

TUESDAY, FEB 12, 2013 9:00 PM UTC

Report finds some gains for minority actors in NYC

BY BY MARK KENNEDY

NEW YORK (AP) — The percentage of minority actors working on Broadway and at the top 16 not-for-profit theater companies in New York City rose to 23 percent during the 2011-2012 season, but whites continue to be overrepresented, according to a new report.

The Asian American Performers Action Coalition released its second annual look at ethnic representation on New York stages and found that minority actors overall saw a 2 percent increase from the previous season.

It found that African-American actors were cast in 16 percent of all roles, Hispanics in 3 percent and Asian-American actors in 3 percent. Caucasians filled 77 percent of all roles, far outweighing their respective population size in the metro and tri-state areas.

According to 2010 U.S. Census numbers, blacks make up 23 percent of the city's population and 17 percent of the tri-state area; Hispanics made up 28.6 percent of the city and 22 percent of the tri-state area; and Asian-Americans comprised 13 percent of the city and 9 percent of the tri-state area. Whites are 33 percent of the city and almost 62 percent of the tri-state's population.

Black actors increased their representation by 2 percent compared to last season, while Hispanics stayed the same as last season, and Asian-Americans saw their numbers tick up by 1 percent.

For the second year in a row, the not-for-profit sector lagged behind the commercial sector when it came to hiring minorities. Minority employment for the non-profit companies fell below 20 percent for the second year in a row.

While the numbers of black and Latino actors on non-profit stages increased, the number of Asian-American actors hasn't budged from the 2 percent-mark for the past three years. By comparison, five years ago Asian-Americans represented 7 percent of working actors.

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