).

“One of the most attractive aspects of the independent live sector is the multitude of different voices that all get to contribute to their own success stories. Having Brad, Jesica, and Kira, each with their own backgrounds, connections, and experiences adding to the overall direction of NIVA's future will bring a stronger future for the organization,” says Rev. Moose, Executive Director and Co-Founder of NIVA. “That Andre, Audrey, and Grace are returning with their institutional knowledge and perspectives ensures that the future of NIVA is in good hands.”

Favro oversees finance and operations for the Newport Folk and Newport Jazz Festivals. She also currently serves as President of the Board of Directors of Caffé Lena, where she previously served as Treasurer since 2016. Caffé Lena is known as the longest continuously operating folk music venue in the US, located in Saratoga Springs, NY. Favro began volunteering for NIVA in May 2020, serving as a NIVA State Outreach Captain for the implementation of the Save Our Stages Act.

Gerbautz is the CEO and Senior Event Producer at PNK Moon Productions, the company she founded in 2018, which promotes Latinx acts and comedians nationally as well as in South America. She has over ten years of experience in creating marketing concepts and producing large-scale events.

“As a board member my goal is to continue to focus on diversity and inclusion. NIVA has the unique ability to give a platform to the many voices from all communities that exist within the independent music industry. Addressing the different needs of our members will be a top priority as will amplifying these voices within our industry. The world is changing, the industry is changing, and we must ensure our work not only reflects these changes but drives them,” says Jessica Gerbautz.

Grossman is a seasoned entertainment executive and entrepreneur, launching Helium Comedy Club’s flagship venue in Philadelphia in 2005. Joining full-time in 2010, Grossman led the marketing and business development team while managing evening operations. In his current role as Chief Operating Officer, Grossman brings together the dynamic portfolio of Helium’s eight rooms including Goodnights Comedy Club in Raleigh and Cap City in Austin, ensuring Helium rooms are filled with diverse lineups, representing every voice in the community it serves.

“What a great opportunity to bring the voices of comedy club owners from across the country to the table. I’m humbled to represent my fellow independent venue owners, advocating for our needs, ensuring the independent ecosystem remains intact and can thrive in today’s challenging environment,” says Brad Grossman.

Separately, NIVA’s Advisory Board has added a new member: Joe Hadley, Global Head of Audience Partnerships and Audience at Spotify. NIVA’s Advisory Board includes voices who top the charts to those at the top of their industries, and the advisory board further assists both NIVA and the National Independent Venue Foundation (NIVF) with their respective missions of preserving and nurturing the ecosystem of independent live venues and promoters throughout the United States. Advisory Board members share their diverse knowledge and professional expertise in streaming, ticketing, management and more. They have helped NIVA and its members navigate the world since the pandemic struck, and provide guidance on rebuilding the live entertainment ecosystem in a transparent, diverse, and inclusive way.

Hadley joined Spotify in 2022, after working as a music touring agent for 10 years at Windish Agency and CAA. At CAA, he served as the Co-Head of Hip Hop/R&B Touring, and led the company’s diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. As Global Head of Artist & Audience Partnerships at Spotify, he oversees Spotify’s music partnership functions - defining Spotify’s partnerships with the industry and strategizing towards targeting new audiences.

The new NIVA board, effective July 1 is:

Grace Blake (Programming Director at City Winery NYC, Pier 57)

Jim Brunberg (Mississippi Studios)

Stephen Chilton (The Rebel Lounge/Psyko Steve Presents)

Kira Favro (COO of Newport Festivals Foundation)

Dayna Frank (CEO First Avenue)

Audrey Fix Schaefer (Communications Director of I.M.P./9:30 Club, The Anthem, Merriweather Post Pavilion)

Jesica Gerbautz (CEO and Senior Event Producer of PNK Moon Productions)

Brad Grossman (COO of Helium Comedy Club)

Andre Perry (Executive Director of Hancher Auditorium)

Hal Real (Founder & President World Cafe)

Lara Ruggles (Best Life Presents)

The new NIVA advisory board, effective immediately is:

Boris Patronoff (CEO, See Tickets - North America and NIVA Advisory Board Chair)

Amy Cranford (SVP of Publishing Administration, Sony Music Publishing)

Cameo Carlson (President, mtheory Nashville)

Christian McBride (Artist)

Dave Grohl (Artist, Foo Fighters)

Joe Hadley (Global Head of Audience Partnerships and Audience at Spotify)

Erika Spielloch (VP of Touring & Special Events, Interscope/UMG)

Janette Berrios (Head of Corporate Marketing, Symphonic)

Jimmy Jam (Songwriter/Producer)

Killer Mike (Artist, Run The Jewels)

Lawrence Peryer (CSO, Lyte)

Lyor Cohen (Global Head of Music, YouTube, Google)

Michele Suzanne Ballantyne (COO, RIAA)

Noelle Scaggs (Artist, Fitz and the Tantrums & Founder of Diversify The Stage)

Dr. Portia Sabin (President, Music Biz Association)

Quincy Jones (Artist/Producer)

Rich Medina (Independent Artist/DJ)

Richard Burgess (CEO, A2IM)

Tiffany Kerns (Executive Director, CMA Foundation & Vice President of Community Outreach, CMA)

Travis Janovich (CEO, eTix)

Wendy Ong (President, Tap Management - North America)

About NIVA:

Formed at the onset of the COVID-19 shutdown, National Independent Venue Association (NIVA), represents independent music and comedy venues, promoters and festivals across the country. NIVA created and led the #SaveOurStages campaign, resulting in landmark legislation establishing the \$16 billion "Shuttered Venue Operators" Grant. NIVA's mission is to preserve and nurture the ecosystem of independent live venues, promoters and festivals throughout the United States.

The National Independent Venue Foundation (NIVF) was founded to further this mission by also seeking to support a transparent, competitive marketplace serving a diverse and inclusive community of artists, fans, and industry workers.

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