



University of Illinois Springfield
**PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER**®

**Community Impact Report
2023–2024**



Season Highlights

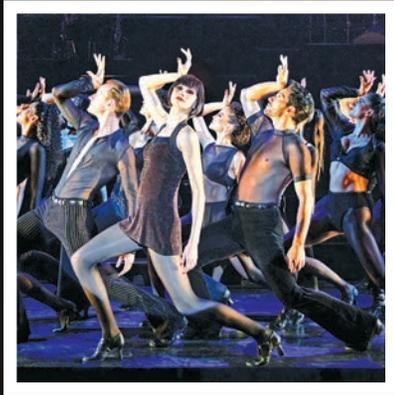


Photo: Jeremy Daniel

Over 72,000 Patrons



Exceeded \$2,500,000 in Ticket Sales

More than \$330,000 in Grants & Charitable Contributions



800+ Donors

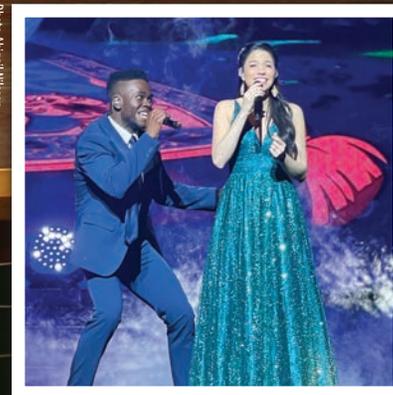


Photo: Abigail Nilsson

From the Chancellor

Dear loyal patrons and donors of the UIS Performing Arts Center,

Please join me in celebrating the performers, guests, educators, staff, volunteers, and countless other members of the community who have made our programs a resounding success in 2023–2024.

Throughout the year, we see Sangamon Auditorium and the UIS Studio Theatre filled with so many types of special moments. There are the dramatic moments that captivate the audience, the comedic moments that provoke laughter, the suspenseful moments that keep the audience on the edge of their seats, the musical moments that enhance the story through song and many, many more. But these moments would not be nearly as special without being able to share them with you!

We appreciate you experiencing these special moments with us. Thank you for your support in helping us bring these meaningful moments to Springfield and I look forward to enjoy them all over again during the 2024–2025 season!

— UIS Chancellor Janet L. Gooch



From the Director



Every day, our goal is to make a positive impact in our regional community, as you will see in this annual Community Impact Report. You may know the UIS Performing Arts Center is renowned for offering some of the best shows in the region, but it is so much more.

Focusing on meaningful community impact, the center provides daytime educational programming for K–12 students, ensuring that the arts remain a vital part of their education. Sensory-friendly performances cater to neurodivergent individuals in our community, making the arts accessible to all. Collaborations with the Springfield Urban League Head Start program, providing performance venues for campus students and faculty, and hosting multiple high school graduations each season are just a few more examples of our community involvement. Additionally, countless free tickets are provided to local non-profits to support their fundraising activities.

Supporting regional artists is a key priority. This includes fostering opportunities and eliminating barriers for historically underrepresented communities of local artists through the annual Our Stage / Our Voices Artist-in-Residence program. The Date Night series continues to showcase area talent. Pathways are also created for regional performers and technicians to transition from volunteer community theatre into professional paid roles, recognizing the value of their talents.

It takes a community to impact a community. This season, the concerted efforts of 17 full-time staff, nearly 300 part-time and extra-help employees, over 200 volunteers, more than 800 donors, and 72,000+ event attendees brought the center to life.

As you explore this report, I hope you feel inspired by our shared achievements. Every performance, every educational program, and every community initiative was made possible by the support and passion for the arts that exists in our community.

Thank you for being an essential part of our community and for believing in the power of the performing arts.

Bryan Rives, Director
UIS Performing Arts Center

Photo Abigail Nilsson

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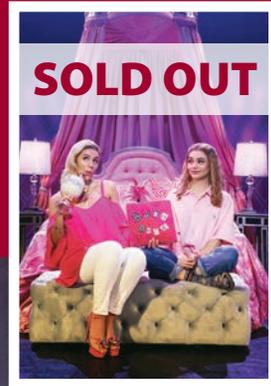
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40

Layout and design by
Lindsey Feger, UIS Graphics

Major Events

2023–2024



Mean Girls



John Mellencamp



Come From Away

- Sept. 29 Rodney Carrington
- Oct. 14 Wheel of Fortune LIVE
- Oct. 15 Theresa Caputo
- Oct. 17 Grand Kyiv Ballet: *Snow White*
- Oct. 21 John Crist
- Nov. 3 Blippi
- Nov. 4 Newsboys
- Nov. 7 One Night of Queen
- Nov. 11 Straight No Chaser
- Nov. 12 Sal Vulcano
- Nov. 16 *Mean Girls*
- Nov. 17 John Cleese
- Nov. 19 Brit Floyd
- Dec. 2 & 3 Copper Coin Ballet Company: *The Nutcracker*
- Dec. 12 Cirque Dreams *Holidaze*
- Dec. 17 Abbey Road's Christmas with the Beatles
- Dec. 21 The Prophecy Show

- Jan. 18 Mania
- Jan. 27 Dean Z: The Ultimate Elvis
- Feb. 17 & 18 *Jesus Christ Superstar*
- Feb. 23 Magic of Motown
- Feb. 27 *Menopause the Musical 2: Cruising Through the Change*
- Mar. 5 *On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio & Gloria Estefan*
- Mar. 6 Disney Princess: The Concert
- Mar. 22 World Ballet Series: *Swan Lake*
- Mar. 23 John Mellencamp
- Apr. 5 Grand Kyiv Ballet: *Giselle*
- Apr. 14 *Come From Away*
- Apr. 20 Celtic Woman
- Apr. 30 & May 1 Bluey's Big Play
- May 7 *Chicago*
- May 9 The Bored Teachers Comedy Tour



Swan Lake

Campus & Community



The UIS Performing Arts Center is proud to work with amazing organizations both here on our campus and within the greater community.

Photo Zach Adams | 1221 Photography



The Inaugural State of Black Springfield event was held at the UIS Performing Arts Center on April 6. Nearly 200 Springfield residents attended the event.



Students from Illinois Eastern Community College pose with performers following the March performance of *On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio & Gloria Estefan*.

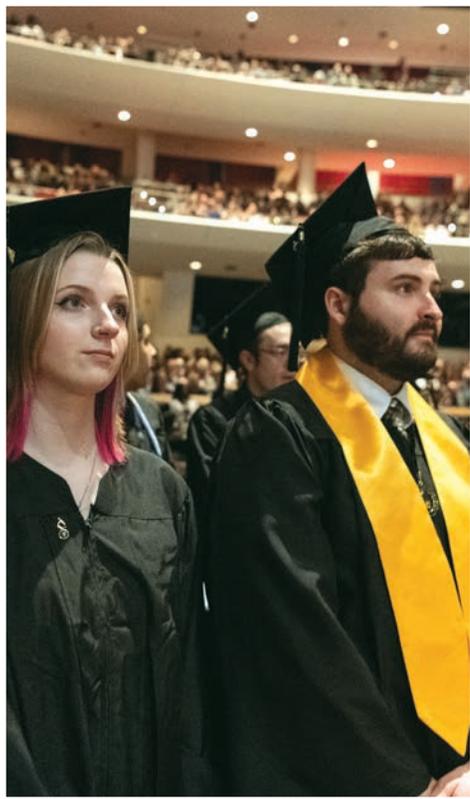
Community Event Highlights

- Three high school graduations
- All City Music Festival
- Eight Illinois Symphony Orchestra concerts
- U.S. District Court Naturalization Ceremony
- The State of Black Springfield

Left: Copper Coin Ballet Company's *The Nutcracker* took the stage two nights in December 2023.



Illinois Symphony Orchestra



2024 UIS Commencement



UIS Music

Campus Event Highlights

- Eleven UIS Music concerts
- Two UIS Theatre productions
- Three UIS Commencement ceremonies



UIS Theatre's *John Proctor is the Villain*



Meet McKenna and Dawn Vereeke

Like so many other college graduates in 2024, UIS Graduate McKenna Vereeke walked across the stage in her cap and gown for the first time this past May. When she graduated high school in 2020, in-person ceremonies were canceled due to COVID-19. But unlike most of her peers from the COVID-altered Class of 2020, when McKenna finally did make that passage, she was joined by a special classmate over commencement weekend—her mother, Dawn Vereeke.

While Dawn had proud mother moments watching McKenna walk during the first of three commencement ceremonies held in Sangamon Auditorium the second weekend of May, the roles were reversed when McKenna celebrated her fellow graduate, and mother, on Saturday.

"McKenna's UIS ceremony was Friday evening and we made a big deal out of it," Dawn said. "It was her night to shine and have that experience. We each had our own special evening. We had fun decorating our caps, and taking loads of photos. I am thankful I participated in my UIS graduation ceremony, as having had classes online, I finally was able to meet in person class members."

Dawn, a human resource manager at Nevco Sports headquarters in Edwardsville, earned her MBA, while McKenna graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Commencement was actually Dawn's first time on campus.

"I did receive phone calls from her almost daily asking how to use Canva and everything which was so great cause I was able to help her out," McKenna said. "She hasn't been in college for several years so it was very cool for me to be able to help her navigate online learning, which is now the norm. She kind of became a peer to me, in that sense." McKenna added that walking across the Sangamon Auditorium stage was much more monumental than the completion of just her four years of college.

"It was the conclusion of eight years because I never had one for high school. My high school graduation was a Youtube video where I sat on my couch and watched it. It was such a big moment for me in the sense of closure. I felt like I finally graduated high school and got my Bachelor's Degree all at once. Those 10 seconds of walking across the stage were very surreal."

Looking ahead, McKenna will start in the clinical psychology doctorate program at the University of Evansville, Indiana in the fall. A violinist herself, she wants to specifically work with performers, musicians and athletes as they work to overcome their various mental health concerns.

"I want to help these people who have these expectations placed upon them to succeed and do well. I want to be the one who is there to support them and help them through any mental barriers they may have."

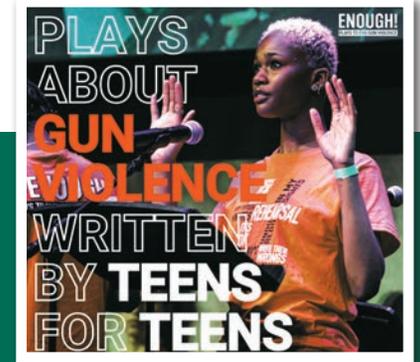
Local Arts & Arts Education



We are proud to serve our diverse community with local arts and arts education programs such as Staley Class Acts, Arts Start with Springfield Urban League Head Start, Partners in Education with Springfield Public Schools, Our Stage / Our Voices, and sensory-friendly events.



Keep Marching



Enough!



Sept. 10 *Violins of Hope* (Two performances)

Sept. 16 *Date Night with Mother Road Bones*

Sept. 22 *Date Night with Improv*

Sept. 27–30 *The Niceties*

Oct. 5 *Date Night with Jazz*

Oct. 7 *PLANETS* with David Becker

Oct. 16 *Nightfall* with Edgar Allen Poe

Nov. 6 *Enough! Plays to End Gun Violence* (Two performances)

Nov. 11 *Outraged! Our Stage / Our Voices* Preview

Nov. 15 *Experience Folk Dancing* (Two performances)

Jan. 10 *The Rainbow Fish* (Two performances)

Jan. 20 *Date Night with Magic*

Feb. 3 *Date Night with Jazz*

Feb. 9 *Keep Marching*

Feb. 9–11 *Outraged: Terror in Springfield 1908*

Feb. 12 *Finding North*

Feb. 20 *University of Wonder & Imagination*

Feb. 27 *Experience Joyful Music with Dan + Claudia Zanes*

Feb. 29 *Date Night with the World of Percussion*

Mar. 15 *Date Night with Fingerstyle Guitar*

Mar. 18 *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* (Two performances)

Apr. 12 *Romeo and Juliet*

Apr. 27 *Panther Women: An Army for Liberation*

Staley Class Acts

Our flagship education program that offers daytime performances for K-12 students that have direct curricular connections to support classroom learning.



Students from Black Hawk Elementary School pose prior to seeing *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*.

This program supports educational goals of area teachers by providing opportunities for students to experience artistic, educational, and high-quality performances by nationally-touring theater companies. More than 11,000 students attended 15 total Staley Class Acts performances.



Arts Start Program

Students in the Springfield Urban League Head Start program engage in performing arts experience funded by the PNC Grow Up Great initiative.



Head Start students perform *The Little Red Hen* at the UIS Performing Arts Center.



Justine Moser and students from the Springfield Urban League Head Start program in Jacksonville rehearse their lines for *The Little Red Hen*.

Date Night Series

Started in 2022, this series showcases skilled local artists sharing their work in the intimate UIS Studio Theatre.



Above: The World of Percussion in partnership with UIS Music

Left: Date Night with Jazz

Below: Internationally-renowned fingerstyle guitarist Adam Maletich



Meet David Becker

David Becker is an award-winning, Grammy and Emmy-nominated jazz guitarist, composer, producer, and educator who has shared the stage with such celebrated jazz acts as Miles Davis, Chick Corea, Michael Brecker and others. His career has spanned four decades and his music can be heard on the Weather Channel, SiriusXM and more. While Becker's touring continues to take him all over the world, he made Springfield his permanent residence in March 2023. Several months later, Becker hosted the world premier of his mesmerizing concert collaboration with Space Channel, titled *Planets Live*, in the UIS Studio Theatre.

"It was great to have the debut at a place like this," said Becker. "It's got a nice atmosphere to it. I like the way that the audience is situated because they have a good view of everything. I like the intimacy of this because you can still accommodate a large number of people, but they feel closer to the whole thing."

Planets is an auditory and visual expedition where captivating projections of the cosmos merge seamlessly on-screen with Becker's masterfully

composed and improvised melodies. It has appeared on Space Channel previously, filmed in an empty studio, but the UIS concert was its debut in front of a live audience. Only hours before the debut, Becker received word from his colleague at Space Channel, who would have been responsible for the performance's audio and video, that an emergency arose and he would not be able to join Becker for the premier. Becker relayed the problem to UIS PAC Production Manager David Hecht, who advised him to not give it a second thought as it would be taken care of.

"That set the standard for the whole tour, actually," Becker said. "Because whenever you do something live with an audience, that's an imprint of what you have going forward. My experience, with playing it here and debuting it here was a great experience. It brought me something to really take to the next venue and say this is the standard."

Planets Live will return to UIS Performing Arts Center again in Fall 2024 as Becker begins his 40th Anniversary Tour. The concert will also feature music from his new album, *Gravitationally Bound*.

Our Stage / Our Voices

Our Artist-in-Residence program provides opportunities for performing artists who are members of historically underrepresented communities to achieve diversity and inclusion in the arts.



Chris Withers Photography

2023–2024 Artist-in-Residence, Tim Crawford



Chris Withers Photography

Above: The cast from *Outraged: Terror in Springfield 1908* pose onstage.

Right: Actor Mariah Brooks onstage during *Outraged: Terror in Springfield 1908*.



Chris Withers Photography

Meet Steve Sykes

Steve Sykes is spending his year as the Our Stage / Our Voices artist-in-residence, not only impacting the spaces within Sangamon Auditorium and UIS Studio Theatre, but at various performing arts venues in Springfield. Sykes, who is a wheelchair user, will be holding discussions, workshops and forums around the city. He also plans to present a seminal theatrical work starring disabled and nondisabled performers.

“I want to increase participation of people who are disabled and want to try their hand at performing, without fully jumping in,” he said. “I was really grateful that the UIS Performing Arts Center thought it was a worthwhile pursuit to warrant representation for the disabled. Inclusion matters. And representation matters.”

In July 2024, Sykes and the UIS PAC Local Arts and Education team sent out a survey looking for feedback from the disabled community, pertaining to being in shows, behind the scenes and the theatre-going experience. The results will be shared amongst nine venues.

“Everybody wants to be supportive of what Steve is doing,” said Carly Shank, Artistic Programs Director of the UIS PAC. “I think, in the end, we will discover everybody can be more welcoming to patrons. And it doesn’t have to be welcoming in a way that will cost a bunch of money.”

Also in July, the OS/OV team led a series of improv acting courses with Capital City Improv at the Hoagland Center for the Arts specifically for people with visible and invisible disabilities. Hopefully, Sykes said, the effort would introduce other disabled people to acting in a comfortable environment.



“I love becoming someone else and telling a story,” said Sykes, who has acted at many venues since arriving in Springfield in 1988. “Those are my two most overwhelming motivations. It’s a challenge to inhibit a character’s persona and act not only with the lines, but with everything that forms this character.”

A finale show for the improv class is expected to be held in August. In November 2024, OS/OV plans to host an all-access open mic show for the disabled community and Sykes will take an unfamiliar role in Spring 2025 when he directs a play on campus. Between now and then, however, he hopes to improve the theatre experience for the disabled community.

“People with disabilities face very real challenges even with things as small as where to park,” he said. “I want to give them a platform where they can be heard and are comfortable going to performances.”

Sensory-Friendly Series

Performances designed specifically to be enjoyed by neurodivergent individuals.



Experience Joyful Music with Dan + Claudia Zanes



Faculty and students enjoy Dan and Claudia's visit to the Hope Learning Academy.



The Springfield International Folk Dancers presented two performances of *Experience Folk Dance* this season.

The Hope Learning Academy principal, Kathy Hulcher, knows there are many different ways her students learn and interact.

Photo Courtesy of <https://hope.us>



The Hope Learning Academy (Hope School)

After spending 20 years in education with Springfield Public Schools, Kathy Hulcher took the helm of the Hope Learning Academy as principal in 2000 and over the years has seen the many different ways her students learn and interact.

But when the UIS Performing Arts Center brought one of its sensory-friendly shows to Hope School in February, it was a new experience for the students. Hulcher said students at Hope, a unique facility designed to allow students with autism and other developmental disabilities to achieve their maximum potential, participate in music classes weekly, but don't often have a chance to use what they've learned.

"Seeing what they're learning and seeing it all come together for a real-world perspective was so great for them," she said. "So many of them were up and dancing, some off to the sides by themselves and others right up near the performers, in front of everyone."

The in-school visit was made possible in partnership with the UIS Performing Arts Center and a grant secured by the Hope School. Grammy Award winner Dan Zanes and Haitian-American jazz vocalist Claudia Zanes were booked for two UIS PAC performances and took their act to the

school in the time between shows, where nearly 100 students were free to enjoy the performances in their own way. UIS Performing Arts Center staff traveled with Dan and Claudia to provide technical support for the in-school visit.

"It's great that (UIS Performing Arts Center) came to us because the students already know the space so they don't have to build that level of comfortability," she said. "They already know the school so they could just enjoy themselves in surroundings they know." This event was unique as all students could participate, not just those who are able to successfully navigate a field trip.

Hope School, Hulcher said, has a wide range of students and each needs a unique level of interaction in order to thrive. While some students aren't comfortable in new environments and cannot participate in field trips, the school does offer other students the opportunity to leave campus periodically and engage in community learning, such as the Staley Class Acts series. As more organizations follow the trend of offering a sensory-friendly entertainment, finding those off-campus offerings can only help the school.

"The need is there now more than ever," she said "So with that, will come the supply that will give our students more opportunities."

Ground Floor Productions

The theatrical producing arm of the UIS Performing Arts Center showcasing local talent.



UIS student Regina Ivy and Meredith Vogel-Thomas starred in *The Niceties*, a play exploring race and identity on a college campus.



Meet Regina Ivy

For the past four years, Regina Ivy has been the brightest star on any stage of campus. She moved to Springfield at the age of 6 from Nigeria, and this fall will start her next chapter at one of the nation's most prestigious theatre schools, New York University.

"NYU has been my dream school to go to since I was a child," said Ivy, who graduated from UIS this past May with degrees in English and Education. "I'm just really open to whatever opportunity comes from this. I feel really privileged to be able to explore my passions in this way. I just want to say 'Bring it on!'" She will pursue her Master's Degree in Educational Theatre at NYU's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.

Ivy applied to NYU in November 2023, about a month after she starred alongside Meredith Vogel-Thomas in *The Niceties*. *The Niceties*, the story of two extraordinary women who square off in a high-stakes academic debate over race, reputation and who gets the final word on how American history is written, was the second show produced by newly-named Ground Floor

Productions, following 2023's performance of *And Then They Came For Me*. *Niceties* producer Carly Shank, UIS PAC Artist Programs Director, had seen Ivy previously perform at the Springfield Muni, Hoagland, in productions through UIS Theatre and elsewhere and invited her to play the role of Zoe.

"My favorite compliments about the show were from audience members who had seen Regina onstage previously, but were amazed by the character and performance she brought to the play," Shank said.

While passionate about performing and being in front of crowds, Ivy plans to take a more behind the scenes route professionally, wanting to inspire students, specifically those in alternative education, to learn and love theatre as she has. Ivy also spent four weeks over the 2024 summer participating in the Irish Theatre Summer Program at the Gaiety School of Acting in Dublin.

"The goal has always been to be a teacher," she said. "As much as I love acting, I know I don't want to be an actor. I want to learn everything that I possibly can to inspire the next generation and instill that passion in them."

Donors



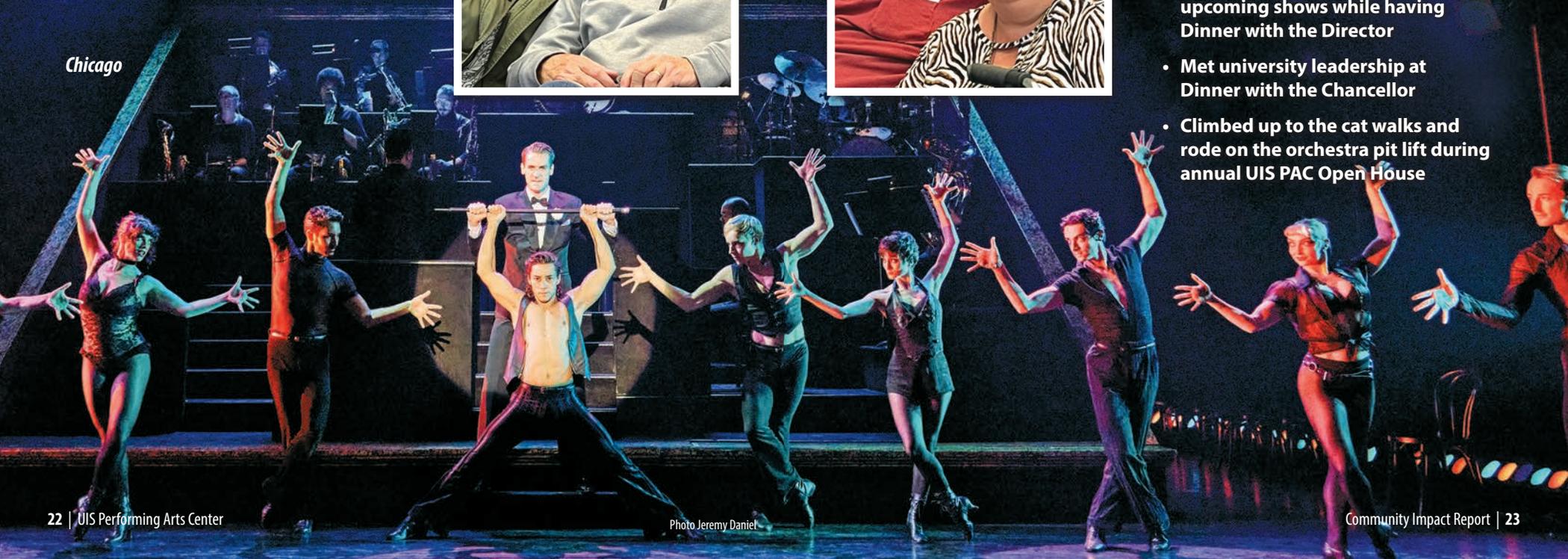
Donors of UIS Performing Arts Center enjoyed exclusive privileges like invitations to backstage events, access to the FRIENDS member's lounge, and a host of extraordinary behind the scenes experiences.



Donor Experiences

- Attended load-ins to Broadway shows
- Enjoyed access to FRIENDS Member's Lounge
- Learned about future plans and upcoming shows while having Dinner with the Director
- Met university leadership at Dinner with the Chancellor
- Climbed up to the cat walks and rode on the orchestra pit lift during annual UIS PAC Open House

Chicago



Lifetime Giving

to the UIS Performing Arts Center

Heritage Society

Donors who have included UIS Performing Arts Center in their estate plans

- Keith D.* & Shirley H. Baer
- John Dale & Ronée Kennedy
- Sharron LaFollette
- Marcus Schnetz in memory of Sherri Schnetz*

Lifetime Gifts of \$1,000,000+

- Elizabeth* & Robert Staley

Lifetime Gifts of \$250,000+

- Helen S. Hamilton*

Lifetime Gifts of \$50,000+

- Gloria Calovini*
- Clark & Carol Esarey
- Charles* & Kathleen Hoogland
- Alvera Knox*
- Margaret "Peggy" Madden*
- Pam Reyhan
- William Schnirring*
- Julius* & Dorothy* Weiss

Lifetime Gifts of \$10,000+

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Norma Van Valkenburg
Bob & Veda Vaughn
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Harry & Florance Wellons
Vicky & Roger Whitaker
Robert & Dixie Williamson
Donald Yakel & Sandra Yakel
Sharon Zook

*Deceased



Meet Marc Schnetz

For years, Marc and Sherri Schentz loved taking in a good show. The two started dating in the early 1990s, wed in 1995, and would take in many shows at the Fabulous Fox Theatre in St. Louis, the Rosemont Theatre or many options around Chicago. The couple loved a weekend getaway. But, Marc said, he and his wife always looked forward the most to seeing one of their favorite acts come to the UIS Performing Arts Center.

"It was always nice for Sheri and I to get away and head out of town," Marc said. "But, having the advantage of staying in town while seeing some big acts, that's a pretty sweet thing to have in our own back yard."

Though typically a country music enthusiast, Marc attended the Magic of Motown performance this past February, which was the first time he had an opportunity to see the new bar and concession stand in the third-floor FRIENDS Member's Lounge. The bar was added to the UIS Performing Arts Center thanks to a gift Marc made in Sherri's name, who passed away in 2014.

"We always enjoyed the live shows," he said. "She was a big Toby Keith fan and I'm a Martina

McBride fan. (The donation) was in memory of Sheri, who I lost a little over 10 years ago. I thought it's be a nice way to remember her and all of those shows we went to."

A sign placed atop the bar lets donors visiting the lounge know the addition was made possible because of Marc's gift, in memory of his wife. He hopes it helps others make some of the many great memories he and his wife shared through the years.

"It was good to see them up there, too," Marc said of his February visit. "People can just congregate up there. I thought it was pretty cool. It's a nice way for them to sit back and relax a few minutes before watching the show."

Though he's unable to make new memories at shows with his wife, Marc said he will continue his patronage of the UIS Performing Arts Center and looks forward to what its future holds.

"To have something like that so close to your own neighborhood, that's pretty special," he said. "That's something we can really cherish and see what we can do to keep it here. Whether it needs some upgrading or renovation, it'd be nice to help and see that happen."

FRIENDS

We are so thankful to our FRIENDS who play a pivotal role in fostering opportunities within our community, vital support for performances, enhancements to our facilities, and enriching experiences for local children.



Brit Floyd

Friends of UIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Honoring those who made gifts from July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024.

Benefactor (\$2,500–\$4,999)

Dan & Lynn Brown
Steven & Jodie Koch
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Dr. Leonard Bogle & Barbara Thompson

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Gerald Aldrich
Judith L. Anderson
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Gary Philo

Meet FRIENDS member, Gary Philo

As the stage lights dimmed in Sangamon Auditorium on April 14, the 2,000 fans who came to watch the Tony-awarded winning musical *Come From Away* were asked to imagine themselves as one of the nearly 7,000 stranded passengers forced to land in Gander, Newfoundland on September 11, 2001.

Longtime FRIEND of the UIS Performing Arts Center Gary Philo, one of the patrons in the crowd that night, didn't have to imagine that moment; he simply had to remember it. Philo was airborne on United Airlines Flight 943 to Chicago from Paris while the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks happened.

"We had no idea what was going on at the time," said Philo, one of 6,000 stranded refugees that landed on 27 planes in St. Johns, Newfoundland. "The Captain notified us that the US air space was closed and we would be landing in St. John's.

While *Come From Away* made its Springfield

debut this past season, the show has been touring nationwide since 2018. Philo knew the musical was receiving critical acclaim, but had been reluctant to go because he thought it would be hokey and could never live up to the experience.

"But it wasn't," he said. "It was amazing. They totally captured it. There were times when I was tearing up. We did all of that same stuff."

"I just never thought it would live up to what I thought it should be about," he said. "And then, of course, it did. In reality, the events of the day were far more bizarre and tragic than anything we, the passengers, had envisioned. It seemed like a dream to me. Surreal. Impossible."

Philo can't recall how many shows he and his wife, Deborah, have been to at UIS PAC over the past 17 years as members of FRIENDS, but they plan to continue both traditions for quite a while.

"I love the theatre," he said. "But what I really like about FRIENDS is getting the presale tickets. That was my main motivation and it's a big plus."

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Meet Carroll Richards

Carroll Richards, a retired Lincoln pastor, was honored this past season with the Outstanding Service Award for Usher. Assistant Guest Services Manager Jennie Davis said the staff honored Carroll for his years of service and his desire to place himself where most patrons with accessibility issues will be. “Carroll is also a staple at most of our Staley Class Acts performances and is very patient and helpful when seating all the students who come to these events,” Jennie said.

Carroll echoed that the Staley Class Acts performances are his favorite to work. “The kids are always so enthusiastic,” he said. For many of them, they’ve never done anything like this before.”

As a longtime usher, Carroll Richards has shared story after story with his fellow volunteers. So when he mentioned prior to the Staley Class Acts performance of *Keep Marching: The Road to the March on Washington* that he marched with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., John Lewis and other icons of the civil rights movement, they were intrigued, though not surprised.

Of all the events since Carroll started volunteering in January 2013, he most vividly

remembers when John Lewis spoke at Sangamon Auditorium and Carroll had the opportunity to reunite with the visionary nearly 50 years after the two men marched together in Memphis. “I positioned to where I could see him and shake his hand,” Carroll said. “I told him I did not march in Selma, but I marched in Memphis. Thank you for all you had done. He looked me dead in the eye and said ‘No. Thank you.’”

Their first march together was on behalf of more than 1,100 black sanitation workers on March 28, 1965 alongside Dr. King. But that demonstration was halted and dispersed, with the Rev. King informing his fellow activists that he would return a week later to march again. That second march is where King was assassinated at Memphis’ Lorraine Motel.

“That march turned into a memorial march for him,” said Carroll, who was a 27-year-old seminary student at Memphis’ Cumberland University at the time. “I always tell people, if I hadn’t shown up that day, it would not have made one difference. But if we all hadn’t shown up, it would have. So that’s just me doing my part.”

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 Patricia Caley
 Ace Cannon
 Roger Carr
 Chancy Chestnut
 Mark Cole
 Justin Costello
 Brian Crowdson
 Holly Dahlquist
 James Dahlquist
 David Darneille
 Alexander Davis
 Elijah Davis
 Michael Davis
 Noah Davis
 Zachary Davis
 Alexander Demeroukas
 Rebecca Dobbs
 Michael Dunn
 Brea Elston
 Michael Elston
 Alaine Ewing
 Nancy Ferguson
 Samuel Foote

Sherry Foote
 Kevin Ford
 Madison Fugnitti
 Dominick Garrison
 Leeann Gathard
 William J. Geiger
 William T. Geiger
 Patrick Gilbert
 Kiev Glasscock
 Lindy Hall
 Kevin Hamm
 Thomas Harvill
 Rebekah Hecht
 Kevin Henson
 Madison Hertz
 Christopher Higgins
 Jill Hiler
 Melissa Hill
 Joseph Hodges
 Donald Honigman
 Jennifer Hopper
 Shannon Hughes
 Daniel Iams
 Nancy Iberg
 Victoria Johnson
 Kathy Johnston
 Melody Jones
 Casey Julseth
 Divya Jyothi Kandepu
 Nicole Kane
 Alexander Kasper
 Virginia Klemm
 Sarah Kline
 Emily Kouzios
 Jennifer Krueger
 Jerry Krumme
 Jerry Kuchar
 Kevin Kulavic
 Richard Kuschel
 Paul Lamantia
 Ryan Lamantia
 Zach Landes
 Frank Lane
 Justin Law

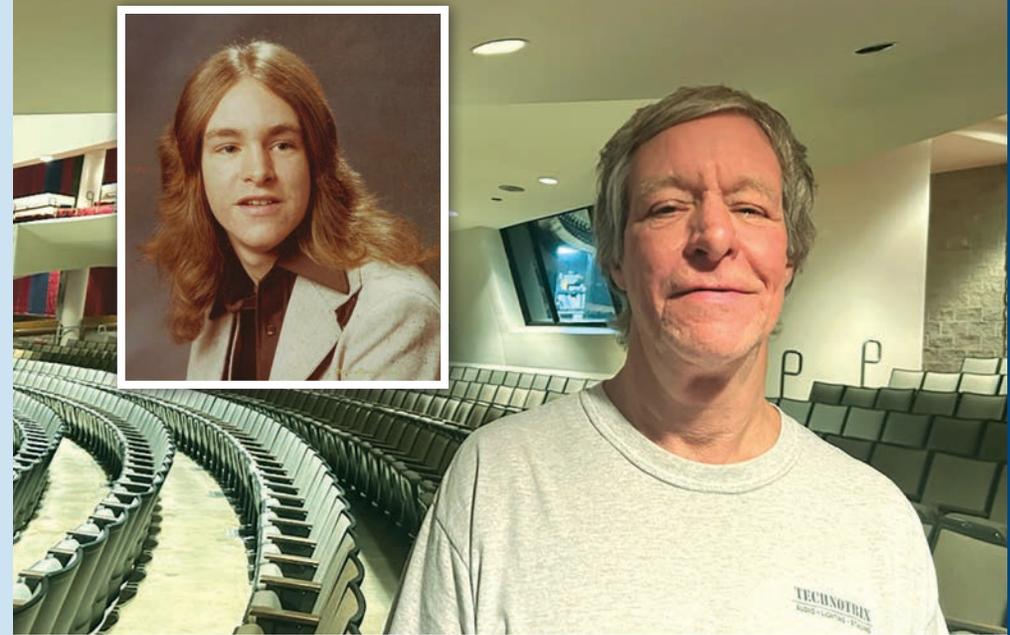


Rachel Law
 Dennis Leach
 Ally Lisnek
 Richard Livingston
 Rebecca Logerquist
 John McAdams
 Stephen McCaffrey
 Robert McKeown
 Robert Morgan
 Jathan Moyer
 Timothy Nielsen
 Godwin Ofurum
 Mary Oseland
 Jacob Pahde
 Gerard Pelich
 Lawrence Perko
 Carmen Perry
 Tamara Pettit
 Michelle Pulce-Flynn
 James Rapps
 Katherine Risse
 Deidre Rosenberger
 Dora Rotello
 Ryan Ruettiger
 Tracy Rusnak
 Abigail Schafer
 James Schafer
 Sarah Schneider
 Katie Schumacher
 Keith Schumacher
 Matthew Scrivano
 Edward Seelbach
 Katherine Seketa
 Ryan Shadis
 Mark Sims
 Juliann Spradlin
 Elizabeth Squires

Alex Taft
 Stephen Tankersley
 Paul Thelen
 John Thomas
 Ashley Towal
 Blaine Traylor
 Molly Vasconcelles
 Elizabeth Verzo
 Meredith Vogel-Thomas
 Sharon Warren
 Traci Wells
 Courtney Wick
 Anthony Williams
 DeWayne Williams
 Janet Williams
 Matthew Williams
 Regena Wilson
 Samantha Wiseman
 Donald Wisniewski

UIS Student Employees

Moritz Albrecht
 Rishika Badamoni
 Niranjan Barla
 Trace Boyd
 Elizabeth Emery
 Grace Henry
 Regina Ivy
 Subha Krishna Kuppam
 Abhinav Mekkonda
 Adrianna Mendez
 Mauro Montalvo Torres
 Rahul Nandru
 Rahulraj Pamula



Meet Joe Taylor

Joe Taylor started working as a stagehand at Sangamon State University's auditorium in 1980. The first performance held in what is now the UIS Performing Arts Center was February 21, 1981 with Hal Holbrook performing *Mark Twain Tonight*.

That's no misprint. Taylor was one of the four stagehands called almost daily in late 1980 to set up the lighting, test the sound system and do anything else necessary to finish the community effort of opening a large auditorium in the state's capital city. And he never left.

"I'll work until they say you can't do this anymore or my legs give out, whichever happens first," said Taylor, who turns 65 in January 2025. "I still love putting on shows just like I did back then. I'll keep doing it as long as I'm able to."

Taylor never thought he would be in it for the long haul. He was a painter and looking to sign on as a partner with the company he was working for, but the stage kept calling.

"You know, I kind of got sucked in," said Taylor, who has now been working full-time at UIS PAC for the past 15 years. "I found out that I really liked

putting on shows. I met some big stars and I kind of liked hanging with the big wigs. I met Johnny Cash and I thought 'I think I'm going to keep doing this.'"

Being part of the UIS Performing Arts Center since it opened, Taylor has stories about the times he met Cab Calloway, Buddy Guy and Mel Torme. He can tell you about reluctantly joining Alice Cooper backstage for a meal when the rock star insisted on chatting him up before the concert. And he can tell you about when Marie Osmond wanted him to go to lunch with her while she was in town but duty called and he had a show to prepare. "I still kick myself in the butt to this day about that," he said "Now, thinking back on it, I blew her off. Which was really stupid."

Taylor has seen so many things change during his tenure at UIS PAC, working under the leadership of three different directors. He vividly recalls coming each year with his daughters to watch *The Nutcracker* at Christmas time, a tradition he has continued with his four grandchildren. Having seen nearly every show that has ever performed at UIS PAC, he said there are too many finalists for him to name a favorite.

ANNUAL FIGURES

INCOME STATEMENT

For the year ended June 30, 2024

INCOME		EXPENSE	
Revenue retained from FY23	\$18,144	Salaries & Wages	\$1,400,698
Correction to FY23 reporting	\$469	Artist Fees	\$436,555
FY24 Operating Revenue:		Capital Projects/Maintenance	\$44,053
Ticket Sales	\$819,074	Event Expenses	\$260,929
Facility Rentals	\$653,486	Marketing Expenses	\$251,546
State Support	\$431,579	Equipment	\$65,987
Ticketing Fees	\$231,319	Administrative Expenses	\$47,200
Earnings on Endowment & Special Funds	\$182,459	Materials & Supplies	\$57,788
Other Earned Revenue	\$36,492	Concession Stand Cost of Goods Sold	\$35,065
Concession Stand	\$121,422	Fundraising Expenses	\$22,298
FRIENDS Annual Fund	\$108,820	TOTAL EXPENSE	\$2,622,119
Other Grants & Gifts	\$42,731		
Total FY24 Operating Revenue	\$2,627,382	Net Income Carried Forward to FY25	\$23,876
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,645,995		

BALANCE SHEET

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS FOUNDATION (UIF) FUNDS	6/30/2023	6/30/2024
ENDOWMENTS BALANCES		
UIS Helen Hamilton Performing Arts Endowment for Youth Fund	\$268,300	\$268,300
UIS Auditorium Endowment Fund	\$266,247	\$266,247
UIS James L. Lundquist Endowment Fund	\$224,578	\$224,578
UIS Chapman-Staley Sangamon Auditorium Endowment Fund	\$222,860	\$222,860
UIS Sangamon Auditorium Maintenance Endowment	\$104,460	\$104,460
UIS Gloria Calovini Endowment Fund	\$44,161	\$44,161
QUASI ENDOWMENTS BALANCES		
UIS Staley Class Acts Sangamon Auditorium	\$762,326	\$762,326
UIS Auditorium Fund	\$257,221	\$172,221
UIS James L. Lundquist Endowment Fund	\$12,500	\$12,500
OTHER MISCELLANEOUS UIF FUNDS	\$30	\$1,650
TOTAL FUNDS AT UIF	\$2,162,683	\$2,079,303
UIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER FUNDS		
Operating / Maintenance Reserves	\$9,849	\$9,662
Sangamon Auditorium Special Projects – Piano Maintenance Fund	\$5,852	\$5,852
Sangamon Auditorium Special Projects – Wireless Mics Fund	—	\$5,601
Sangamon Auditorium Special Projects – Class Acts Donor Fund	—	\$538
Endowment Earnings Unspent	\$2,442	\$532
Other Annual Gifts	—	\$12,897
Youth Outreach Program Fund	\$374	\$374
Sangamon Auditorium Angel Tickets Fund	\$40	\$40
TOTAL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER FUNDS	\$18,557	\$35,496
TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS	\$2,181,240	\$2,114,799

In Memoriam



Alice Loraine Bettis

Valued Donor, Colleague and Friend

Dec. 26, 1951– June 6, 2024

For nearly 20 years, Alice Bettis was the smiling face of UIS, 13 of those years at the UIS Performing Arts Center. “People were just drawn to her,” said UIS PAC Business Manager Briana Fulton of her lifelong friend. “You knew if you were having a bad day, you could stop in Alice’s office.”

Fulton was actually born in Virden, next door to Bettis. She grew up best friends with Alice’s daughter, Becky. Both women graduated from the University of Illinois Springfield. Becky was the recipient of a scholarship sponsored by UIS graduate Dennis Sedlak, a longtime donor who knew neither of the Bettis women. One day, Sedlak received a phone call from the University of Illinois Foundation letting him know that, through the years, Alice continually added money to his endowment at UIS until the money he awarded Alice’s daughter had been replaced.

Sedlak said, as a donor, no one ever expects to have their contributions repaid. But, the one and only time he ever spoke with Alice when he came to campus to speak at a scholarship luncheon, she told him she wanted to make sure someone else received the opportunity he made sure her daughter had.

“The memory of that gesture and act of kindness still brings a tearfully happy reflection to my life,” Sedlak wrote on Bettis’ online Tribute Wall. “You never know how any single person can so positively impact your life. Albeit, all too brief, it was an honor to have shared even a small part of her life. Journey well, Alice. The pleasure of your company was all ours.”

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