

# East Coast extension lures indies

## Guild boosts branch membership with practical approach to profession

By **STUART MILLER**

**T**he PGA East, little sibling to the Producers Guild of America, has undergone a remarkable growth spurt in recent years, tripling its ranks to nearly 300 active members.

While it remains a tiny organization lacking the big-name clout of the PGA and other West

Coast film and TV organizations, the PGA has big plans for its New York-based offshoot. Executive director Vance Van Petten believes it can be the cornerstone for the organization's overall growth, predicting it will reach 1,000 members in a relatively short period of time.

Such ambition requires strong leadership, a cohesive vi-

sion and, Van Petten says, a very active and hands-on approach. Leadership was put in place in the summer and has promised more activity this year.

"They're doing a really good job in terms of events and seminars," says Kit Golden, a producer on "Chocolat" who joined the PGA East in 2004. "They have a really good balance in the

type of events."

Nancy Goldman headed up the first burst of expanded activity, pumping up numbers in part by developing seminars, screening programs and a job forum as well as offering membership discounts to attract new faces.

But Van Petten says that that to reach the next level,

Goldman felt the org needed a high-profile name and deep connections to independent film.

"Nancy had built a viable organization but knew she was not able to tap into the independent film community enough," he says, adding that Goldman, who remains on the board of governors of the Associate Producers

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