

POLLSTAR x **venues** NOW == 2021

IMPACT: NEXT GEN



PRESENTED BY: **THE TORCH**
L.A. COLISEUM

NEW WAVE

Impact: Next Gen is the new name for VenuesNow's Generation Next, a program marking its 10th anniversary of recognizing bright, hard-working people who are making a difference in the venue business and piling up accomplishments at a young age. In many cases, it gives us a chance to introduce readers to industry players whom they'll grow familiar with in the future — think Carl Mittleman, 2011 honoree and now chief operating officer at Aramark; Casey Sparks, 2015 honoree and now vice president of OVG Austin and assistant general manager of Austin's new Moody Center; and Jordan Silberman, 2017 honoree and now general manager of Capital One Arena.

The change brings VenuesNow's awards into the same program as those of sister publication Pollstar, and you'll find **Impact: Next Gen** winners in both this issue of VenuesNow and the Aug. 13 issue of Pollstar, as well as on each magazine's website. VenuesNow will continue to honor those who work for venues or in businesses related to them, and Pollstar will recognize those operating in the broader live industry.

To line up with Pollstar's qualifications for candidates, VenuesNow is eliminating the age limit of 35 or younger that it has used in past years. This recognizes that a 37-year-old making waves in some parts of the business is as notable as a 27-year-old doing the same in other parts. We're concentrating a little less on how many years our honorees have been on this earth and a little more on what they've done with them.

With the formalities out of the way, let's move on to the fun stuff: We're excited to introduce our **Impact: Next Gen** honorees for 2021. Turn the page and say hi.



Aaron HURT

Executive Director, **Butler Arts & Events Center**

AARON HURT IS starring in the third reel of his family's venue history on the Butler University campus. Hurt's grandfather Donald, a member of the projectionist union, helped open the Arts & Events Center's primary theater, Clowes Memorial Hall, in 1963, even hanging the original main curtain and working as a stagehand for the first few weeks. Hurt's father, Daniel, worked his first job there at age 16 on the stage crew before joining the projectionist side of the union.

"I grew up in a movie projection booth," Hurt said. "I had to go to work with my dad. I'd just hang out and I learned how to splice reels."

Jump ahead to today, and Hurt oversees Clowes Hall, four smaller spaces that can be used for performances, and a number of other event venues on campus, all under the Butler Arts & Events Center banner. He's held the executive director job since the beginning of 2019.

Arts and events came together under a plan from Hurt — maybe it's his splicing experience put to use — that allows a cleaner booking process, especially for conferences coming to campus in the summer that want to offer accommodations to participants.

"We're a one-stop shop for

everything from Broadway (productions) in Clowes to if you want to put a wedding in our gardens or guest housing on campus," he said.

He got a taste of an Indiana tradition when the first COVID-era NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament played every game in the state, some of them at Butler's hoops temple, Hinkle Fieldhouse. Hurt was one of the executives running a committee on the details of how to handle the arrival of the Big Dance on campus.

Hurt is finishing up a construction project that has created a new main entrance for Clowes Hall that will keep the nearly 50-year-old theater up to date for the future.

"I'm an alum of Butler University also," he said, "so it's weird to think I put my mark permanently on the campus."

▼

— Rob Knapp

PROPS FROM ABOVE

"Aaron is passionate about venue management and creating memorable experiences for guests while constantly increasing his knowledge and education. He consistently impresses me with the way he looks for ways to improve operations and bring his team together to find solutions."

— Ty Sutton, President and CEO, Dayton Live



Brittany KINTER

Vice President of Marketing Strategy, Live & Venues, **MSG Entertainment**

BRITTANY KINTER'S PANDEMIC task wasn't easy: Keep the brands of several iconic venues alive, even as they were shuttered to the public.

"We had to figure out a way to pivot so that we were keeping our fans engaged, as well as our partners and artists," said Kinter, vice president of marketing strategy for live and venues, at MSG Entertainment. "The only platforms we could leverage were our digital platforms, primarily social media. It was important for us to really continue the conversation there and find new and creative ways for us to stay relevant."

Thankfully for MSG Entertainment, Kinter had started laying the groundwork for such a digital pivot well before the pandemic.

"The one common denominator for me is I've always worked in the live space and venues in particular," said Kinter, who began working with MSG Entertainment in 2016 as marketing and social media director at Southern California's Forum, when it was still an MSG property.

She has also worked at AEG, handling marketing initiatives for L.A. Live, the entertainment district that houses Staples Center and Microsoft Theater.

"I've always been a fan of live music and creating those magi-

cal moments, and I think that's been part of why I continue to do what I do," she said. "All the hard work really pays off when you're able to walk into a room and see the artist take the stage and the fans have an amazing experience and walk away with memories that will last a lifetime."

A key part of that process is documenting those experiences — for fans who were there and want to relive them and for the ones who couldn't make it.

"We're always testing and learning," she said.

Kinter's openness to new formats yielded several successful pandemic livestreams, including The Beacon Jams, Trey Anastasio's audience-less, eight-week residency at New York's Beacon Theatre. Still, there's nothing like fans in stands, and Kinter cites Foo Fighters' June gig at the Garden — the first concert there since the pandemic began — as a career highlight.

"It was exhilarating and surreal and a good reminder of why I'm in this business," she said. ▼

— Eric Renner Brown

PROPS FROM ABOVE

"She's strategic, detail driven and is constantly finding new and innovative ways to connect MSGE's venues to our fans and to the artists that play our stages."

— Darren Pfeffer, Executive Vice President of Live, MSG Entertainment



CONGRATULATIONS **BRITTANY KINTER**

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