



SEASON 8 ANNUAL REPORT





Friends, Comrades, Collaborators,

On a daily basis my four-year old Margot asks me, "Tell me a story from your imagination!" As she wiggles and pleads, I often find myself wondering where to begin. What worlds do I want to introduce to her? What points of view? What kinds of people?

She pushes me to imagine other perspectives and to find ways to speak to them. As I reflect on the beginnings of this sacred space – the Playhouse, or as a dear friend of mine calls it, "House of Play" – I am reminded of why it all started. The Playhouse was born out of a desire to awaken hearts, inspire connection, and ignite voices. When I'm lucky, I get to experience all of these things in my workday. The how comes from people like you who ask questions and are curious to understand another person's journey.

You teach me to imagine more, to believe more. Your directness informs my work.

When I'm smart enough to pause, I realize that the Playhouse is fueled by a large extended family in ways I'm still learning to appreciate. For example, Atticus Salmon started acting in the Fall Festival of Shakespeare in the third grade and has played many of Shakespeare's greats at such a young age. Atticus has also been in *A Christmas Carol* going on four years in a row. Through our relationship with Atticus as a young actor, we are now teaching Shakespeare at a high school where his mother works. Atticus and his family are an extension of what it means to bring stories to life.

When I open my eyes, I see more than 45 former Apprentices that now live and work in Portland and internationally. Some have gone on to graduate school. Some have carried on the work of their solo shows. Some live together here in town, and some have built wonderful careers with local theatres. I was lucky enough to officiate the wedding for one of our past apprentices, Josh Weinstein, two summers ago in North Carolina. My little girls – Margot and her younger sister, Ellie – were the flower girls.

I'm blessed to be a part of an ever-extending network of artists that push each other to discover new ways of seeing the world.



I believe our work should come from a sense of play. When we play, we are open to discovery. And when we discover, our hearts soften and we listen deeper. At a time when our world is in deep crisis, I hope that you will find ways to seek wonder, to understand love, and to look for joy in everyday moments. Our lives can be filled with great challenges, great loves, and great risk.

If you are brave enough, like Margot, you will allow yourself to be seen for all your strengths and flaws as we seek connection through our shared stories.

Thank you for being a part of our story,

Nikki M. Weaver

Nikki Weaver, Founder/Education Director

OUR STORY

Portland Playhouse is a nonprofit that produces culturally-diverse, socially-relevant productions intended to engage the local community both on stage and through school classrooms. It was born in 2008 when a group of artists found a historic repurposed church in which to realize their dream of creating topical, relevant theatre in an intimate, community setting.

Since then, Portland Playhouse has evolved into a lively community arts center in the King neighborhood. In response, the neighborhood has embraced us and our efforts to present important works from well-known, culturally diverse playwrights like August Wilson and Tony Kushner to emerging voices such as Idris Goodwin, Mia Chung, and Tarell Alvin McCraney. Willamette Week named our production of Wilson's *The Piano Lesson* as the "Best of the Stage" in 2014. And Portland Monthly named the Playhouse "City's Best Theatre."

The Playhouse has garnered national acclaim as well. As a 2015 AND 2016 American Theatre Wing "National Theatre Company Award" recipient – we've been recognized as "integral to the fabric of the community and furthering the national cultural conversation in exciting ways." In addition, we're partnering with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to engage diverse audiences and have received funding from the National Endowment of the Arts for several projects.

In our fourth season, when the Bureau of Land Development asked us to vacate the church because of a zoning issue, the community rallied. Hundreds of neighborhood residents wrote letters of support and showed their commitment to the Playhouse by filling City Council chambers on the day of the hearing.

So far, so good, right? But we're not done. Not even close.

Our historic repurposed church is undergoing a major renovation thanks to Alex Colas, whose family's construction company is playing a pivotal role (more on that later).

In winter 2018, thanks to a Creative Heights Grant from the Oregon Community Foundation, we'll premiere *Scarlet*, a musical by Portland composer and lyricist Michelle Horgen based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel "The Scarlet Letter." We're excited to be working on this project with PHAME, a Portland-based nonprofit that inspires individuals with developmental disabilities to lead full, creative lives through arts education and performance. With support from PHAME, the Playhouse will integrate 1-2 artists with developmental or intellectual disabilities as part of the professional cast.

Until then, we'll keep challenging conventions and pushing boundaries while producing compelling content and entertainment. We'll remain committed to equity and inclusion, our core tenets.

We'll continue being vital.



"I love the plays that transport me to a place I've only heard of... everything about this production opened my eyes and touched my heart." - Audience member, *You For Me For You*

Susan Hyon and Khan Doan in *You For Me For You* | photo by Brud Giles

STAFF

Brian Weaver
Co-founder/Artistic Director

Michael Weaver
Co-founder/Managing Director

Jeffrey Martin
Communications & Marketing
Director

Katie Frederick
Development Associate

Anna Marie Brown
Front of House Manager

Alix Kolar
Bookkeeper

Nikki Weaver
Co-founder/Education Director

Elena Hein
Development Director

Thyra Hartshorn
Production Manager

Quinn Fitzgerald
Box Office Manager

La'Tevin Ellis
Front of House Manager

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Bing Sheldon

APPRENTICE COMPANY

Robert Durante

Charles Grant

Lauren Gruenberg

McKinley Hughes

Rachel Lewis

Tonea Lolin

Tamera Lynn

IN APPRECIATION: GEORGE 'BING' SHELDON

Bing, a titan in the Portland architecture and urban planning world, served on the Playhouse Board from 2013-2016. His vision, advocacy, and heart helped steer the Playhouse from a small arts start-up to an embedded community asset with deep roots and resilience.

HAROLD GOLDSTEIN, *Portland Playhouse Board Chair and close friend*

During the time the City was working to shut down the Playhouse from performing at the Church, Brian and I met with Bing to get his advice. He asked us to read our Mission statement and then told us to be true to our Mission and, as we are dedicated to our community, ask local leaders if they would support our ability to stay in the church. The King Neighborhood Association rose to the challenge and led the appeal to City council on our behalf. We will be forever grateful to Bing for his leadership and support.

BRIAN WEAVER, *Portland Playhouse Co-Founder/Artistic Director*

I have incredible respect for the work Bing accomplished in his life: building a world-class firm, helping start Central City Concern, the Portland Plan.... However, my experience of Bing was not his impact on buildings, but on people. He told me to believe in myself, and asked me to never stop pursuing my vision as an artist. He embarrassed me in meetings, saying things like, "I'm here because of this man." As someone who is uncomfortable with praise, it was hard for me to hear. But

I saw Bing do it to others, and I saw them rise to the occasion. He inspired me. Through his faith in me, I feel empowered to dream big, take risks, and most importantly to pass this encouragement on to others. I know that it is not ultimately about 'me.' I learned this from Bing. It's about the team. It's about working together, and building something bigger than myself. I'm honored to be part of this community that Bing helped build, and I hope we can follow in his footsteps.



CHARLES MCGEE, *Black Parent Initiative President/CEO*

Every great city needs a Bing Sheldon. He was great at so many things, but in particular – people power, recognizing that we're better together than apart. Next was his vision – he dwelled on not what's here now, but focused on what's to come. And then it was how we're leveraging and corralling our better selves, seeing the invisible. I don't think you can talk about a great city and not talk about its arts. It bridges, it transcends. Part of his genius was also looking at how we influence the things around us and the places we interact with.

Bing was committed to the betterment of the world. Weeks before he passed, he was going to meetings focused on what the next generation of Portland would look like. Most people would have probably been considering when they were going to play golf or something else in that moment. But three weeks before his passing, he was thinking about how to make the community better.

Three words to describe him? Generous. Creative. Questioning.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is grounded in the belief that theatre is a space where ALL people can come together to celebrate the complexity of our shared human experience.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a world awakened by the wonder of theatre.



OUR VALUES

BELONGING

Portland Playhouse is a space where everyone is welcome. We foster a feeling of belonging for artists, students, and audiences. It's a place to connect with friends, family, and neighbors, and to meet new and different people.

GRATITUDE

We are here by the grace and generosity of our community. We are grateful for the goodwill and support of the many people who make our work possible. Thank you.

GRIT

We do what we need to do to create great work. We operate as a team; no one is above rolling up their sleeves and working hard.

AMBITION

We tackle large, complex plays and education programs with a refreshing ignorance to all reasons why we should fail.

Our education programs further our mission. We encourage students of all ages to explore human behavior in a safe and nurturing environment. We commit ourselves to strengthening the voices of tomorrow through the immersion in dramatic arts, a visceral learning experience. Our programs build confidence, challenge perspectives, and foster empathy through storytelling.

FALL FESTIVAL OF SHAKESPEARE

We began introducing young people to the joys of theatrical performance when we launched our Fall Festival of Shakespeare in 2009. This 10-week after-school program links students' first encounter with Shakespeare's prose to the thrill of participating in live performance. The program stresses three ideals: a spirit of collaboration (not competition); audience engagement; and an aural method to learn texts. We use a traditional Elizabethan-style approach, removing the language barrier reading Shakespeare often creates. This aural way of learning (hearing and repeating) levels the playing field for students with varying abilities. Specific reading level is not a prerequisite for participation. When young people experience Shakespeare as actors, what once seemed daunting and arcane comes alive. Our program is modeled after the highly successful Shakespeare & Company method in Lenox, MA.



2016 Fall Festival of Shakespeare

"The combination of respect, push, inquiry, challenge, and passion that Nikki [Co-founder/Education Director] brought forward and demanded of all participants is an exemplar of effective arts education ... I congratulate Portland Playhouse on creating a powerful education program that advances mission and inspires the next generation of artists."

– Eric Friedenwald-Fishman, Fall Festival Parent, Metropolitan Group Creative Director/Co-founder

GET YOUR SCHOOL INVOLVED!

Email nikki@portlandplayhouse.org or call (503) 488-5822 to learn more about bringing our Fall Festival of Shakespeare or a customized residency to your school.

FALL FESTIVAL OF SHAKESPEARE SEASON 8 BY THE NUMBERS

306
STUDENT
PARTICIPANTS

2500+
ESTIMATED
AUDIENCE MEMBERS

6 

SCHOOLS

13 

EDUCATORS

10 

WEEKS

OF OUR 2015 FALL FESTIVAL OF SHAKESPEARE PARTICIPANTS...

96%

Are comfortable speaking in public.

99%

Are comfortable trying new things.

92%

Are successfully able to manage stressful situations

82%

Are comfortable sharing their feelings with others.

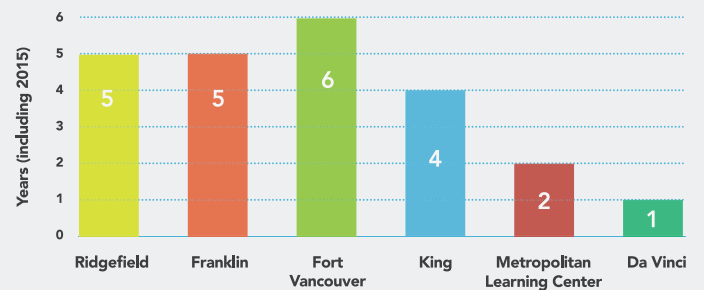
88%

Are comfortable expressing criticism for other's work.

96%

Are comfortable receiving criticism for their own work.

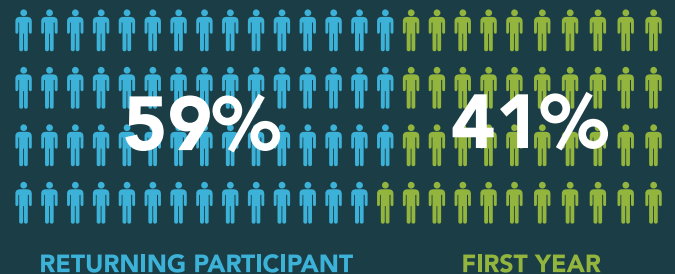
HOW MANY YEARS HAS EACH SCHOOL BEEN INVOLVED IN THE FALL FESTIVAL OF SHAKESPEARE?



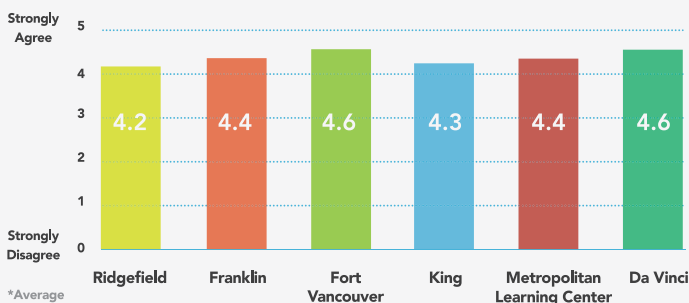
WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE FALL FESTIVAL OF SHAKESPEARE AGAIN?



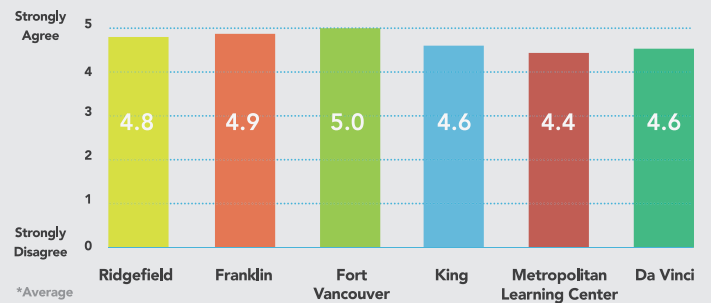
THIS IS MY FIRST YEAR PARTICIPATING IN THE FALL FESTIVAL



I AM COMFORTABLE UNDERSTANDING SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS



I BELIEVE THIS PROGRAM WAS A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE



APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Each year, Portland Playhouse welcomes a small group of pre-professionals for a year of training. Since 2010, we have served as a bridge between the university and the profession, developing each individual's skills by working alongside professional artists. We serve 5-10 young artists every year.

Season 8 represented our 6th year of hosting apprentices for a year of training and they were a strong group of women. These artists not only got the opportunity to work alongside us in the box office, development, marketing, and education programs; but they were also the ensemble in our productions of *A Christmas Carol* and *You For Me For You*. And a couple of them performed in *Peter & The Starcatcher* in the spring. As always, the highlight of the program was their solo shows. We're proud of all their hard work last year. Several of them have continued to work with the Playhouse as actors, educators, and even as our new box office manager!



Becoming an apprentice is a decision that I will never regret and an experience that I am truly grateful for.

– Andrea Whittle, 2015-2016 Apprentice Company Member

**KNOW SOMEONE INTERESTED IN BECOMING
A PORTLAND PLAYHOUSE APPRENTICE?**

Visit portlandplayhouse.org/apprentice-company for more
information or to apply.

BIG PLANS FOR THE FUTURE



The new Portland Playhouse as rendered by SERA Architects

You may have noticed. Our funky 110+ year-old building has had its challenges since the start. Since 2008, we've DIY'd problems using Band-Aid and duct tape solutions. A sewage line needs to be replaced. We have inadequate heating and cooling systems, no insulation, insufficient office space, and makeshift dressing rooms. The building needs siding repair and a new coat of paint. And with only two single stall bathrooms, we know you've noticed our bathroom line!

But we're doing something about all of that. We started last summer with replacing the leaky roof.

Today, we're in the middle of a \$2 million capital campaign to renovate and restore the church. SERA Architects has partnered with us (pro-bono!) to identify our functional needs and growth strategies for the future. The scope of project includes a significant renovation within the existing building, the addition of a 1,465-sf building on site, and providing design intent for the outdoor spaces. The overall goal is to create a "neighborhood gem" that will benefit the King neighborhood and our larger theater community.

In the Playhouse's lower level, we are bringing daylight and openness to the behind-the-curtain spaces, which includes new offices, dressing rooms, a green room, kitchen, and communal area. On the first floor, the public-facing lobby will be refreshed and the bathroom capacity tripled, while remaining gender-neutral. A new, modern outbuilding will complement the historic church, and provide dedicated rehearsal and community space, along with a production shop for set construction.

TIMELINE:

PHASE 1 (Summer 2014 - Fall 2017): planning, fundraising

PHASE 2 (July 2016): new roof installed (COMPLETE)

PHASE 3 (March 2017 - Aug 2017): Construction/Renovation

SPOTLIGHT

ALEX COLAS



Alex Colas,
Colas Construction, Inc.

NOTE: Beginning in March 2017, our historic church, our “house of play” will be converted into a beautiful and functional space for our audience, actors, and neighbors in the King community. Our goal is \$2 million, and at the moment, we’re 73 percent of the way there. Here’s a community partner helping make this possible:

With fondness, Alex Colas remembers the church at the corner of Prescott and 6th serving as scenery in the developing story of his childhood. He grew up near the King neighborhood. While he might not have fully realized it at the time, the surroundings instilled a distinct pride of place, a sense of investment in Colas.

It shaped him.

“I understand this community,” Colas says.

Which is why it’s hardly a surprise that Colas, currently the head of the special projects division at Colas Construction, is now guiding the major renovation of that same church, which, of course, is now home to Portland Playhouse.

The Playhouse mission resonates with Colas because it’s familiar.

“A big part is obviously inclusion, a multitude of different communities and backgrounds,” Colas says. “Being a minority general contractor, one of the only ones in our region, it definitely sounded interesting to find another organization that has similar values and strives to keep different perspectives and levels of inclusion in their program. As a company, that’s pretty much how we operate.”

Whether it’s the rejuvenation of a century-old house of worship or the conversion of abandoned strip clubs into homeless shelters - Colas Construction is in the midst of remodeling its third - the return remains the same. The community ultimately benefits.

“It’s going to be completely transformational,” Colas says. “The space is going to transform that neighborhood, that community and that corner tremendously... And the whole non-profit aspect? I know you allow kids from the community to go to performances, charge less or free and all of those things - that’s who we are and that needs to continue. Arts and music - those are the first things they cut in public schools, you know?”

That local sensibility is what made Colas Construction attractive to the Playhouse, and the roots obviously run deep. In June 1997, Hermann Colas founded the company as West-Trend Construction, which has thrived and grown into its current state with several of his children - including Alex - serving prominent roles.

They’ve never abandoned what they know. “Providing arts and theatre for people in that neighborhood is awesome,” Colas says.

FINANCIALS FOR THE YEAR ENDING JULY 31, 2016

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

SUPPORT	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Corporations	\$2,943	-	\$2,943
Foundations	\$238,500	-	\$238,500
Government grants	\$59,784	-	\$59,784
Individuals	\$290,313	\$40,750	\$331,063
In-kind support	\$81,197	-	\$81,197
Special projects	\$30,090	-	\$30,090
Total support	\$702,827	\$40,750	\$743,577
REVENUE			
Educational services	\$33,259	-	\$33,259
Season subscriptions	\$58,129	-	\$58,129
Single tickets	\$184,710	-	\$184,710
Other income	\$30,836	-	\$30,836
Total revenues	\$306,934	-	\$306,934
Net assets released from restrictions	\$90,922	(\$90,922)	-
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUES	\$1,100,683	(\$50,172)	\$1,050,511

EXPENSES

OPERATING EXPENSES			
Artistic expenses	\$550,956	-	\$550,956
Education expenses	\$114,564	-	\$114,564
Management and general expenses	\$131,626	-	\$131,626
Fundraising expenses	\$162,658	-	\$162,658
Total operating expenses	\$959,804	-	\$959,804
NON-OPERATING INCOME & (EXPENSES)			
Unrealized loss on investments	(\$10,425)	-	(\$10,425)
Non-operating expenses	(\$24,299)	-	(\$24,299)
Capital campaign contributions	-	\$867,313	\$867,313
Capital campaign funds released from restrictions	\$46,444	(\$46,444)	-
Total non-operating income & expenses	\$11,720	\$820,869	\$832,589
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$152,599	\$770,697	\$923,296
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$26,436	\$110,922	\$137,358
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$179,035	\$881,619	\$1,060,654

THANK YOU.

Portland Playhouse gratefully acknowledges our supporters. YOUR generosity allows us to activate, surprise, delight, and challenge in our lives. We envision a world awakened by the wonder of theatre.

CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, & GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

BELL TOWER \$25,000+

The Collins Foundation
Meyer Memorial Trust
James F. And Marion L. Miller Foundation
Raymond Family Foundation
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Willamette Week Give Guide

Wrather Family Foundation

SUPPORTING BEAM \$2,500-\$4,999

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BELL TOWER \$10,000 - \$24,999

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Oregon Arts Commission
Oregon Cultural Trust
PGE Foundation

ROOF RAISER \$7,500-\$9,999

Herbert A. Templeton Foundation
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SEAT RISER \$5,000-\$7,499

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The Boeing Company
BP Lester & Regina John Foundation
The Kinsman Foundation
Newman's Own Foundation
Oregon Community Foundation
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Regional Arts & Culture Council

STEPPING STONE \$1,000-\$2,499

The Looker Foundation
¿Por Qué No?
Urban Pacific Real Estate LLC
Volunteers of America

UNDER \$1,000

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PRODUCER \$25,000+

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Ronni Lacroute
Judy Shih & Joel Axelrod
Phillip Terranova
In Memory of Phyllis Weaver

PLAYWRIGHT \$10,000-\$24,999

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Jeff & Esther Clark
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Marge & Stephen Kafoury
Katherine Immerman & Anthony Melaragno
Steve & Elsie Weaver
Linda Wrather & Anthony Finnocchiaro

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\$5,000-\$9,999

Michael Cowan in memory of
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Jess Dishman
Walter Jaffe & Paul King
Isabel Sheridan

DESIGNER \$2,500-\$4,999

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Brooks & Dorothy Cofield
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Karen & Dave Johnson
Bing & Carolyn Sheldon
Brian & Nikki Weaver
Michael Weaver & Suzi Carter

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McGranahan

A Hunter Sunrise

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Angela Hult
Declan Glover
Matt Jones & Kristin Mihalko
Jeff & Carol Kilmer
Ted Lamb & Pamela Anne Fairchild
Robert May
Whitney Morehouse
Carole Morse

This list represents contributions and pledges received from August 1, 2015 – July 31, 2016 and include gifts to the capital campaign to restore our building. We make every attempt to acknowledge your name accurately. If you find a mistake, please don't hesitate to call us at 971-533-8743. We want to hear from you!

Brennan Obrien & Megan
Veihmann
Michael Ossar & Gretchen Holden
Patricia M. Perkins
Scott Pratt & TJ Browning
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Stephen & Kate Robinson
Rich & Joan Rubin
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Lillian Shirley
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FRIEND \$100-\$249

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Dick & Renee Binns
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Dashiell Van Meter Rucka
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Lynn Youngbar
Merrie & Jonathan Ziady

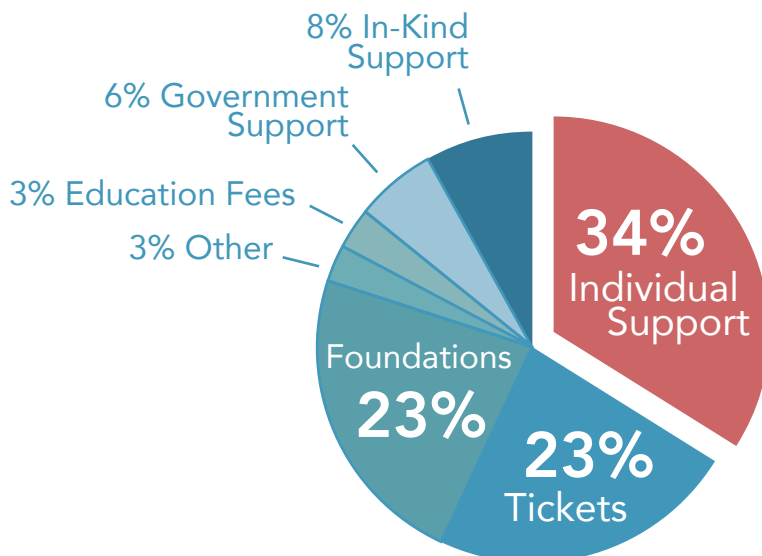


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