



PARAMOUNT  
THEATRE

MISSION POSSIBLE!

# PHILANTHROPY AT PARAMOUNT

2025





PARAMOUNT  
THEATRE



## DEAR FRIENDS,

As we reflect on 2025, your impact is unmistakable. You and our generous supporters have been at the heart of Paramount's success. Through change and challenge, Paramount has remained steady in its purpose, continuing to enrich lives through the magic of live theater right here in our beloved Aurora.

Paramount stands as a cornerstone of our community's cultural life. Together, we advance a mission to create powerful live theater that connects people across generations. Your belief in the arts — and in creating access to exceptional theatre in the suburbs — allows us to build a lasting legacy of impact.

Thank you for choosing Paramount as the home for your transformative generosity.

We have so much to celebrate. Our flagship artistic program, the Broadway Series, received incredible reception this past year with prize-winning pies in *Waitress*, trapeze-flying felines in *Cats*, the stranded strangers of *Come From Away*, and the timeless romance of *White Christmas*. Paramount was honored with a record number of Jeff Award nominations this summer, securing 29 across all our productions from the 13th season.

Paramount's School of the Arts had record-breaking enrollment across each semester, resulting in a 30% increase in enrollment year over year. We celebrated a sold-out benefit performance of our annual gala, bringing in over \$820,000 in support of artistic programming and general operations. These milestones reflect the strength of supporters like you who invest in Paramount's mission and make this work possible.

This year reminded us what it means to be a community. Your presence in the theatre, in your encouragement, and through your generosity continues to anchor our work and reflect the values we share. More than 5,300 donors and 40,000 subscribers stand behind this mission each year, ensuring that our artistic productions and arts education programs thrive.

Inspired by what we've accomplished together, we now look ahead to the next chapter. We're committed to growing the foundation that will sustain and expand our impact. Paramount's goal is clear: to create meaningful, accessible art that moves generations and contributes to the vibrancy of our region. With your ongoing support, we are poised for even greater achievements in the years to come.

Thank you for your partnership and for helping us make 2025 a year of growth, artistry, and connection. We are so grateful for you and can't wait to see what we'll accomplish together in this new season at Paramount.

With sincere gratitude,

Tim Rater, *President & CEO*

Jonathan Hylton, *Board Chair*

# PARAMOUNT PROGRAMMING

## A YEAR TO CELEBRATE

As a nonprofit arts organization and civic center, our primary responsibility is to provide services and programming aligned with our mission. With thoughtful stewardship of resources and creativity, Paramount produces and presents hundreds of shows each year.

In 2025, we welcomed 345,722 patrons to our three venues: Paramount Theatre, Copley Theatre, and Stolp Island Theatre. Amidst the extensive renovations at RiverEdge Park, we welcomed an additional 220,000 individuals at the Christkindlmarket this holiday season.

We increased our daily performance average to 2.1, staging a total of 783 performances. Paramount maintained the same audience size as 2024 despite RiverEdge Park's summer closure and pausing the BOLD Series. These figures reflect the enthusiasm of our loyal audience who sold-out shows of Million Dollar Quartet, packed the house at Paramount Theatre, and witnessed unforgettable performances at Copley Theatre.

**565,722**

Total Patrons and Visitors in 2025

**783**

Total Performances

**40,000+**

Broadway and BOLD Subscribers

**10%**

Increase in Broadway Audience

**29**

Jeff Award Nominations

# PARAMOUNT PROGRAMMING



## BROADWAY SERIES

Paramount celebrated closing the 13th and launching the 14th Broadway Season in 2025. Paramount received enthusiastic crowds for each of the Broadway series shows, breaking records for *Waitress* and *Come From Away*, and garnering international attention for our production of circus *Cats*. *White Christmas* was one of the highest grossing shows in Paramount's history with a delighted audience reception. We ended the year with 40,602 subscribers to our Broadway Series.

We closed the year with more than 273,000 patrons visiting Paramount for the Broadway Series, a 10% increase in audience size over last year. Across four full Broadway Series productions and the final weeks of *Frozen*, we staged 257 performances in 2025. Your generous contributions ensure that our artistic programs, like the Broadway Series, maintain the highest quality standards of scenic, costume and prop design and builds, casting, and direction. Your gifts fill the 26% revenue gap between what ticket sales cover and the actual costs of putting on a show.

THANK YOU TO OUR BROADWAY SERIES SPONSORS!



“PARAMOUNT HOLDS NOTHING BACK IN CREATING ABSOLUTE MAGIC AND WONDER ON STAGE.” -DEAN RICHARDS

## BOLD SERIES

Paramount closed out the third season of the BOLD Series with the comedy musical *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and ushered in the fourth season with the gritty classic *True West*. Between these two productions, we welcomed nearly 13,000 patrons and staged 112 shows at the Copley Theatre.

While Paramount faced a heartbreaking farewell to the BOLD Series after closing *True West*, we were touched deeply by the response of subscribers and ticketholders who chose to donate the value of their remaining subscription back to Paramount, resulting in a remarkable demonstration of support with more than \$50,000 in generous contributions.

THANK YOU TO OUR BOLD SERIES SPONSOR!



## STOLP ISLAND AND MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

With the ecstatic audience reception of *Million Dollar Quartet* in our brand new Stolp Island Theatre, Paramount extended the run of the show twice, resulting in a full year of nonstop rock 'n' roll. As cast members changed, new energy was brought to the show. Captivated audience members returned to see the show multiple times. Fans brought friends and enjoyed authentic vocal stylings and new takes on the favorite characters of Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis.

In 2025, *Million Dollar Quartet* ran 368 performances for more than 32,000 patrons. After a brief pause for the winter, Paramount will once again host a run of *Million Dollar Quartet* through the end of May in 2026.

THANK YOU TO OUR STOLP ISLAND THEATRE SPONSOR!





Talkback with Kevin T, the real-life inspiration behind the *Come From Away* Character



Accessible performance attendees

Accessibility remains central to our work. In 2025, 700 patrons participated in open-captioned, ASL-interpreted, and audio-described performances. In January 2026, Paramount hosted its second sensory-friendly, relaxed performance of *White Christmas*, serving 242 individuals and their families. Looking ahead, patrons will benefit from new Auracast Bluetooth audio technology, which was funded by a local grantmaking partner, allowing guests to connect personal devices directly to the theatre's sound system.

“

“We have attended ASL performances in NYC and the Chicago area, and we love how at Paramount, our designated section has great visibility of the show. **You all should be teaching other theatres how to handle accessibility.**” – Paramount Patron

942

Patrons benefitted from accessible performances

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As a mission-driven organization, Paramount advances outreach, education, and accessible programming to expand opportunities and enrich our community. Engagement initiatives included Career Pathways Day with West Aurora High School; post-show talkbacks with actors and creative team members; and partnerships with local service providers, including Document the Abuse following *Waitress*. Annual participation in Aurora's PRIDE parade and Juneteenth celebrations further gathered neighbors in shared celebration and reflection.

The REACH Aurora Program and the Broadway and Beyond Children's Fund expand access through free and reduced-price tickets for productions at the Paramount and Copley Theatre stages. In 2025, Paramount distributed more than 2,000 Pay What You Can tickets, with guests contributing an average of \$8.50 per ticket. Donor support makes the two preview-week Pay What You Can performances possible, broadening access for families across the region. Paramount's annual free

student matinee welcomed 15 schools and more than 1,300 students and chaperones, reinforcing the belief that a lifelong love of theatre often begins with a school field trip. During the run of *White Christmas*, more than 800 tickets were donated to veterans.

2,009

Pay what you can tickets sold

2,500

Participants at community engagement events

37%

Increase in attendance to \$1 Classic Movie Mondays

1,363

Broadway and Beyond Children's Funded Free tickets



Talkback with artists behind work-in-progress musical *Mija*

# PARAMOUNT SCHOOL OF THE ARTS



123

Scholarships Awarded

30%

Increase in Student Enrollment

1,657

Unique Enrollments

## Paramount School of the Arts (PSA)

continues its upward momentum, marking another year of remarkable growth with a 30% increase in enrollment and more than 1,600 students served across 100+ classes and camps.

Access is vital to that growth. PSA awarded more than 120 scholarships to students seeking financial assistance, supported by over \$116,000 in total donor investment in the school, including \$54,000 raised on Giving Tuesday for scholarships and the general fund.

Beyond the classroom, PSA expanded performance opportunities on Paramount's historic stage, producing five student showcases throughout the year. These included the fourth annual Spring Showcase, *Theatre Kids!*, the original holiday production *Winterwoven*, and three dynamic summer camp productions. More than 600 students participated in summer programming alone, including Dare to Dream, Paramount Experience Camp, and the third annual Paramount Performance Camp, which culminated in a production of *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR





Winterwoven performance



Work-in-Progress reading of *The King's Wife*



Work-in-Progress reading of *Mija*

# PARAMOUNT'S COMMITMENT TO NEW WORKS

## THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES: WINTERWOVEN

Paramount School of the Arts partnered with Paramount's New Works department to develop and produce an original, all-ages holiday production for Paramount Theatre's stage to be performed each December. Five student collaborators were selected to join the Director of New Works as part of a devising team, contributing to the creation of the original script. Summer workshops provided a free opportunity for students to learn about playwriting and the new works development process, culminating in a public reading of the first draft on August 12.

Winterwoven is a story about finding joy through pain, connection through solitude, and the invisible threads binding us to loved ones through it all. After months of rehearsal, Paramount premiered its inaugural holiday production, *Winterwoven*, on December 2, 2025. Nearly 900 family members, friends, and community members attended the free performance, which introduced audiences to both PSA and the new works process. Supported by PSA's professional theatre team, a

21-student cast brought the production to life through dance and song, performing a mix of holiday favorites and contemporary selections.

This play with music was created to establish a new holiday tradition while expanding mainstage performance opportunities for students each semester. Designed as an inclusive, intergenerational project, the production fosters meaningful relationships among students at different life stages. By building a tradition that will grow year after year, PSA is cultivating a thoughtful pipeline of developing actors, singers, and dancers who can envision their artistic future unfolding on the Paramount stage and beyond.

“It has been so fun and exciting to get involved at the Paramount School of Arts. I'm really excited as we shape the future of this show!”

– Elijah, new PSA student and playwriting collaborator for *Winterwoven*

## THE SPARK LAB SERIES

In February 2025, we launched Spark Lab, an incubation initiative advancing bold, original theatrical works. Serving as a creative engine for the future of theatre, Spark Lab provided week-long developmental residencies for emerging and established artists, culminating in public showcases of works-in-progress.

This year, Paramount hosted four Spark Lab workshops and public readings. The series began on February 8 at the Copley Theatre with Chicago playwright Karissa Murrell Myers' *Blood of My Mother's*, followed by a reception and talkback with the playwright and actors. In March, *The King's Wife*—written by Mēlisa Annis with music and lyrics by Grammy-nominated composer Jamie Floyd—was developed in partnership with its New York-based creative team, culminating in a concert and book reading at Society 57.

In May, Spark Lab welcomed the team behind *Mija*, a bilingual musical by west-coast creative team Eynne Hollens and Rebecca Touriño Collinworth with music by

Anna Gilbert and Gaby Moreno. Presented at the Copley Theatre, the project was supported in part by Healing Illinois and reflected Aurora's vibrant Latino community, engaging both Spanish- and English-speaking artists and audiences.

The series concluded in September with *The Block*, a genre-defying work developed by New York-based company, Wolf 359. Presented in the Marquee Room to create a flexible, community-centered experience, the project featured two public readings, with audiences immersed in the story through pre-event email threads. The production fostered meaningful connection, with attendees lingering in conversation long after the performance concluded.

In total, more than 400 community members attended these free public readings, and approximately 90 artists were supported through the generosity of donors and funders. Together, these works amplified diverse voices, explored cultural identity and women's histories, and strengthened connections across our community.

90

Artists Supported

436

Community Member Attendance

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



# YOUR PHILANTHROPY

**5,327**  
Donor Households

Your partnership through philanthropy, your presence in the theatre, and your goodwill throughout the community are deeply valued. Your commitment to seeing Aurora's crown jewel shine catalyzes our growth and strengthens the foundation on which we stand.

In 2025, more than 5,300 donors joined us in advancing our mission, contributing 7,170 gifts totaling over \$3.7 million.

**1,741**  
First-time donors

We are grateful for our 74 dedicated spotlight monthly giving donors who ensure that Paramount has sustained income throughout the year. Like our loyal subscriber base, monthly giving helps Paramount anticipate income and plan accordingly. In addition, our corporate philanthropy included 29 business partners who give to the theatre in support of our economic impact on local business, benefitting from brand recognition and hospitality experiences.

**7,170**  
Unique Gifts

Paramount celebrated the end of the year with our third annual gala in January, hosting the sold-out show, A Benefit Performance with Jerry Seinfeld. With show tickets, sponsorships, and paddle raise gifts, Paramount generated gross revenue of more than \$820,000 during this annual event.

**20%**  
Increase in Giving

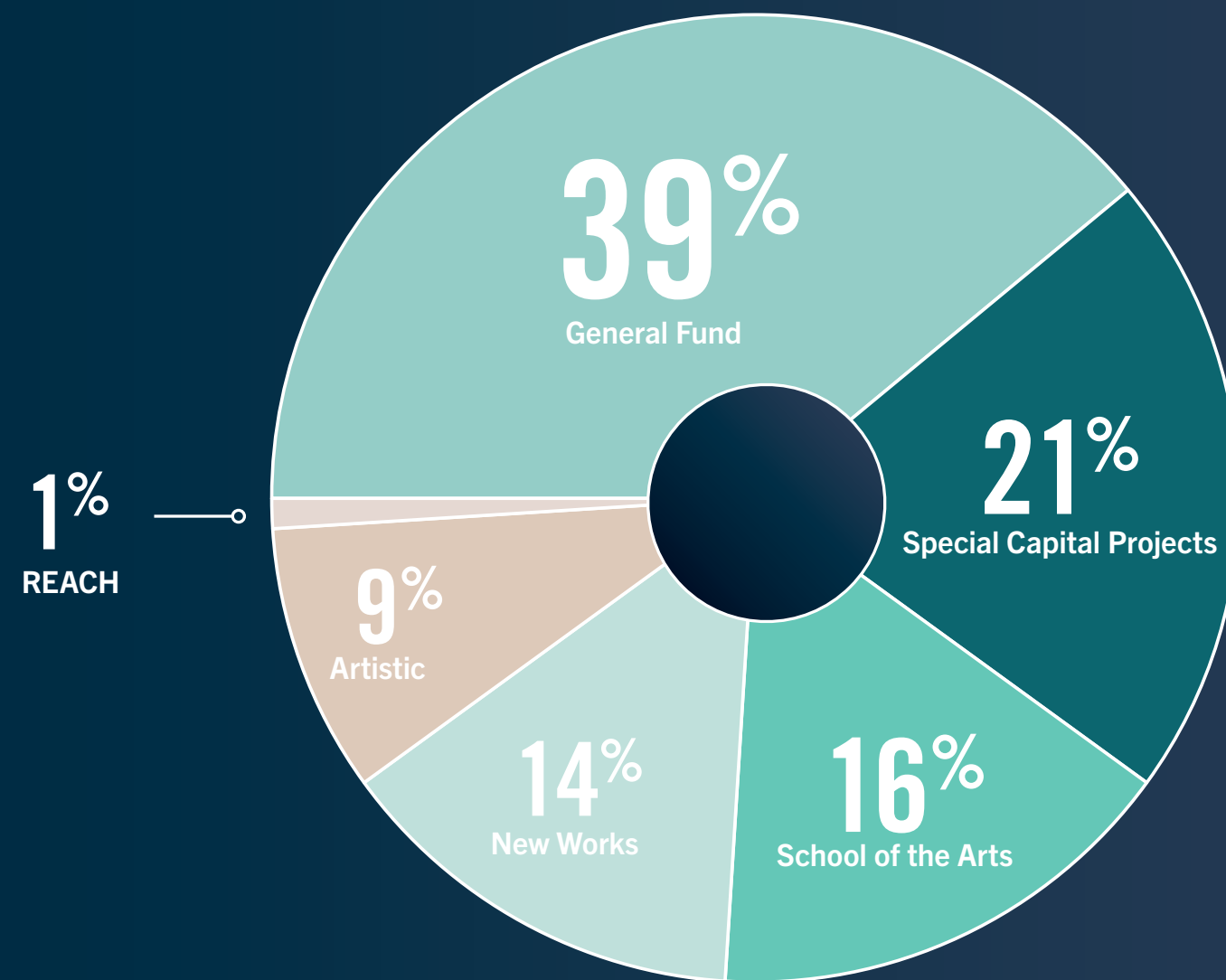
This support fuels artistic programming and our general fund. We are incredibly grateful for the donors and supporters who helped make this night such a success!

Through invitations to opening night receptions, special donor events, student performances at PSA, and our six Paramount on Tour trips, the Development team at Paramount ensures your experience partnering in our mission is both personal and powerful. Our goal is to sustain and strengthen the future of the performing arts in Aurora while providing clear transparency into the impact of your investment. Through intentional communication, we share the stories of those directly touched by your generosity—illustrating why your support is both essential and transformative.

Thank you to all our generous supporters for their gifts last year. Together, we will make 2026 another year of success.

For a full donor listing, please visit:  
[www.paramountaurora.com/support](http://www.paramountaurora.com/support)

## AREAS OF SUPPORT



**=\$3.7M**

# ORGANIZATIONAL FINANCIAL IMPACT

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

Through productions and presented performances, arts education programs, community engagement initiatives, and its role as a driver of job creation in and around the theatre, Paramount attracts visitors and residents alike to downtown Aurora. This impact is measured through patron visits, organizational expenses, and related economic indicators that demonstrate our contribution to the local economy.

In 2025, Paramount's programming generated

# \$49,000,000+

## IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Source: Arts & Economic Prosperity 6.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Paramount Theatre is committed to being a defining catalyst for personal and community transformation by making the performing arts accessible for every age and socio-economic background, introducing the magic of live theatre across generations to encourage expansive imaginations and broad views of people and the world, and contributing to the future stability and growth of Aurora's downtown.

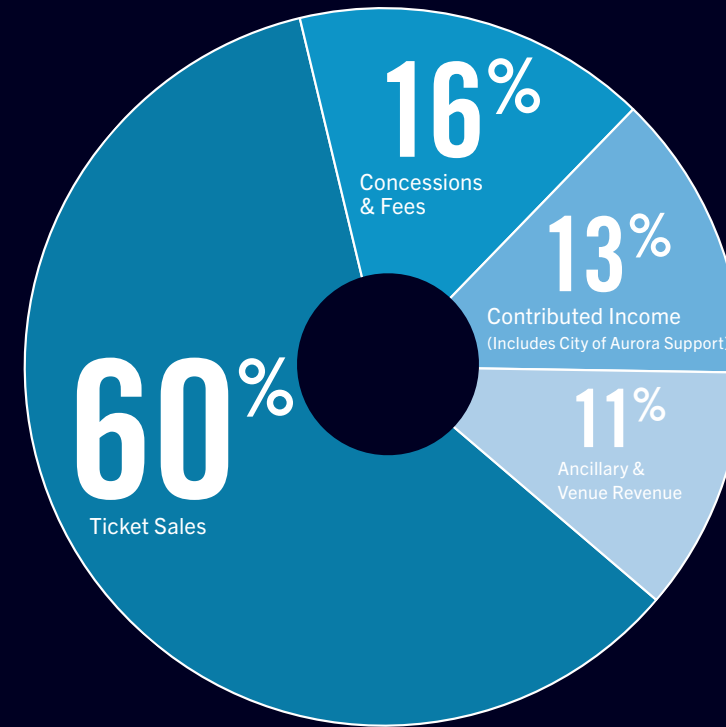
**70%** of every donor dollar is reinvested directly into Paramount's artistic programming, theatre operations, and educational outreach.

## THANK YOU

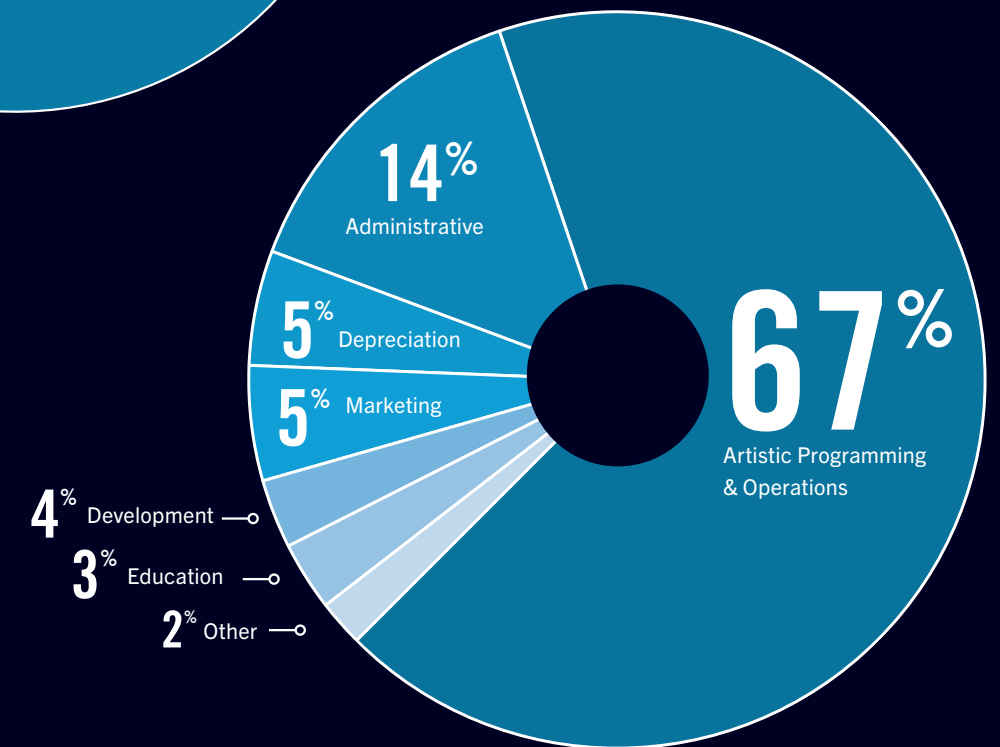
Your investment in our mission is the reason Paramount's accomplishments have been achieved. Thank you for trusting us with your gifts, for your commitment to Paramount Theatre, and for believing with us that the shared humanity through live storytelling changes lives.

**We could not do this work without you.**

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES

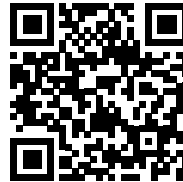




# YOUR PASSION. OUR MISSION.

## GIVE TODAY:

ParamountAurora.com/Support  
Development Team (630) 723-2479



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>Chairman</b> Jonathan Hylton	<b>Vice Chairman</b> Gina Moga	<b>Treasurer</b> John Savage	<b>Secretary</b> Mike Baum
------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------------

## Members

Brian Caputo • Tim Hoppa • Cynthia Latimer  
Phillip Van Lear • Christine Goerlich Weber

8 East Galena Boulevard Suite 230 Aurora, Illinois 60506

box office 630.896.6666 website ParamountAurora.com

PARAMOUNT ARTS CENTRE, INC.