



2018 ANNUAL REPORT  
REPORTING IN FISCAL YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2018



# CONNECTION

## MISSION

The Playhouse Mission is to engage, educate, and entertain patrons and volunteers with theatrical productions ranging from classical to contemporary; train the next generation of artists and advocates; provide meaningful educational programs that serve the entire community, regardless of background or socio-economic status; and celebrate the power of the performing arts to impact personal and community growth.



ERIE PLAYHOUSE • 13 WEST 10TH STREET • ERIE, PA 16501 • 814.454.2852 • [WWW.ERIEPLAYHOUSE.ORG](http://WWW.ERIEPLAYHOUSE.ORG)

Front cover: *Hunchback of Notre Dame*



## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### ART FOR ALL

With a year under my belt, I am still thrilled and grateful to be able to lead your Erie Playhouse in its second century alongside a dedicated staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers. With their incredible work and support, we are able to present a diverse palette of entertaining and thought-provoking theatre on our stage, while spreading the transformative power of the performing arts throughout the community with our outreach efforts. None of this, of course, would be possible without the contributions of every season ticket member, single ticket buyer, and our strong network of donors, grantors, foundations, business partners, and sponsors.

Established in 1916 as the *People's Theatre*, we have stayed true to the vision of our founder to build the most engaging of community assets. Our beautifully renovated space on West 10th Street provides a venue for the community to come to be transported for a few hours to a different time, place, space and gives them time to laugh, cry, smile, think, and contemplate different viewpoints during shows performed by their fellow community members and neighbors. Our volunteers come from people with different jobs, different degrees, and different experiences. My favorite thing to watch is the friendships and connections that develop during the rehearsal period and backstage between people who may have never crossed paths were they not to share the experience of creating art on our stage. We are always hoping to see new faces so that our stage can continue to reflect the rich diversity of the Erie Region. So, if you have any interest in volunteering onstage or backstage, in the pit, or at the scenic and costume shop, please give us a call...no prior experience is required!

As you read Connection 2018, I invite you to revisit your favorite moments of the past season. Looking forward, we promise to deliver outstanding theatrical experiences and transformational outreach for years to come.

**Kate Neubert-Lechner**  
*Executive Director*



## ANNUAL FUND

### YOUR GIFT MAKES COMMUNITY THEATRE POSSIBLE

Six hundred and seven donors contributed to the annual fund campaign, which raised \$181,269, 94% of the \$192,200 goal. Annual gifts, which are received and spent in the same year, go to work immediately to support productions and day-to-day operations. They provide a vital source of revenue needed to meet our mission, maintain steady growth, and balance the budget. Thank you.

**Our sincerest gratitude goes to Alan and Suzanne Natalie for their leadership in this campaign.**



*Zayna Darres as Annie with her friend from the Humane Society.*

## MEET THE BAHMS

### 2018-2019 ANNUAL FUND CHAIRS

Our family is honored to have been asked to be the Erie Playhouse Annual Fund Chair for the 2018-2019 season! Jim and I started our marriage attending Erie Playhouse shows in the 90's as a fun, affordable date night. With the arrival of our girls and the launch of our business, Networking Technologies, our life was overtaken with obligations and sadly we attended far fewer shows. Then it happened: our youngest Emily decided to take her dramatics to the Erie Playhouse stage. We have participated in all the fun parent activities in the Erie Playhouse Youtheatre, like making broccoli out of Paper Mache. Emily loves the stage and enjoyed growing up with her Erie Playhouse family. In fact, both our daughters have a true love for theater that is contagious. Our nest is now empty and date nights at the Erie Playhouse have returned. We marvel at the ambitious productions the Erie Playhouse always brings to their theater. We are entertained and enchanted by the talent on and off stage. But what our family most appreciates about the Erie Playhouse is that it is a community theater, a community that reaches out beyond its doors. The Erie Playhouse is more than just entertainment for a couple of hours; it's part of the heart of our Erie Arts Community.

Join us in celebrating another fantastic season at the Erie Playhouse, but this year take the time to look around and see how the Erie Playhouse is making a difference in your community.

Sincerely,  
The Bahm Family

**Jim, Maggie, Emily, and Wendy Bahm**



# 2017-2018 SPONSORS

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**FAMILY SEASON SPONSOR**  
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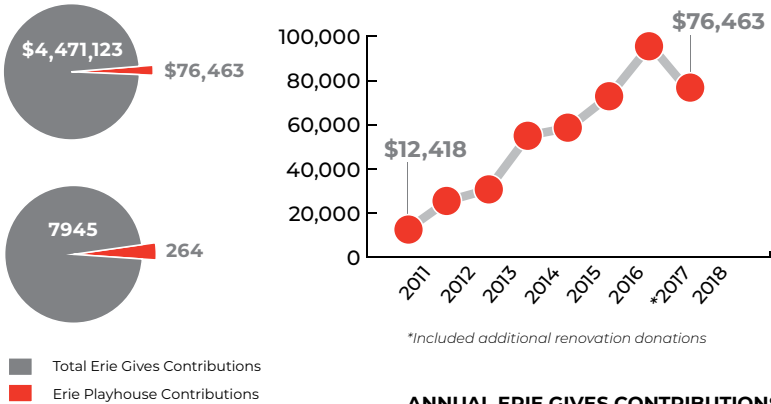
# GRANTS RECEIVED FISCAL YEAR 2018

American Tinning and Galvanizing Company –  
Neighborhood Assistance Program for PLAYtime  
Erie Arts and Culture – Programming and Operations  
Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority – Lead Asset Sustainability and Programming  
Erie Insurance – Neighborhood Assistance Program for PLAYtime  
PA Council of the Arts – Programming  
Schuster Re-Grant Initiative – Arts Accessibility  
United Way of Erie County – PLAYtime  
UPMC Health Plan – Neighborhood Assistance Program for PLAYtime

# ERIE GIVES RAISES \$4,471,123 THE COLLECTIVE POWER OF MANY PEOPLE

On Aug. 14, 2018, The Erie Community Foundation hosted the 8th Annual Erie Gives. Two hundred sixty-four generous donors helped The Playhouse raise \$76,463.47. Wow!

A special thank you to The Erie Community Foundation for sponsoring this event, and to The Erie Community Foundation, GE Transportation, Erie Insurance, Presque Isle Downs & Casino, Northwest Savings Bank, McInnes Rolled Rings, E. E. Austin & Son, ERIEBANK, Knox Law, Erie Times-News and Little Caesars/Dickey's BBQ, for providing the pro-rated matching funds of \$300,000. The prorated match amount was 7.02%; credit card fees were 3.0%, providing a net match of 4.02%.



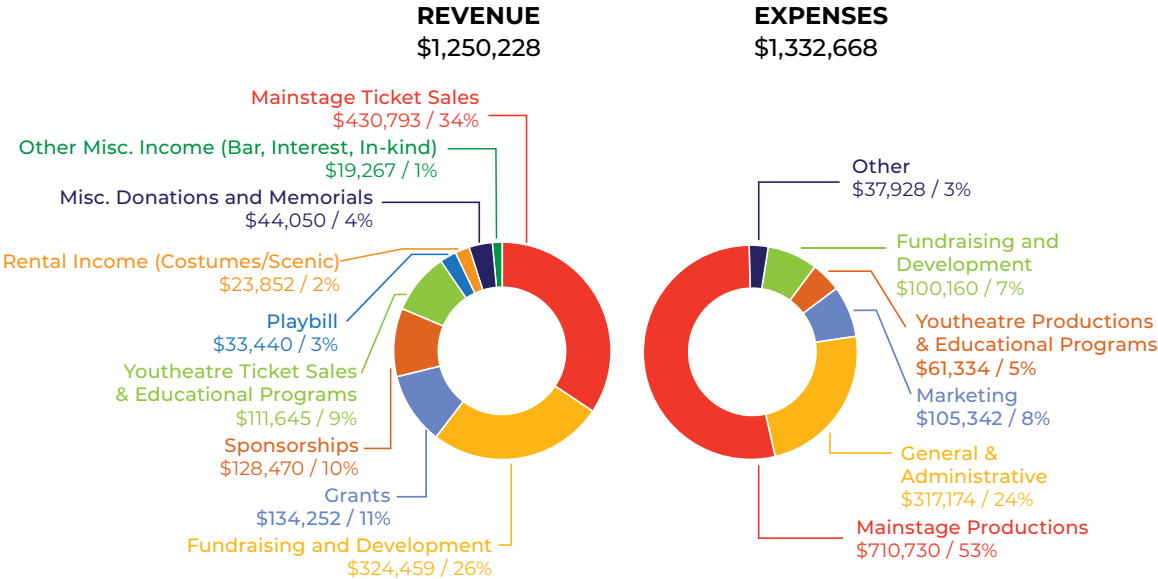
## ANNUAL ERIE GIVES CONTRIBUTIONS

For every \$25 donation on Erie Gives, patrons were entered into a drawing for a LES MISERABLES package to Cleveland's Playhouse Square. Congratulations to winner Ken Dias. A special thank you LECOM Health for the tickets!

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

## REVENUE FALLS SHORT OF GOALS

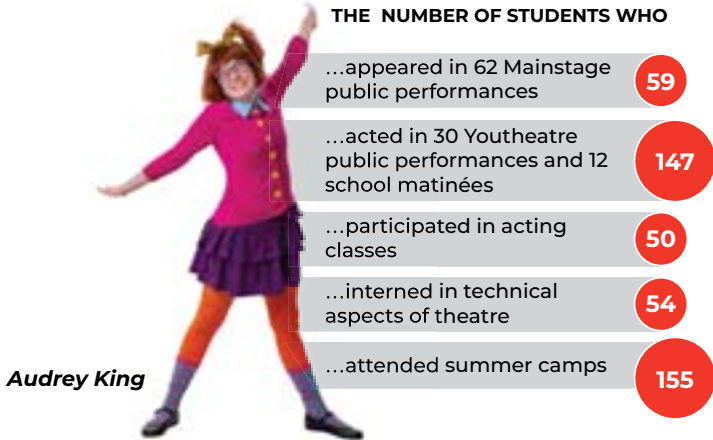
Financially, the year presented some unexpected challenges. Some revenue goals were not met (annual fund drive, CANDIDE collaboration with the Erie Philharmonic, staging JACK AND THE BEANSTALK offsite) and we incurred unexpected renovation costs. Even though production expenses were managed in a way that minimized the effects to the bottom line, we still ended the year with an \$82,440 deficit. However, we are poised for future success.



*\*Salaries and benefits included in relevant categories (marketing, production, etc.)  
Our audited 990s are available on our website at [erieplayhouse.org](http://erieplayhouse.org)*

# EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT

## IMPACTING CHILDREN'S LIVES



For more information on the application process and how your business can support the Erie Playhouse through EITC, please contact Teri Marshall at 814.454.2852, ext. 4.

- The Erie Playhouse would like to thank the following for supporting our innovative Educational Improvement Tax Credit programs in fiscal year 2018.**
- Erie Insurance
  - Knox McLaughlin Cornall & Sennett
  - MacDonald Illig
  - Marquette Savings Bank
  - Scott Enterprises
  - UPMC Diversified Services

# 2017-2018 FUND DRIVE PATRONS

## YOU MAKE THE MISSION HAPPEN!

Donating to the Playhouse annual fund is not about giving, it is about making a difference. YOU are part of the larger story – a tradition of philanthropy that has impact on all facets of our community.

### Producer Circle

(\$2,500+)

#### **Estate of Jacqueline Baker**

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Dwyer Family Fund of the Erie  
Community Foundation

#### **Mo & Bob Dwyer**

Erie Community Foundation  
*Erie Insurance Matching Gifts  
Program*

*GE Matching Grant Foundation  
Anonymous*

#### **Hunchback of Notre Dame**

##### **Patrons**

#### **Launch Party Raffle**

#### **Alan & Suzanne Natalie & Family**

Vorsheck Family Foundation

#### **Jack & Jean Young**

### Director Circle

(\$1,000–\$2,499)

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#### **Jim & Mary Ann Baldauf+**

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Carla W. Clark

#### **Emy & Gary Dougan+**

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#### **Connecting Hands**

### Benefactor Circle

(\$600–\$999)

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(\$300–\$599)

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Marion Gallivan+

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Gerry & Peggy Trichel+

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(\$125–\$299)

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**Jack Yakish**

Devon Yates

Trisha Yates

**Allison Young**

Patricia Young

**Peter Zurn**

+ indicates increased giving

**bold** indicates new donors

*Italics* indicates matching gift

\*Donors as of 9/13/18



## MAINSTAGE and YOUTHEATRE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY THEATRE

This season included shows that truly reflect the Playhouse mission to engage, educate, and entertain patrons and volunteers. Due to the renovation, we opened the season with JACK AND THE BEANSTALK on the Strong Vincent Middle School stage and delayed the opening of the smash hit MAMMA MIA! for several weeks. We thank you for your patience.

Here is the season by the numbers.



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$124,621  
Production Expenses: \$39,899  
Performances: 17  
Attendance: 6,780  
Percent Capacity: 97%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$28,321  
Production Expenses: \$13,706  
Performances: 12  
Attendance: 2,538  
Percent Capacity: 51%







Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$83,498  
 Production Expenses: \$34,915  
 Performances: 13  
 Attendance: 4,569  
 Percent Capacity: 85%

Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$26,668  
 Production Expenses: \$16,261  
 Performances: 12  
 Attendance: 2,465  
 Percent Capacity: 50%

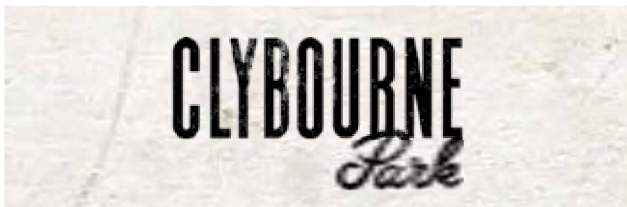
Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$38,681  
 Production Expenses: \$16,622  
 Performances: 11  
 Attendance: 1,901  
 Percent Capacity: 42%







Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$39,690  
 Production Expenses: \$34,965  
 Performances: 11  
 Attendance: 1,720  
 Percent Capacity: 38%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$32,992  
 Production Expenses: \$16,018  
 Performances: 11  
 Attendance: 1,320  
 Percent Capacity: 29%



Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$44,381  
 Production Expenses: \$15,017  
 Performances: 13  
 Attendance: 4,160  
 Percent Capacity: 78%







# CAMELOT

# BOEING Boeing

# HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME

Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$51,175  
 Production Expenses: \$28,651  
 Performances: 11  
 Attendance: 2,567  
 Percent Capacity: 57%

Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$41,182  
 Production Expenses: \$17,570  
 Performances: 11  
 Attendance: 2,323  
 Percent Capacity: 51%

Ticket & Sponsorship Revenue: \$55,221  
 Production Expenses: \$34,439  
 Performances: 11  
 Attendance: 3,166  
 Percent Capacity: 70%



# SERVING THE COMMUNITY: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

## PLAYTIME PRE-K PROGRAM

- Since 2015, 622 students have participated in over 1,000 Classroom visits to date, each running 25-30 minutes in length.
- Each session begins and ends with a song, created especially for PLAYtime, as a creative way of maintaining cohesion between sessions.
- A new book is featured each week from United Way's Imagination Library.
- Each book is featured twice – by reading it aloud and by utilizing dramatic play, music, and art to actively involve the children in the story.

## PLAYTIME MUSICAL

- Since 2015, we have presented 15 free performances of PLAYtime musicals based on Imagination Library books: MY LUCKY DAY, ONE COOL FRIEND, and THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD.
- Approximately 3,400 children and their families have attended shows free of charge, with half of them also participating in special Parent & Me sessions offered in conjunction with the musicals.
- In addition to the PLAYtime musical, over 3,000 students & families from all the PLAYtime learning centers, as well as United Way Imagination Library families, attended the Youtheatre musicals, many of them attending a live theatrical performance for the first time.

PLAYtime is made possible by the generous support of the United Way of Erie County and our Neighborhood Assistance Program partners: American Tinning, Erie Insurance and UPMC Health Plan.



## PLAYtime stories:

*Each week we leave a storybook behind, placed ever so carefully in the classroom library. Last week the teacher asked, "Any chance I could get two copies for my room? The stories you read are the first off the shelf every time! We've had to start a waiting list!"*

*"PLAYtime is their favorite time of day, even my non-English speaking children understand the stories when you add in all the drama and music!"*

*"I know Halloween is over, but can't we do 'The Spooky Walk' again!"*





## THE FRIENDSHIP

On June 11, 22 students from the Barber National Institute presented on the LECOM stage THE FRIENDSHIP, a musical about embracing differences, friendship, and working together to reach a goal. Trisha Yates, Education Outreach Coordinator, directed this heartwarming production in partnership with the Barber National Institute and its staff.



## SCRIPTWRITING WORKSHOP

Domenic Del Greco, Youtheatre Director, completed a two-semester workshop with 25 students at Sarah A. Reed Children's Center. During that time students devised a storyline, created a script, and performed it on the LECOM stage for family, friends and staff of Sarah Reed and the Playhouse. Funded by Schuster ReGrant.

## ZYDECO BLUES

Students at Edison (240), McKinley (200), Pfeiffer-Burleigh (90) and the Barber National Institute (15) joined Trisha Yates who presented hands-on workshops and assemblies on zydeco music and Cajun culture prior to their attendance of PETITE ROUGE. Funded by Erie Arts and Culture Grant.



## THE JEFFERSON EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

In April we partnered with the Jefferson Educational Society for a two-part series in conjunction with our production of CLYBOURNE PARK. A full house attended the first panel discussion entitled *How Theatre Can Teach Us: What Erie Can Learn* from CLYBOURNE PARK. Audience members received vouchers for free tickets to the show. The series concluded with a lively talk back with cast members and community leaders on the set of CLYBOURNE PARK after the final performance. Ben Speggen from The Jefferson Educational Society moderated the series.

## SUMMER THEATRE CAMPS

WHERE THE YOUNG COME TO LEARN AND EXCEL



## INVITATION-ONLY EVENTS



### MAMMA MIA! OPENS OUR 2ND CENTURY

#### PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR ARTS & CULTURE NEIGHBORS

The Playhouse and Erie Arts & Culture hosted a cocktail reception at the Avalon followed by the opening performance of MAMMA MIA!. Guests included Playhouse donors at the Benefactor level and above, sponsors, partners, and special friends; Erie Arts & Culture guests included the Leading Ladies, a group of women who are passionate about providing a vibrant future for arts and cultural experiences in our region.

Special thank you to the Avalon, Plymouth Tavern, LaBella, Petra, Brewerrie, Molly Brannigans, Calamari's, Sabella's Catering, Sheraton Erie Bayfront and Cloud 9.



### RENOVATIONS COMPLETED

On August 23, we hosted a French-themed cocktail reception to celebrate the completion of our 1.8 million dollar renovation that transformed our theatre into an energy-efficient and accessible performance space that audiences will enjoy for the next century. The spotlight showcased Setting the Stage for the Second Century, a sculpture commissioned by renowned metal artist, Evan Everhart. This masterpiece is dedicated to the patrons whose generosity demonstrates a commitment to the tradition of yesterday and the vision of tomorrow. It is hanging on the south wall of the inner lobby alongside the names of major campaign donors.



*George Espy and Almitra Clerkin*



*Tom and Fran New, Marlene Jones, Msgr. Tom McSweeney*



## SIGNAGE REVEALED

**DORIS BECKER GREENROOM**



*Jay and Mark Becker, Sharon Taton*

**JOJO ZURN'S CANDY COUNTER**



*Evan Everhart, Joanna Zurn, Kate Neubert-Lechner*

## DR. DORIS SNELL AWARD LEGENDARY LOVE OF THEATRE

Congratulations to Linda Wingerter and Gary Daugherty, who received the Dr. Doris Snell Award in 2017 and 2018 respectively. The award is named after its first recipient, Dr. Doris Snell, whose commitment to her education, community, and love of theatre is legendary. Linda and Gary are long-time performers who embody the spirit of this award. Past recipients include Bob Martin, Judy Matthews, Roberta Stoughton, and Michael Malthaner.

**LINCOLN RECYCLING LOBBY**



- Doris Becker - Greenroom
- JoJo Zurn's Candy Counter
- Lincoln Recycling - Lobby
- Myron and Marlene Jones - Rotunda
- Erie Insurance - Showcase (east)
- The Lincoln Family Showcase (west)



**SHOWCASES**



**Linda Wingerter**



**Gary Daugherty**

And thanks to the donors who supported **Setting the Stage for the Second Century**



## AN EVENING IN THE BIG APPLE

### DONOR DINNER

On December 5, 2017, Circle of Friends patrons at the Benefactor, Director and Producer levels attended the donor dinner on the stage set of ANNIE. The evening began at 6:00pm with the featured cocktail, a Bourbon Manhattan, expertly mixed and served by the annual fund chairs, Bruce and Trisha Yates. Dinner, donated and prepared by Don Baxter, consisted of Manhattan clam chowder, Waldorf salad and New York Strip Loin with Au Jus, smashed potatoes, and roasted root vegetables with brown garlic butter. Dessert was New York cheesecake served with Merlot chocolate sauce and fresh fruit.

A sincere thank you to Dennis Borczon and Anne Marie Albaugh for providing the wine service; Andrew Rainbow and the orphans of ANNIE for the entertainment and Trisha Yates for the fabulous favors. Also thank you to Teri Marshall for baking the cheesecakes; Don and Susan Baxter, Shawn Clerkin, Barb Weber, Lynn Halasz, Paul Bills and Teri Marshall for plating; and the following servers: Charles Corritore, Richard Tryzbiak, Carolin Lynn, Eleanor Logan, Sue Lechner, Kelly Craig, and Bailey Williams.

## HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

### HANNIGAN'S HOOCH A HIT

The Erie Playhouse hosted its holiday party on December 12th from 5:30 to 7:30pm at the Playhouse. Invited guests enjoyed sweet and savory hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer, along with the featured drink, Hannigan's Hooch, a tribute to our holiday production of ANNIE.

A special thank you to Cloud 9 owner, Bertrand Artigues, for the delicious duck wings and stuffed mushrooms. and to all the bakers, cooks, servers and bartenders: Almi Clerkin, Charles Corritore, Kelly Craig, Christine Daugherty, Karen Etter, Kristy Garvin, Kathy Grisier, Julie Hulick, Kelly Kennedy, Sue Lechner, Teri Marshall, Scott Sesler, Amy Tevis, Richard Tryzbiak, and Sean Wiley.

## 5th ANNUAL LAUNCH PARTY

### 102ND SEASON ANNOUNCED



*Ethan Craig*

On March 27, a packed house attended the reveal of our 102nd Season. Guests enjoyed butlered hors d'oeuvres and complimentary beer and wine as well as special incentives for renewing or purchasing a new season ticket that night. The success of the Launch Party is due to the outstanding efforts of Playhouse volunteers, Richelle Esposito and Lisa Callaghan, who took charge of this event.

A special thank you to their wonderful crew: Jeff Esposito, Chris Callaghan, Paul & Shani Bills, Tracie Craig, Allison Judd, Scott Sesler, Valerie Niebling, Kathy Gebhardt, Sarah & Chris Pietsch, Sue Lechner, Ken & Dianna Dias, Julie Hulick, Sean Wiley, Mike Houston, Steve Ropski, Carla Hughes, Bill Williams, Michael Burns, Brad Fox, Tom Wager, Matt Fuchs, Joanna Zurn and Jared Lossie.



# SERVING THE COMMUNITY: COLLABORATIONS

## BIG BROTHERS/BIG SISTERS

- Participants attended pre-show workshops and were treated to lunch before attending JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, PETITE ROUGE, and JUNIE B. JONES. Thank you to the Lawrence Park Athletic Club for supporting this program.

## ERIE PHILHARMONIC

- On April 14, we joined with the Erie Philharmonic to present CANDIDE, a comic operetta based on Voltaire's satire of innocence and unexpected lessons of life. Leonard Bernstein wrote the score with lyrical contributions by Stephen Sondheim, Richard Wilbur and John Latouche. Many guests also enjoyed the preshow reception and after party.



## pARTnership

- In March we joined forces with All An Act Theatre, PACA, The Erie Art Gallery, and the Erie Art Museum to present shows based on the theme of "art." The Playhouse performed **SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE**, All An Act Theatre staged **PICASSO AT THE LAPIN AGILE**, PACA presented **ART**, and the Erie Art Museum offered free admission to experience the work of local artist Daniel Burke.

## HIGHMARK CARING PLACE

- We welcomed as our guests for the opening night of JUNIE B. JONES the children, adolescents and their families from The Caring Place, a center for grieving children, adolescents and their families. The experience included dinner on the stage and a tour of the theatre.

## READING BUDDIES

- Reading Buddies, a United Way of Erie County PLAYtime partnership event, conducted three Saturday workshops in Erie and Girard with over 75 families in attendance. Parents learned strategies for reading with their children, while their kids spent time with casts from JACK AND THE BEANSTALK, PETITE ROUGE, and JUNE B. JONES. They read stories, engaged in literacy activities, and got autographs from their favorite characters. Each family received a voucher to attend the featured Youtheatre show together at the conclusion of the event!

## THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD

- In cooperation with the Imagination Library for Erie County, we presented three free family-friendly performances of THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD. We offered fun literacy-building activities after each show for parents and their children.



## 2017-2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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