

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

2016/17 through 2019/20

# Impact report



**PennState**  
College of Arts and Architecture



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#### ON THE COVER

As part of the Penn State's Campus Arts Initiative, Pennsylvania-born artist Adam Frelin worked with the Center for the Performing Arts to conceptualize, design, and install *Extended Sunset*. Funded by the University's Strategic Planning Seed Grant program, *Extended Sunset* features a Pennsylvania sunset installed in October 2019 on the inside of the six large, vertical windows at the front of Eisenhower Auditorium. The backlit image is illuminated by LED light strips surrounding the interior of the window frames. White vinyl behind the images functions as the back of a light box and as a light reflector. An astronomical timer controls the LED lights, illuminating the window from dusk until dawn.

Eisenhower Auditorium photo by Amirmasoud Agharebparast.

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact the Arts Ticket Center at 814-863-0255 in advance of your participation or visit.

**This publication is available in alternative media on request.**

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## Mission

The Center for the Performing Arts provides a context, through artistic connections, to the human experience. By bringing artists and audiences together we spark discovery of passion, inspiration, and inner truths. We are a motivator for creative thinking and examination of our relationship with the world.

## Vision

Enriching lives through inspiring experiences

## Stretch Goal

The Center for the Performing Arts seeks to be one of the top three reasons why students choose to enroll at Penn State.



## Core Values

### Arts Leadership

We believe artistic distinction and exceptional experiences are the cornerstones of the Center for the Performing Arts and are integral to our position of national leadership.

### Service Focused

We provide our constituencies and partners with a consistently high level of support, access, and opportunities ensuring the greatest possible inclusiveness, diversity, and enrichment for those we serve.

### Creative Innovation

We seek and promote innovative, provocative, and risk-taking ideas and creative approaches across our organization.

### People First

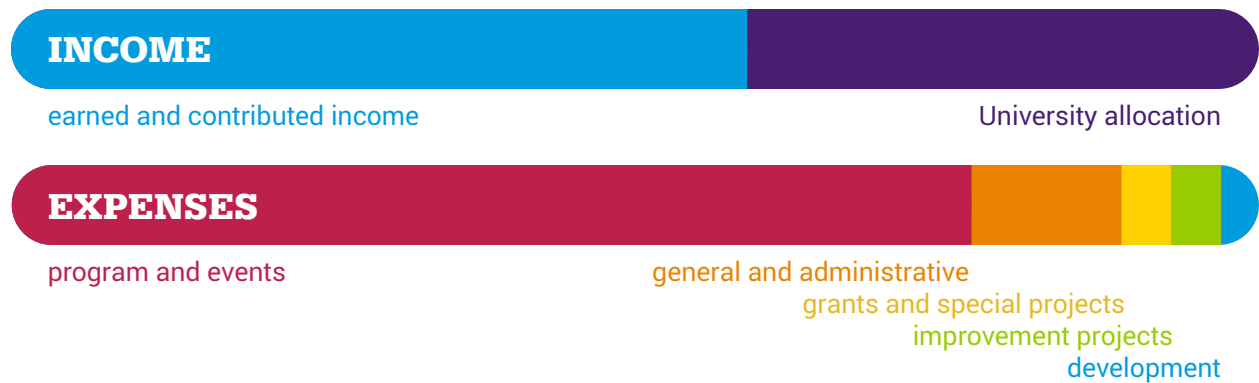
We value everyone who benefits from and contributes to the Center for the Performing Arts. We take pride in fostering an environment of mutual respect, teamwork, and high ethical standards in which everyone's involvement is honored, supported, and appreciated.

### Committed Stewardship

We ensure fiscal health, sustain superior facilities, create self-sustaining systems, and support the reduction of our environmental footprint through our business model, practices, and policies.

# Fiscal Responsibility

The Center for the Performing Arts has diverse sources of revenue with 59 percent coming from earned and contributed income and 41 percent from a University allocation. Approximately 77 percent of expenses are for program and events with 12 percent general and administrative. The Center for the Performing Arts funds a range of equipment purchases and improvement projects (4 percent).



# External Support

## Members and Sponsors

▲ **16%** Membership gifts and pledges increased.

▲ **04%** Sponsorship gifts and pledges increased.

## Endowments

### Four were created:

- Timothy J. Carr Endowment
- Robert and Sonia Hufnagel Endowment
- Dr. Stanley E. and Debra Lee Latta Endowment
- Meghan R. Mason Program Endowment

### Two were activated:

- Dotty and Paul Rigby Classical Music Endowment
- Gerald B. M. and Sylvia Stein Endowment

## Grants

### Non-University funding:

- Arts Midwest Touring Fund
- Happy Valley Adventure Bureau
- The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation
- New England Foundation for the Arts
- Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

### University funding:

- Equal Opportunity Planning Committee
- University Park Student Fee Board

## Hospitality Partners

Sixteen provided in-kind goods/services.





# IMPACT ON THE UNIVERSITY

Major grants

Artist and composer residencies

Special programs and initiatives

Professional services for clients

Penn State partners

Academic partnerships



A dancer, opposite top left, for Ballet Hispánico, a company presented in 2018, glides across the stage (photo by Paula Lobo). Penn State students, opposite top right, support a dancer during an artist class visit. Musicians from Bang on a Can All-Stars, opposite bottom, listen while composer Julia Wolfe speaks at a 2017 Classical Coffeehouse. A featured Essence of Joy singer, left, performs at a Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative kick-off dinner in 2016 (photo by Stephanie Swindle Thomas).



Sculpture photo by Penn State University Marketing.

## Major grants

The Center for the Performing Arts has received two major, multi-year grants from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, both of which have funded the development of permanent additions to the Penn State curriculum.

### Classical Music Project

The six-year Classical Music Project featured the development of *Under the Hood: How Classical Music Works*, a general education course offered through the Penn State School of Music. The Classical Music Project, which ended with the 2016–2017 season, was made possible by two foundation grants totaling \$870,000.

## The Reflection Project: Looking at Who WE ARE

The three-year, \$600,000 Reflection Project, which began in the 2019–2020 season, has selected five proposals for the development of Penn State inter-domain courses that include the performing arts at their cores.

A January 2020 call for proposals resulted in submissions representing an array of Penn State departments and programs. The selected proposals will be developed into general-education courses by 2022.

The selected courses are:

- ***Creativity and the Art of Human Flourishing***, which will dive into the exploration of art and creativity and what it means to not only survive, but to thrive as a person;
- ***Improv Theater, Curriculum, and Instruction***, which will engage students in the study and practice of longform improvisational theatre through, and along with, the field of curriculum and instruction;
- ***Climate Change and Storytelling***, which will use the art of storytelling to explore the impact of climate change on health issues;
- ***Performance 360***, which will ask students to experience and reflect on the performing arts as cultural practice, tourist product, vehicle for self-expression, response to structures of power, and more;
- ***Perspectives on Aging/Lighter as We Go***, which will examine research on happiness, aging, and well-being alongside the lived experience of older adults.



## Artist and composer residencies

What happens offstage is just as important as what goes onstage. The Center for the Performing Arts engages performing artists for explorations of their work, enhancing understanding and providing greater perspectives. In the last four seasons, the Center for the Performing Arts hosted a total of eighteen artist residencies lasting two days or more each.

A weeklong residency by Step Afrika! in January 2020 featured members of the dance company lecturing in a general education theatre course; teaching two master classes for students in tap dance classes; engaging students in a discussion for both the Paterno Fellows and students in the Center for Character, Conscience, and Public Purpose; showcasing their art form alongside student organizations from Black fraternities and sororities plus other student dance groups; and presenting the world premiere of *Drumfolk* surrounded by pre- and post-performance talks with the artists.

The Center for the Performing Arts also invites composers to University Park in connection with works of chamber music that have been commissioned. The composers engage with students in the Penn State School of Music composition program and other courses, as appropriate. Since 2016, five composers have participated in residencies.

In 2017, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Julia Wolfe came to Penn State for the presentation of her work, *Anthracite Fields*, which featured engagement and performance with the Penn State Concert Choir, directed by Christopher Kiver. Wolfe lectured at the Penn State Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum and Art Gallery regarding her research into the history of anthracite mining in Pennsylvania. She also had extensive interaction with students involved in the production. Kiver had his students delve into their family histories to discover the depth of mining roots among Americans.



Penn State Concert Choir Director Christopher Kiver leads the ensemble in a rehearsal for a 2017 performance of Julia Wolfe's *Anthracite Fields* (photos by Stephanie Swindle Thomas).



## Special Programs and Initiatives

### Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative

Building on a legacy of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion through the performing arts, the Center for the Performing Arts in 2016 launched the Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative. Under the leadership of Scholar in Residence Tom Hogan, the collaborative began with a dinner to welcome the Sphinx Virtuosi, a Detroit-based orchestra featuring musicians of color. The dinner included welcoming remarks by Penn State President Eric Barron.

The collaborative involved a team of engaged Penn State faculty from various disciplines. The Center for the Performing Arts has leveraged those connections to continue promotion of inclusion through the performing arts.

When artists visit, they connect with the community and the University. A partnership with the

Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese, for instance, involves a Spanish-speaking artist visiting a class to converse with the language learners. Ballet Hispánico artistic director Eduardo Villaro even conducted a basics of Latin dance class in Spanish for the department's students.

### *I Am Woman* season theme

The 2018–2019 season theme *I Am Woman* was timely, relevant, moving, and motivating. The theme was relevant to topics surrounding women of various ethnicities, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses. It drew attention to issues such as equal pay and the gender wage gap, discrimination in academia, career opportunities, and women as leaders. The theme garnered enthusiastic support from the Center for the Performing Arts staff, Community Advisory Council, College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State administrators, visiting artists, and patrons.





Visiting artists participated in question-and-answer feature stories by sharing their experiences. Patrons engaged in *I Am Woman* photo opportunities with specially designed backdrop and sign props to express their sense of selves. A gallery of framed images were displayed in Eisenhower Auditorium to share the theme with visitors.

Selected artist images were produced in large format and hung as banners from the railings on both sides of the Eisenhower lobby. The banners connected the message to images on the main lobby wall. *OnStage*, the Center for the Performing Arts performance program, included feature stories related to the theme. Penn State social

media provided additional exposure with the hashtag #IAmWomanPSU, which was also used across the college for stories and performances that acknowledged female artists and themes.

Inspired by the theme, Barbara Korner, then dean of Arts and Architecture, began a leadership forum for women faculty and staff members. It culminated in a production of the *Vagina Monologues* at the Palmer Museum of Art. The theme spawned new efforts and programs, such as Empow(h)er music production, the Arts and Architecture alumni awards program, a Palmer exhibit, and other tie-ins across the college.

To launch the Diversity and Inclusion Collaborative, Penn State's Essence of Joy, opposite, performs at a 2016 welcome dinner for Sphinx Virtuosi (photo by Stephanie Swindle Thomas). In conjunction with *I Am Woman*, the 2018–19 season theme, patrons, above, express themselves in front of a backdrop in Eisenhower Auditorium (photos by Jacob Iwinski).



### ***The American Experience: Through an African-American Lens* season focus**

The 2019–2020 season focus included eight scheduled artists/ensembles—two events had to be canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic—illustrating the stories of African Americans. From the world premiere performance by Imani Winds and Catalyst Quartet of composer Jessie Montgomery's *Sergeant McAuley*; to the breathtaking performance by Dance Theatre of Harlem, celebrating its fiftieth anniversary of surviving and thriving against great odds; to the week of activities that culminated in a world premiere of Step Afrika!'s *Drumfolk*, the season focus explored many rich perspectives of what it means to be Black in America.



Jessie Montgomery, top, composes works for Catalyst Quartet, for which she plays violin, and other ensembles (photo by Jiyang Chen). Members of Step Afrika!, above, perform a contemporary dance (photo by Jati Lindsay).

## Professional services for clients

The Center for the Performing Arts is a professional component of an academic college *and* a key intersection for student interaction. Staff members share their expertise and provide professional training to those who wish to create performances, present programming, or gather to celebrate accomplishments.

The adjacent list includes student organizations and committees –plus University units, departments, and institutes–that in the last four years have utilized a Center for the Performing Arts facility and/or one of its professional services such as ticketing, production, and/or audience services to implement a public performance or presentation.

Many clients return each year, which allows mutually beneficial relationships to develop. Mentorships grow between Center for the Performing Arts staff members and student liaisons for some of the organizations. When the relationship is new, staff members spend considerable time guiding clients through applicable University policies and procedures.

### Ticketing services

The Arts Ticket Center works closely with Integrative Arts 5 instructors to coordinate the sales of tickets to students and provide attendance reports. The ticket center also coordinates group sales and social events for the Graduate & Professional Student Association.

The New Employee Ticket Program annually offers two complimentary tickets to new University Park employees. The program, funded by the Office of the Provost, has grown in popularity during the last four years. Some 1,814 people have benefited from the program during that period. The Center for the Performing Arts partners with the Human Resources Development Center to market the program.

Center for Science in the Schools  
 Chinese Students and Scholars Association  
 College of Agriculture  
 College of Health and Human Development  
 Department of Economics  
 Department of English  
 Distinguished Speaker Series  
 Fraternity and Sorority Life  
 Graduate School  
 Greek Week  
 Hillel  
 Homecoming  
 Indian Cultural Language Club  
 Infusion  
 Lionettes  
 Office of Finance and Business  
 Office of Strategic Communications  
 Office of Summer Sessions  
 Outreach  
 Penn State Law  
 Penn State Public Broadcasting  
 Rock Ethics Institute  
 School of Music  
 School of Theatre  
 Schreyer Honors College  
 Student Programming Association  
 Student Transitional Programs  
 THON  
 Undergraduate Admissions

## Penn State Partners

African and African American Studies Program  
 Alliance of Heroic Hearts  
 Alumni Association  
 Arts & Design Research Incubator  
 Arts Entrepreneurship Program  
 Asian Classical Music Club  
 Ballroom Dance Club  
 Blue & White Society  
 Campus Arts Program  
 Center for Arts & Crafts  
 Center for Character, Conscience,  
 and Public Purpose  
 Center for Ethical and Spiritual Development  
 Center for Immigrants' Rights Clinic,  
 Penn State Law  
 Center for Science and the Schools  
 Chinese Language Program  
 Chinese Students and Scholars Association  
 Coffee Club  
 College of Arts and Architecture  
 College of Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum  
 and Art Gallery  
 College of Engineering  
 College of Health and Human Development  
 College of the Liberal Arts  
 Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,  
 Transgender, and Queer Equity  
 Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity  
 Communication Sciences and Disorders Program  
 Comparative Literature Program  
 coolBlue Community at Innovation Park  
 Council of LionHearts  
 Counseling and Psychological Services

Dance Program  
 Dark Storm Step Team  
 Dear Hero Program  
 Delta Sigma Theta Sorority  
 Department of African American Studies  
 Department of Communication Sciences  
 and Disorders  
 Department of English  
 Department of French and Francophone Studies  
 Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages  
 and Literatures  
 Department of History  
 Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese  
 Department of Women's, Gender,  
 and Sexuality Studies  
 Discover House  
 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration  
 Student Committee  
 EcoReps  
 Educational Equity Office  
 Empower Orphans PSU  
 Equal Opportunity Planning Committee  
 Essence of Joy  
 Exploration-U, Eberly College of Science  
 Frost Entomological Museum  
 Global Programs  
 Graduate & Professional Student Association  
 Health Promotion and Wellness  
 Hispanic Heritage Month  
 Human Resources Management Program  
 Humpday Gallery  
 In Memoriam Sketch Club  
 Intensive English Communication Program  
 Joint Commissions Committee  
 LifeLink PSU  
 Linguistics Program  
 Lion's Pantry  
 Matson Museum of Anthropology  
 Mexican-American Student Association

Millennium Scholars Program  
 Multicultural Resource Center  
 Museum Consortium  
 Music Service Club  
 National Student Speech-Language-  
 Hearing Association  
 No Refund Theatre  
 Office of Physical Plant  
 Office of the Vice President for Research  
 Palmer Museum of Art  
 Paterno Fellows Program  
 Penn State Altoona  
 Penn State Taiko  
 Performing Arts Council  
 Radiation Science & Engineering Center  
 Residence Life  
 ROTC  
 School of Labor and Employment Relations  
 School of Music  
 School of Theatre  
 School of Visual Arts  
 Schreyer Honors College  
 Science Education  
 Shaver's Creek Environmental Center  
 Smeal College of Business  
 Student Affairs  
 Student Engagement Network  
 Student Farm  
 Sustainability Institute  
 Sustainable Communities Collaborative  
 Swing Dance Club  
 Tapestry Dance Company  
 Tennis Club  
 THON  
 Ukulele Club  
 University Libraries  
 Urban Dance Troupe  
 Woskob Family Gallery



## Academic partnerships

The Center for the Performing Arts has a network of faculty relationships that span the University.

Its first-ever scholar in residence, Tom Hogan, is a professor of practice in human resources management. His area of expertise is engaged scholarship and using the performing arts as a vehicle to create a more welcoming and inclusive campus climate.

Hogan, who has a doctorate in management, has engaged in several multi-year research projects with the Center for the Performing Arts team. The student engagement manager leads a group of his senior-level business ethics students in an arts-based project that benefits the Center for the Performing Arts each semester.

The Center for the Performing Arts also enjoys extended relationships with faculty and students in Penn State's Schreyer Honors College, Paterno Fellows Program, University Libraries, Dance Program, School of Music, and Communications Sciences and Disorders Program, among others.







# IMPACT ON PENN STATE STUDENTS

Classical Coffeehouses

Partnership with Student Affairs

IllumiNATION

Mindful Making

Integrative Arts 005

Contributions to THON

Student Fee Board grants

Internships

PULSE Penn State arts surveys



Penn State School of Music cello students, opposite top left, meet Yo-Yo Ma in 2017 (photo by Stephanie Swindle Thomas). A member of the Penn State Ballroom Dance Club, opposite bottom left, demonstrates bachata moves at a Friday Night Dance Social in 2018 (photo by Jacob Iwinski). A University student, top left, poses with her creation at an IllumiNATION lantern-making workshop. A Penn State student employee, bottom left, works on the rigging backstage at Eisenhower Auditorium.

## Classical Coffeehouses

In collaboration with the Penn State Alumni Association, the Center for the Performing Arts began presenting three Classical Coffeehouses per season as part of the former Classical Music Project. Each coffeehouse, presented at Hintz Family Alumni Center's Robb Hall, gives Penn State students a free opportunity to experience traditional or contemporary music in a casual atmosphere.

Each coffeehouse, which is also open to non-Penn State students for a suggested monetary donation, includes a mini-performance, discussions among artists and audience members, and social time with the musicians and others in attendance. To make the coffeehouses extra enticing, complimentary snacks and beverages are served.

The Center for the Performing Arts and the alumni association partner with the Blue & White Society, the PSU Music Service Club, and the Penn State Coffee Club to present the events. Each typically takes place the evening before the featured touring artists are scheduled to perform a ticketed concert at Schwab Auditorium.

In the last four seasons, featured ensembles have included Roomful of Teeth, Han/Setzer/Finckel Trio, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Sō Percussion, Cantus, Escher String Quartet, Sybarite5, Imani Winds and Catalyst String Quartet, and members of Apollo's Fire: The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra.





## Partnership with Student Affairs

The Center for the Performing Arts and Penn State Student Affairs jointly fund a student engagement manager who works to create opportunities for students to have engaging and meaningful art experiences. The manager also advises the Performing Arts Council, which works to uplift the many performing arts student organizations at University Park and to promote collaboration among them.

Imani Winds musicians, opposite top left, share some smiles at a 2019 Classical Coffeehouse (photo by Jacob Iwinski). Escher String Quartet, opposite bottom left, performs at a 2018 coffeehouse (photo by Stephanie Swindle Thomas). Penn State Coffee Club members, opposite top right, brew up beverages for a 2018 coffeehouse with Cantus (photo by Stephanie Swindle Thomas). Penn State students, opposite bottom right, take in a coffeehouse (photo by Jacob Iwinski). Hope Falk, student engagement manager, above center, chats with Marissa Works and Eleanor King, each a former president of the Performing Arts Council (photo by Jacob Iwinski).

Two Performing Arts Council students serve on the Center for the Performing Arts Community Advisory Council.

The student engagement manager recently began a relationship with the Center for Character, Conscience, and Public Purpose. This new Student Affairs office is responsible for offering programs and services designed to challenge students to reflect on questions of personal conscience and character and equip them with the understanding, motivation, and skills of responsible citizenship.

The Center for Character, Conscience, and Public Purpose offers a lunch series that schedules speakers to talk about civic engagement and ethical leadership. During the 2019–2020 season, the Center for the Performing Arts engaged members of Kronos Quartet to speak about U.S. government travel restrictions on visitors from certain Muslim-majority countries and artists from Step Afrika! to speak about racial discrimination.

# IllumiNATION

IllumiNATION is a student-focused, arts-based festival and parade project based at University Park. IllumiNATION includes art-making workshops throughout the year that are strategically attached to and inspired by events conducted by Penn State partners.

The project is aligned with Earth Hour, an annual worldwide lights-out event organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature, intended to raise awareness about the effects of excessive energy consumption on the environment.

IllumiNATION seeks to create a unified Penn State community, full of responsible and inclusive citizens of the world by encouraging creativity, practicing sustainability, and providing a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The first IllumiNATION festival and parade had been scheduled for March 2020, but it was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.



## IllumiNATION partners

### Penn State

Center for Arts and Crafts

Center for Spiritual and Ethical Development

Counseling & Psychological Services

EcoReps

Global Programs

Health Promotion and Wellness

Intensive English Communication Program

International Student Council

Residence Life

Student Engagement Programs

Sustainability Institute

### Community

Cultural Exchange Group



## Mindful Making

Founded in fall 2018, Mindful Making uses art and culture to promote mindfulness and community. Mindful Making, a collaboration with Penn State's Health Promotion and Wellness and Student Engagement Programs, features workshops meant to give University students the space and permission to slow down and partake in self-care.

In its first two years, Mindful Making included thirty workshops with a total of 357 participants. The program also engaged one student intern.

### Workshop partners

The Arboretum at Penn State

*Art of Human Flourishing*  
(College of Health and Human Development course)

Center for Arts and Crafts

Dharma Lions

Knittany Lions

Palmer Museum of Art



## Integrative Arts 005

The Center for the Performing Arts has partnered for many years with a large, general education Penn State course called *Introduction to the Performing Arts* (Integrative Arts 005). Each student in the online course chooses six performances, from a slate of eight or nine options, to attend. One of the aims of the course, which is offered in fall and spring semester year academic year, is to have each student repeatedly experience patronizing a theatre in the hope of cultivating future theatregoers.

The student seats spread throughout the auditorium, just like the other patrons, so students might find themselves sitting next to a community member, a Center for the Performing Arts staff member, a college dean, or the University president.

Both prior to and after the theatre-going experience, students engage in online learning and discussion about the artist and art form. By engaging with the Center for the Performing Arts in this way, students use center presentations as a living laboratory from which to learn.

Students taking the course account for a significant portion of the Center for the Performing Arts' ticket sales to Penn State students.

Season	InArt 005 students	Total Penn State student tickets	Percentage of student sales
2016–17	3,476	8,833	39%
2017–18	5,743	10,065	57%
2018–19	6,541	10,442	63%
2019–20	5,342	9,947	54%

Center for the Performing Arts Student Engagement Manager Hope Falk, opposite top, helps Penn State students buying tickets (photo by Jacob Iwinski). Students wait in the Eisenhower Auditorium lobby, opposite bottom, for their turn to purchase tickets in 2019.

## Contributions to THON

In 2018 and 2019, the Center for the Performing Arts helped to raise thousands of dollars for Penn State's nationally recognized student-run charity.

For each ticket purchased to the 2018 presentation of Béla Fleck, Zakir Hussain, and Edgar Meyer, with special guest Rakesh Chaurasia, \$5 was donated to Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon (THON), the University's year-round charity supporting children and their families struggling with cancer. A portion of merchandise sales was also donated. That year's donation to the Four Diamonds Fund was \$5,961.

In 2019, the Center for the Performing Arts again donated \$5 from the sale of each ticket to the presentation featuring Dance Theatre of Harlem. The event did not include merchandise sales, but a portion of food concession sales was donated. The total donation came to \$6,583.



## Student Fee Board grants

For the last four seasons, Penn State student tickets have been \$15 apiece for most Center for the Performing Arts presentations. Those prices have been made possible by a grant each year from the University Park Student Fee Board, which allocates funding from the comprehensive student fee paid by each student attending Penn State's largest campus.

The Center for the Performing Arts received a \$140,000 grant in each of the fiscal 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 years and a \$195,000 grant in each of fiscal 2018–2019 and 2019–2020.





The Center for the Performing Arts partners with THON to contribute thousands of dollars to Penn State's nationally recognized student-run charity (photos by Michelle Bixby).

## Internships

Work at the Center for the Performing Arts is enhanced by Penn State students participating in the internship program. Through partnerships with the Bellisario College of Communications, the Department of English, and the Community Service Federal Work-Study program, a total of thirty interns have worked at the Center for the Performing Arts in the last four years.

Learning from these students—as well as grounding them in real-world, meaningful arts work—has brought student voices to the table in ways that would not be possible otherwise.

**“I gained a wealth of hands-on work experience and advice, attended so many memorable performances, and discovered a new sense of direction for my career path.”**

**Jessica Sensenig**, marketing director,  
Arts Alliance of Greater Waynesboro



## PULSE Penn State arts surveys

In 2016 and 2019, the Center for the Performing Arts and other units of the College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State partnered with the University's Student Affairs Research and Assessment Division in PULSE Arts Surveys.

Surveys were sent to approximately 25 percent of undergraduate and graduate students. An average of 10 percent and 16 percent, respectively, responded.

Survey questions covered arts attendance, participation, and the value students placed on the arts at Penn State.

The surveys indicated that:

- Approximately 80 percent of students attended at least one arts event in the previous year;
- Around 25 percent participated in at least on arts event in the previous year;
- 24 percent of undergraduates and 49.5 percent of graduate students chose classical music as one of three types enjoyed most;
- 74 percent of undergrads and 85 percent of grads agreed/strongly agreed that “academic courses in the arts are just as important as courses in English, history, science, or mathematics”;
- 59 percent of undergrads and 72 percent of grads indicated “before attending Penn State, I have frequently attended or participated in arts events.”

# +90%

agreed that arts events “**reflect Penn State’s commitment to diversity/inclusion**” and that the arts “**help to bring people together by emphasizing common human experiences.**”

# 83%

of undergrads

# 92%

of grads

agreed/strongly agreed that “**participation in the arts is important for a well-rounded education.**”

# 85%

of students agreed/strongly agreed that “**It is important for me to have many opportunities to experience the arts to have a high quality education at Penn State.**”





# IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

Sound system upgrade

Helping the community

Outreach to the elderly

Let's Dance

Dance engagement events

Community reach

Community partners



Cast members from *Jersey Boys*, opposite top left, perform for residents of Centre Crest in 2018. Children, opposite top right, work on craft projects at Cinderella's Ball at Schlow Centre Region Library in 2018 (photo by Jacob Iwinski). A member of Urban Bush Women, opposite middle right, guides a community dance workshop in 2019 (photo by Jacob Iwinski). A pint-sized percussionist, top left, bangs on a taiko drum during a 2018 workshop. The For Good Troupe, bottom left, performs at a Let's Dance community event (photo by Jacob Iwinski).

## Sound system upgrade

Penn State notched up the technical capabilities for performing arts programs with the January 2018 installation of a Meyer Sound Leo Family reinforcement system at Eisenhower Auditorium. At a school renowned for its Nittany Lions athletic teams, the new state-of-the-art reinforcement system is appropriately anchored by twenty-four Lyon line array loudspeakers.

"It's really a game changer with this system hanging in here," says Tom Hesketh, Center for the Performing Arts events manager and de facto technical director. "Now we can offer touring acts a better system and at a lower expense when you factor in labor costs on rental rigs."

Rental systems were a continual necessity as the former house system, a decades-old "Voice of the Theatre" cluster, was rejected by touring riders and was barely adequate for many University events.

In addition to the main Lyon arrays, the new system includes a center array of eight Leopard line array loudspeakers, six per side cardioid arrays of 1100-LFC low frequency control elements, eight UPJunior-XP loudspeakers for front fill, and five UPQ-1P loudspeakers as balcony delays. The system is optimized and managed by four Galileo GALAXY 816 processors (networked via AVB/TSN), while an RMServer enables comprehensive remote status monitoring.

The system made its concert debut with the big-band jazz of The Birdland All-Stars. "A good one to break it in," Hesketh says. "Their engineer was top flight, and it sounded amazing."

Barbara Korner, former dean of the College of Arts and Architecture, who worked with senior administrators to facilitate the upgrade, considers

it a significant enhancement to the cultural life of the University and the community.

"We are now able to host shows and events that we couldn't before," she says. "People notice the difference immediately, as the new system allows our audiences to experience music and theatrical events at a higher level."

—Meyer Sound





## Helping the community

When appropriate, the Center for the Performing Arts creates links to engage the public in collection drives benefiting partner organizations.

In 2019, the Center for the Performing Arts hosted Los Angeles-based dance company BodyTraffic. One of the works on the program, *Fragile Dwellings*, honors the unhoused population of the California city. The Center for the Performing Arts partnered with Skills of Central PA, Inc., to collect winter gear—including hats, scarves, gloves and socks—to distribute to people experiencing homelessness throughout central Pennsylvania. More than 150 new winter-weather items were collected.

In 2017, in connection with the Mid-State Literacy Council, the Center for the Performing Arts asked the public to donate children’s books in support of literacy projects. The book drive collected thirty-four boxes of books for children with pre-school to sixth-grade reading levels. The books were distributed among Bald Eagle Area School District’s Howard, Mountaintop Area, Port Matilda, and Wingate elementary schools.

Above, from left, Center for the Performing Arts Education and Community Programs Manager Medora Ebersole; center Audiences Services Manager Kelly Kaiserian; center Director George Trudeau; Skills of Central PA Inc. Program Specialist Karry Carr; Barry Cain, a participant in a Skills adult training service; former Penn State College of Arts and Architecture Dean Barbara Korner; and College of Arts and Architecture Staff Advisory Council member Jennifer Howard stand next to items donated to the center’s winter gear drive.

## Outreach to the elderly

Members of the touring Broadway production of *Jersey Boys* performed for residents at Centre Crest, a nursing and rehabilitation center in Bellefonte, in April 2018.

The visit was part of a program funded by the Hall-LeKander Endowment, which was created by Peggy and Dan LeKander in 2008 as a way of sharing the performing arts with the elderly in Centre County.

The endowment has enabled the Center for the Performing Arts to present a variety of music artists at Centre Crest plus State College's Hearthside Rehabilitation and Nursing Center.

In addition to the visit by *Jersey Boys* cast members, Bria Skonberg Quintet (November 2016) and Veronica Swift/Emmet Cohen (September 2018) have performed at Centre Crest since 2016. A performance by members of Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, which had been slated for April 2020 at Centre Crest, was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The endowment has also allowed the Center for the Performing Arts to offer free tickets to selected presentations, through the Centre County Office of Aging, for distribution to senior center groups.



Members of the touring Broadway cast of *Jersey Boys* perform for and mingle with residents of Centre Crest, a long-term care facility in Bellefonte, in 2018.







## ***Let's Dance***

Our annual *Let's Dance* movement workshops promote inclusion. Open to everyone, the outdoor workshops help participants feel connected.

### **Community Partners**

Centre Region Down Syndrome Society  
For Good Troupe

### **Penn State Partners**

Alliance of Heroic Hearts  
College of Health and Human Development  
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders  
National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (Penn State chapter)  
School of Theatre



Penn State students and the community come together for a workshop promoting fun, exercise, creativity, and inclusion (photos by Jacob Iwinski).



Children, top, show their moves at Cinderella's Ball in 2018. Dancers of all ages, left, learn steps at the 2017 Salsa Social (photo by Briana Bennett). Participants at the 2018 Friday Night Dance Social, above, get a feel for bachata (photos by Jacob Iwinski). Attendees at the 2019 Urban Bush Women Hair Party, opposite, receive guidance from a member of the dance company (photo by Jacob Iwinski).



## Dance engagement events

The Center for the Performing Arts presents dance companies, touring Broadway shows, and big bands with all the right moves. Free dance engagements, each scheduled shortly before a mainstage presentation, allowed beginners to learn simple dance steps in fun and friendly downtown State College settings.

### Salsa Social

- November 2017 salsa
- A partnership with Penn State Ballroom Dance Club and Borough of State College
- In anticipation of Spanish Harlem Orchestra

### Cinderella's Ball

- February 2018 ballroom
- A partnership with Penn State Ballroom Dance Club and Schlow Centre Region Library
- In anticipation of Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella*

### Friday Night Dance Social

- March 2018 bachata
- A partnership with Penn State Ballroom Dance Club and Borough of State College
- Inspired by moves made famous in *Dirty Dancing*

### Urban Bush Women Hair Party

- March 2019 guided movement and conversation
- A partnership with Urban Bush Women and Woskob Family Gallery
- In conjunction with Urban Bush Women's *Hair & Other Stories*

## Community reach

Center for the Performing Arts presentations	Center for the Performing Arts performances	University presentations
87	117	72
Academic presentations	Rentals	Community presentations
217	6	23
Center for the Performing Arts tickets distributed	University, academic, and community event tickets distributed	Group tickets
134,509	148,691	19,101

## Community partners

ACRES Project  
Adam Swartz Puppets  
AIDS Resource  
Altoona Area High School  
America Reads  
Annie Halenbake Ross Library  
Appalachian Outdoors  
Bellefonte Area High School  
Bellefonte Elementary School  
Borough of State College  
Café Lemont  
Cambria Dance Academy  
Cheryl Capezzuti  
Central Pennsylvania Dance Workshop  
Centre Crest  
Centre Dance  
Centre Region Down Syndrome Society  
Clearfield Alliance Christian School  
co.space  
Culture Exchange Group  
Easterly Parkway Elementary School  
Essence 2 Ltd.  
For Good Performance Troupe  
Holly Foy  
Happy Valley Chinese School  
Higher Achievement  
Hot Styles Dance Company  
Huntingdon Dance Academy  
J.A.M. Fest  
Jana Marie Foundation  
Living in One Neighborhood (LION) Bash  
Rebecca Maciejczyk  
Cynthia Mazzant  
Mid-State Literacy Council  
Millbrook Marsh Nature Center  
MindBodyArt School of Dance  
Mt. Nittany Middle School  
Mt. Union High School  
Movement Arts Studio  
Multicultural Unity Fair  
New Leaf Initiative  
Nittany Ballet  
Penns Valley Area School District  
Roots of Life Performing Arts Ensemble  
St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
Schlow Centre Region Library  
Skills of Central PA  
Standing Stone Elementary School  
State College Area High School  
State College Area High School World Languages and International Baccalaureate programs  
State College Area School District  
State College Area School District Delta Program  
Taproot Kitchen  
Temple University College of Public Health's Occupational Therapy Program  
3 Dots Downtown  
Tyrone Area School District  
Unity Church of Jesus Christ  
The UPS Store at the Colonnade  
Tyrone-Snyder Public Library



# IMPACT ON CHILDREN

School-Time Matinees

Jazz in schools

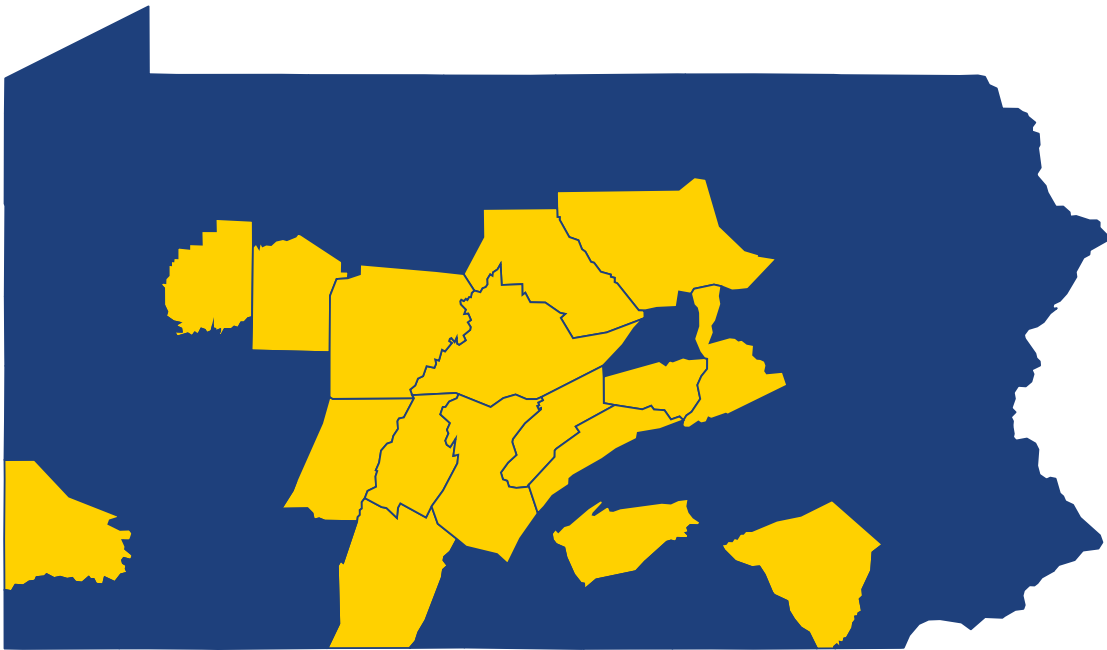
Art-themed self-care kits

*Kids Connections*



Each performance of Erth's *Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure*, a 2020 presentation, opposite top, includes selected children from the audience participating on stage. Buses transporting students for a School-Time Matinee, opposite bottom, line up in front of Eisenhower Auditorium (photo by Heather Mannion). Cast members, top left, perform a scene from *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood LIVE!*, a 2017 presentation. A young royal, bottom left, gets a bird's eye view at Cinderella's Ball, a community engagement event, in 2018 at Schlow Centre Region Library (photo by Jacob Iwinski).

## School-Time Matinees



16

Presentations

14,459

Attendees

17

Counties  
Represented

Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton,  
Cumberland, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Juniata, Lancaster, Lycoming, Mifflin,  
Northumberland, Snyder, Washington



## Jazz in schools

*Let Freedom Swing*, a history-based concert program produced by New York City's Jazz at Lincoln Center Education Department, was performed in February 2020 for a total of more than 500 students at five schools across three central Pennsylvania counties.

A gift from the estate of Richard Higgins allowed the Center for the Performing Arts to provide the touring program.

New York City-based band members Jake Blasini (music director and vocals), Oliver Beardsley (drums), Justin Poindexter (guitar and vocals), Bria Skonberg (trumpet and vocals), Mika Nishimura (piano), Braxton Cook (saxophone), and Noah Garabedian (bass) supplied the music and the insight.

They traveled to Huntingdon County's Mt. Union High School (where students from three elementary schools had converged); Clearfield County's Standing Stone Elementary School and Clearfield Alliance Christian School; and Centre County's Easterly Parkway Elementary School (along with Mt. Nittany Middle School special education arts appreciation students) and Bellefonte Elementary School.

The musicians introduced the fundamentals of jazz and described the genre's growth in the African-American communities of turn-of-the-twentieth-century New Orleans. The ensemble demonstrated how jazz mingles the expressions of people who come to the United States, by choice or by force, with the expressions of those already living in the Americas.

The musicians treated the students to classics from some of jazz history's most important figures, such as "Caravan" by Duke Ellington, "After You're Gone" by Ella Fitzgerald, "Careless Love" by Bessie Smith, and "It Don't Mean a Thing" and "When the Saints go Marching In" by Louis Armstrong.

After each concert, ensemble members made time for the students to see the instruments up close and to realize they were just like the musicians—with opportunities to play in school bands and orchestras.



New York City-based jazz musicians perform *Let Freedom Swing* for students at State College's Easterly Parkway Elementary School in 2020.

## Art-themed self-care kits

Getting an education in the age of the coronavirus pandemic is challenging, especially for children living in homes without Internet access. Beginning in April 2020, the Center for the Performing Arts, in partnership with the Jana Marie Foundation, distributed performing arts-themed self-care kits through school system meal programs and curriculum packets.

### Funding

Honey and Bill Jaffe Endowment for Audience Development

### Donated Printing Services

The UPS Store on Colonnade Way in suburban State College

Kits Distributed

17,854

Participating  
School Districts

3

Penns Valley Area  
State College Area  
Tyrone Area



Self-care kits based on Erth's *Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure*, a show presented at Eisenhower Auditorium in 2020, are placed in student meal bags at State College Area School District's Delta Program High School (photos by Stephanie Swindle Thomas)



A child, top, works on an activity provided by Matson Museum of Anthropology at the Kids Connections session before the 2019 presentation of *Me ... Jane* (photo by Jacob Iwinski). Kids, above, explore items from Shaver's Creek Environmental Center before the 2017 performance of *A Year with Frog and Toad*.

## ***Kids Connections***

*Kids Connections*, which is free for ticket holders and includes a craft-centered, child-friendly activity, takes place one hour before each public presentation for children.

### **10 Sessions**

### **Partners**

Adam Swartz Puppetry  
 Discovery Space Children's Science Museum  
 Holly Foy  
 Matson Museum of Anthropology  
 Cynthia Mazzant  
 Penn State Science and Engineering Center  
 Schlow Centre Region Library  
 Shaver's Creek Environmental Center  
 WPSU

