



COMMUNITY • TRADITION • RESTORATION

DOWNTOWN THEATER PROJECT

Report Updated 2/2023

Letter of Intent

Downtown Theater Project is seeking support from local organizations, grant foundations, and interested individuals to help grow The Indiana Theater into a thriving community hub.

Downtown Theater Project (DTP) was established as the management entity to develop programming, coordinate events, and grow community at the theater building. The dedicated staff serve as the support system to performers, community groups, and patrons. We have improved the space to support multiple avenues of use, and continue to look for ways to further our mission.

We have a strong history of community engagement and grassroots fundraising. Our social media campaigns quickly garner both interest and action. These supporters are key in continuing our efforts on the ground, and to help grow us into a building being used daily. However, we also need larger avenues of support to align with our vision and ensure that these grassroots efforts can continue.

Our goal is to create a community gathering place for entertainment with special consideration to serving the diverse population of Indiana, Pa as well as the surrounding area. There are several distinct groups looking for unique opportunities: families, IUP students, concertgoers, amateur performers, dance troupes, and many others. We believe that The Indiana Theater can be a space where these varied groups can host or attend events, as well as where many of them can mingle and interact. IUP students may be excited to see a family film from their childhood on the big screen right alongside community residents who bring their children. A music recital could include high school and college talent for a new audience. Concerts might draw a retired grandmother right alongside a middle schooler excited to hear their first live band. There is space for all of these events.

This amazing building should not stand empty, but raise the value of downtown Indiana, Pa with a lively centerpiece. It can draw those from outside of the region as well as locally. We know that many community members and funding organizations share the same mission to keep the arts alive and share our passion for connecting community. By providing a restored theater in the downtown area, we will make genuine improvements to Indiana, Pa.

We so appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to exploring ways that our organizations can partner together. If you have any questions, or if you would like to schedule a tour of our theater, please contact us at indianatheater@gmail.com or call us at 724-427-5141.

The Downtown Theater Project Board



Our Vision

Imagine driving down Philadelphia Street on a summer evening and as you pass the Indiana Theater, the marquee is fully lit, shining like a beacon downtown. People gather outside as the early show ends and a late show is set to begin. A food truck sits outside, or perhaps a local vendor provides libations in the lobby.

This is what we want for the theater: an active community connection, an alternative to the local bar scene, a creative place to explore the arts.

Contrary to popular belief, the local theater is not dead. It has just morphed into an event center--a place to see your favorites on the big screen, or join in on audience participation, or enjoy local fare pre-show. It's events and cult classics and camaraderie.

Our Mission

The Downtown Theater Project is organized for the purpose of offering the community quality and diverse programming in an inclusive environment. The mission of the Organization is to be committed to the restoration and revival of the Indiana Theater as a thriving community hub.

Downtown Theater Project is responsible for:

- Event scheduling and management
- Coordination with the community
- Staffing and house management
- Theater improvement exploration
- Growth of event opportunities
- Grant applications and fundraising

The Board believes that the theater will work best with a group specifically created to manage and control the daily workings of the space. This improves building security and safety, creates clarity in organization, and will allow for paid positions. The nonprofit status allows DTP to seek grants and fundraising for specific projects as well as general improvements, It also creates a support structure for other groups coming in to use the theater without the need to start from scratch every time an event occurs.

Our Board

Michael Perry

Michael Perry runs the Computer Information Technology Department at Lenape Technical School. He has remade the program from the ground up, retrofitting both the classroom and curriculum. Before education he was an accomplished IT professional. His year in Americorp gave him more insight and volunteer opportunities in both community involvement and organization. His studies include an undergraduate in Business and a Masters in Business Administration from Youngstown State University. His educational and work experience are only matched by his love of all art, especially film and music.



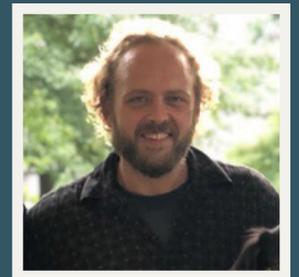
Veldorah J. Rice

Veldorah J. Rice is the owner and administrator of Write from the Heart, an online writing and literature program. She has worked in public and private schools at both the high school and college level. Veldorah holds bachelors degrees in English, History, and Communication and a MA degree in English and Film Studies. She has worked in the independent film industry in Indiana and Pittsburgh, serving as a location manager, props master, and production assistant in various productions.



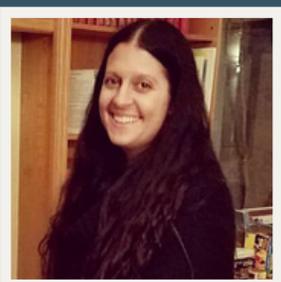
Steve Holliday

An Indiana native active in multiple venues and creative spaces since 2014, including the Indiana Theater (2015, programming), Cafe Nervosa, HR Steinhouse, indiArts Fest (music/event booking), WIUP-FM (on-air volunteer) .. currently a freelance Audio Engineer and Lighting Designer, and Union (IATSE) Stage Technician. He graduated from Full Sail with an Audio Engineering degree (2002).



Stephanie Wilkins

Stephanie Wilkins is a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing at ARIN IU 28. She holds a degree in Deaf Education and a master's degree in teaching English as a second language. Stephanie is excited to see the historical and beautiful downtown theater brought to life again and how it will bring the community together.





THREE PATHS OF PROGRESS

Small theaters are becoming more popular for niche entertainment, and there are many options available. Here are three ways we could envision the Indiana Theater meeting niche needs.

PROGRAMMING	<p>From bands to comedians to podcast recordings, the Indiana Theater is uniquely positioned as a place for intimate shows. Several performers have already staged concerts here, including Billy Price, Jim Donovan, and the Clarks. Local bands and national acts have already reached out for opportunities to work with us. In addition to this, The Indiana Arts Council has committed to staging twelve concerts a year in the theater.</p>
BRINGING PERFORMERS IN	<p>The Indiana Theater is already in high demand from local groups looking to host events. A film and panel discussion from a group at IUP, a private party with a screening, and a local high school group filming a music video, and a family reunion are all ways that the theater has already been engaged. We see this expanding to corporate events, art shows, and many other opportunities.</p>
PRIVATE EVENTS	<p>The Indiana Theater is a space for the community to come together. We intend to show films throughout each month, often with a theme, to draw many different sectors of the community, from families to college students. We also offer the theater as a place for community groups to hold meetings or host an open mic night. We desire to be able to support everyone and offer opportunities for all.</p>
POTENTIALS	REACHING THE COMMUNITY



Technology Updates

Our room is unique in a lot of ways, and so is the condition we found it when we first walked in. It's understandable; being a multi-function venue that has seen a variety of groups and production companies using the space, it has been left with the memories of Technology-past, in the ceiling and through the walls, as well as above and below the stage.

We have spent a good bit of our time cleaning up dead-end wires and trying to make what is still functional safe and organized. We will continue to work to give the space a "clean slate" while respecting and reveling in our role of keeping this Historic room active and thriving.

What we envision going forward is bringing in a quality baseline of gear -- modern and modest sound, lighting, and stage reinforcement equipment that will offer consistency and versatility to suit the needs for all types of programming that will be presented, from performing artists to films and forums, as well as for community group events, meetings, and multi-media presentations.

Technology will play a huge part in the theater's rebirth and revitalization: giving our in-house audience an inspired and memorable experience, but also furthering our reach, visibility and crowd engagement. In the future, we hope to expand through online streaming, the current and future platform to showcase what already is a really beautiful theater - with so much potential, and with so much more life in it.

Fundraising and Grants



In order to help make the Indiana Theater viable as an entity, we have been actively fundraising and seeking grants to be able to restore the theater to its highest potential. Here are some of our successes:

Online Fundraisers

In just four months, we have moved the Theater from having no online presence to a burgeoning, fan base, with several new followers daily. In just two weeks in December, our followers raised \$1700 simply by answering a call for help through social media posts.

Grants and Tax Credits

Downtown Theater Project is actively seeking grants and similar opportunities to support our projects.

We were recently awarded a marketing grant through the Indiana County Center for Economic Operations, which we will use to build a website that will be able to offer tickets online and connect visitors to all our events.

Local Fundraisers and Sponsorships

Downtown Theater Project plans to host a few local fundraisers every year. Our first, in March 2023, included a basket raffle and the opportunity for the community to vote for what film we would show. We garnered 285 votes in two weeks. We worked in tandem with Downtown Indiana and were able to secure significant donations from several local businesses.

In the future, we hope to offer sponsorships for particular events or items our theater needs. We will also be doing a membership drive, where members receive certain perks such as first-access to tickets and free concessions.

GET IN TOUCH

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 252 Church Street
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