

JUNIOR COMMITTEE

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{Member blog} Kaylen Ratto: Workin\' hard for the money

By kaylenr

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Big news! Crain's New York Business just published an [article](#) reporting on Dance/NYC Junior Committee's "Dance Workforce Census: Earnings Among Individuals 21-35". AND, the full report is now available on Dance/NYC's website [here](#). Based on survey responses collected in May 2011 from over 1,200 individuals working in the dance field in New York City, findings describe how a critical segment of the dance workforce is surviving financially.

Spread the news far and wide. To quote Crain's, "...dance advocates said they hoped that by releasing real data, more private and state funding would be given to the field." We want every dancer, administrator, funder, choreographer, audience member, politician and philanthropist to read and share this data.

So how have people been reacting to the data when they hear that the average dance worker is making on average \$28,000 or just above the poverty line? Some selected quotes:

"Shocking."

"Not surprising."

"Those sound like the same numbers from the 70's."

So, the big question at Dance/NYC's Symposium on Sunday was what are the solutions and opportunities to make our field more sustainable for our youngest workers? How do we keep them in the field before they burn out or realize they cannot continue to live with these limitations?

After Co-manager Julia Kelly presented these startling findings at the data panel in front of a packed house of dance community members, the Junior Committee presented a breakout session that served as a discussion forum on the report (full disclosure: I co-facilitated the breakout session with Kate Wilfert). Over the next couple of days, I'll share some highlights of the brilliant comments and insights from our relative peer group. We are hoping we can do another forum later in the year for a wider audience.

In the meantime, share the article and report. What is your first reaction to the data? Is there a certain statistic that stands out as the most startling? What do you think the field could do differently to ensure sustainability for its workers?

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