

Dear Ken, Summer, Monica, the rest of Ken's staff, fellow Pro, Inner Circle Members, and voters,

The show I co-wrote (with my collaborators, Jan Roper and Gabrielle Wagner Mann) is a musical called *City of Light*. ([www.cityoflightmusical.com](http://www.cityoflightmusical.com)) It's about an American girl, Molly, who goes to Paris to scatter her father's ashes on the one year anniversary of his death, but of course she does not get a friendly reception from the French and everything that could possibly goes wrong, well, goes wrong. In the face of adversity, in a country where she is lost and doesn't speak the language, Molly discovers herself and ends up making some life changing decisions. It's a romantic musical comedy with a light feminist twist at the end – nobody gets the girl – set in contemporary times against the backdrop of Paris. I recount our musical not to pitch it, but because I sometimes feel -- as a new musical theater writer who is based in California -- that trying to break into Broadway is a little like being lost in a country where you don't speak the language and can't figure out how to find your hotel! But fortunately for Jan, Gabi and myself, we've had some help navigating our way, beginning with the teachers at New Musicals, Inc in Los Angeles, and more recently, the incredible support and coaching by Ken Davenport.

I was an early follower of Ken's and had the pleasure of meeting him just as he put out his first CD on how to produce a Broadway show. I think it is key for writers to know about the finances and legalities of producing theater, if only to protect ourselves as our own shows move into production. I am infinitely grateful to Ken for demystifying Broadway and for making it accessible to those of us who aren't based in the New York, for creating such a supportive Pro community, and for creating an enormous variety of ways for new writers to educate themselves. From his podcasts, to the Superconference, to his daily blogs, to the "I F'd Up", to the resources he and his team have compiled for us to use, I am always entertained and always learn something new and incredibly useful from Ken. Ken is also one of the most active listeners I've ever met, and it doesn't surprise me that he is so successful raising money because when you are speaking with Ken, he is fully focused on you. Ken's energy and encouragement makes everything seem possible. Writing and producing theater used to seem scary and impossible; now – because of Ken -- it just seems like a path that anyone can choose to be on, if they are willing to put in the time, energy and patience.

Ken and his team have specifically helped our musical, *City of Light*, by providing dramaturgical services (thank you, Eric!) which helped with a major re-write of our show before it went into a festival in New York City; by providing marketing support during that same festival, and by providing assistance with legal and insurance documentation for our festival production. Ken made the time to come see our musical when we did a reading of it at Feinstein's 54 Below, he gave us suggestions on which regional theaters he thought it might appeal to, and, finally, by supporting us in our submission to NAMT last year. Ken's team is always responsive to

questions, and helpful when we need guidance on the many resources they've provided, or if Ken isn't available.

With Team Davenport's help, *City of Light* has moved forward successfully, and while we are not yet at our goal of a full production, we are well on our way. If one of the \$10,000 prizes were awarded to us, we would leverage that investment to raise more money and obtain our first full production regionally. To receive a \$10,000 investment from Ken Davenport would be a sign to investors and artistic directors across the country that our show merits being seen. It would not just be a monetary gift, but a vote of confidence that would truly make a difference.

Thank you, Ken, for all that you do for the rising theater community across the nation, and across the globe. We are part of Broadway because you have opened its doors to us.

Warmest regards,

Julie Weiner  
Pro and Inner Circle Member  
Lyricist, *City of Light*