



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 10, 2020**

**WIF (WOMEN IN FILM, LOS ANGELES) ANNOUNCES  
THE HIRE HER BACK INITIATIVE  
URGING EQUITY IN HIRING AS THE SCREEN INDUSTRIES RETURN TO PRODUCTION**

**WIF, NYWIFT, and WIFTA raising a fund to provide grants for  
women in entertainment whose livelihoods have been impacted by COVID-19**

June 10, 2020, Los Angeles — WIF (Women In Film, Los Angeles) is launching today the **Hire Her Back** Initiative, a multimedia campaign calling for entertainment employers to achieve gender and racial equality as they move toward returning to film and television production. **Hire Her Back** will call attention to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and people of color, as well as highlighting the extraordinary talent of women in the screen industries. The campaign will be rolled out and amplified by industry leaders over the coming weeks.

As a key component to this campaign, WIF—in partnership with New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) and Women In Film and Television Atlanta (WIFTA)—is raising the **Hire Her Back** Fund to provide grants to women in the screen industries whose livelihoods have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The grants will be administered by The Actors Fund.

Seed funding has been generously provided by producer Shivani Rawat, founder of ShivHans Pictures, who continues to be committed to supporting and hiring women in the industry and elevating their creative voices. Additional contributions to the fund can be made at [wif.org](http://wif.org); information about applying for the grants will be available on the website in early July.

Amy Baer, WIF Board President, said, “With the increased commitment to parity across the entertainment community in recent years, we are seeing an uptick in the number of women working in front of and behind the camera. We cannot lose this important momentum because of entertainment job losses related to the COVID-19 crisis.” She added, “I am so grateful for Shivani’s generosity and continued support for women in need. Having had the privilege of producing Brian Banks with her, I know firsthand how committed she is to elevating women and persons of color in the screen industries.”

Current COVID-19 unemployment statistics are perilous. According to the Labor Department figures for May, women's unemployment was at 13.9%, two-and-a-third percentage points higher than that of men in the same time period.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, roughly half a million jobs in the entertainment sector have been lost in recent months.<sup>2</sup> Following the economic crisis in 2008, women regained employment across all sectors at a much lower rate than men, and took longer to rebound.<sup>3</sup> There is ample evidence suggesting the same will be true for women rebounding from the COVID-19 crisis, in particular Latinas and Black women who have faced some of the highest rates of unemployment of any group.<sup>4</sup>

Added WIF Executive Director Kirsten Schaffer: "With the convergence of a pandemic and the national uprising in defense of Black lives, it must be made clear that current market structures have to be transformed if we are serious about creating equity." Schaffer continued, "We call on leaders to join us in building a new normal that prioritizes equity and career sustainability for women, especially Women of Color, in the screen industries."

The **Hire Her Back** Initiative marks the debut of new institutional branding designed for WIF by Saatchi & Saatchi New York. Andrea Diquez, Saatchi & Saatchi NYC CEO, supports this campaign, saying, "as we begin to emerge from the shadow of COVID-19 and begin work on restarting the economy, it is incredibly important that the gains women have made in the workplace don't fall backward. We are committed to the mission of WIF and excited to have brought our strategic and creative teams on board to support this initiative."

<sup>1</sup> [Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor. "The Employment Situation--May 2020." June 5, 2020.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Maddaus, Gene. "No, 890K Entertainment Jobs Have Not Been Lost Due to the Coronavirus." Variety. May 20, 2020.](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Kochhar, Rakesh. "Two Years of Economic Recovery: Women Lose Jobs, Men Find Them." Pew Research Center, Social & Demographic Trends. July 6, 2011.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Frye, Jocelyn. "On the Frontlines at Work and at Home: The Disproportionate Economic Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Women of Color." The Center for American Progress. April 23, 2020.](#)

### **About WIF**

Founded in 1973 as Women In Film, Los Angeles, WIF advocates for and advances the careers of women working in the screen industries, to achieve parity and transform culture. We support women and non-binary people in front of and behind the camera and across all levels of experience. We work to change culture through our distinguished pipeline programs; we advocate for gender parity through research, education, and media campaigns; and we build a community centered around these goals. Membership is open to all screen industry professionals, and more information can be found on our website: [wif.org](http://wif.org). Follow WIF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

### **About New York Women in Film & Television**

New York Women in Film & Television (NYWIFT) advocates for equality in the moving image industry and supports women in every stage of their careers. As the preeminent entertainment industry association for women in New York, NYWIFT energizes women by illuminating their achievements, presenting training and professional development programs, awarding scholarships and grants, and providing access to a supportive community of peers. NYWIFT

brings together nearly 2,500 women and men working both above and below the line. NYWIFT is part of a network of 50 women in film chapters worldwide, representing more than 15,000 members. NYWIFT is a nonprofit 501c3 public charity. Learn more at [www.nywift.org](http://www.nywift.org). Follow on all social media platforms @NYWIFT / #NYWIFT

### **About Women in Film and Television Atlanta**

Women in Film and Television Atlanta (WIFTA), a 501c-3 Georgia non-profit, is a member-based organization for creative media professionals. It is the second oldest Women in Film chapter worldwide. With a focus on driving the advancement of women in the TV/Film industry, WIFTA provides a dynamic network for facilitating the exchange of ideas, sharing opportunities, and accelerating the professional development of our members. Since its inception in 1974, WIFTA has proudly had a membership community of multi-generational and culturally diverse professionals—women and men. Our membership is comprised of professionals who work as (or strive to be) producers, directors, actors, entertainment attorneys, camera and sound technicians.

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