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**HALL GIFT FUNDS STARLIGHT THEATRE INTERNSHIPS**

*Newly named Bob Rohlf Internship Program and endowment honors past president's service*

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Local community leaders and longtime Starlight Theatre supporters, Donald and Adele Hall, have awarded the Starlight Theatre Association of Kansas City, Inc. a gift in the amount of \$300,000. The gift is intended to fund the outdoor theatre's internship program for the next five years and establish an educational endowment for the future.

The gift was made in honor of former Starlight president and executive producer Bob Rohlf, who retired in September 2008 after 29 years of service to the theatre. The internship program, which has been in existence at Starlight since 1984, was renamed the Bob Rohlf Internship Program. The Halls' gift funds the program for five years and places the remaining balance in an endowment. That endowment will require additional funds to assure continuity of the full program in the future..

"I am truly touched that Don and Adele Hall, two of Starlight's most fervent supporters for decades, have honored my service and recognized the importance of Starlight's educational commitment in such a generous way," Rohlf said. "Because of their generosity, many more talented young people will have the opportunity to experience the excitement of working and learning in a live theatre environment."

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The Bob Rohlf Internship Program welcomes nearly 20 college students from across the Midwest and the nation to work at Starlight Theatre each summer. Interns are paid an hourly wage or weekly stipend as they gain hands-on experience in multiple departments, including production, stage management, lighting design, musical direction, accounting, marketing, group sales, event planning, education, operations and more in support of Starlight's Broadway and concert seasons.

"It's truly an exceptional learning experience," Rohlf said. "All of Starlight's interns leave with a well-rounded understanding of how a professional theatre company is run."

The Halls and the Hall Family Foundation have been longtime supporters of and contributors to Kansas City's historic outdoor theatre. In addition to being major benefactors to the Starlight Annual Benefit Gala for more than 20 years, they were also leading contributors to the Starlight Future Generations Campaign that concluded in October 2006. That capital campaign brought numerous new facilities, facility improvements and program enhancements to the theatre. Adele Hall is currently serving a three-year term on Starlight's board of directors.

"Adele and I are pleased we can support one of Kansas City's great treasures, the Starlight Theatre," Donald Hall said. "We also are pleased that Bob Rohlf would allow his name to be associated with the internship program he was so instrumental in conceiving and fostering. We hope others will join us in supporting Starlight and the young people who benefit from these internships."

Applications for the 2009 summer Bob Rohlf Internship Program at Starlight are currently being accepted. Internship descriptions and application materials are available at [www.kcstarlight.com](http://www.kcstarlight.com); click on Theatre Education. Applications are due March 27.

### **Starlight Theatre**

Presenting Broadway entertainment since 1951, the non-profit Starlight Theatre Association is Kansas City's oldest and largest performing arts organization. The Association operates, programs and maintains the largest stage in the United States, as well as the 16-acre Starlight Theatre complex. While assuming all annual operating costs for the complex, the Association also raises funds for capital improvements and a variety of programs, including national Broadway musical performances, concerts, community outreach and education. Since 2000, the Association has contributed more than \$25 million of privately funded improvements to the Kansas City, Mo.-owned Starlight Theatre. Each Broadway season, Starlight donates more than 11,000 tickets to its performances to regional non-profit organizations serving the disadvantaged.

In 2008, Starlight Theatre was selected as the “Favorite Performing Arts Venue or Organization” in the Kansas City Convention & Visitors Association’s Visitors’ Choice Awards program. Starlight also received a Gold Award for “Best Performing Arts Venue” and Bronze Award for “Best Theater” in *Ingram’s* 2008 Best of Business Kansas City Awards. The theatre seats approximately 8,000 and is located in Swope Park.

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