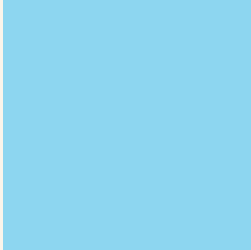
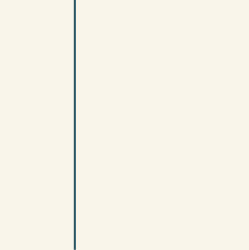
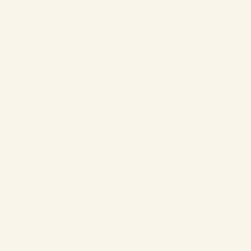
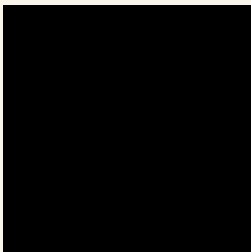


2024-2025

Annual Report



A letter from Cody and Libby

Thank you for joining us during our 2024–2025 season. This marked our 35th year—a milestone we're proud to celebrate with you. It was also an incredible achievement: our second-best season ever in terms of single ticket sales, surpassed only by last year!

We were thrilled to have you with us as we explored four distinct and powerful stories. From the high-energy impact of *THE ELABORATE ENTRANCE OF CHAD DEITY*, to the humor and heart of *ALMOST, MAINE*, the gripping performances in *THE CHILDREN*, and the intimate, emotionally resonant portrayals in *CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION* — each production reflected our mission to engage hearts and minds, stimulate thought, and foster new perspectives.

Our education program also had a successful year. We celebrated the 27th year of Next Actors, our summer camp for high school students, which remains completely free of charge. In addition, we were able to send a group of students to New York City to see multiple productions and connect with theatre professionals — an unforgettable experience for all involved.

While we're encouraged by increased subscriptions and strong ticket sales, the financial demands of producing professional theatre remain high. Your continued support is essential — not only to sustain our work on stage, but also to grow our impact in the community.

We look forward to seeing you at the theatre!



Cody Estle

Artistic Director



Libby Amato

Managing Director



2024-25 Impact

106

performances over

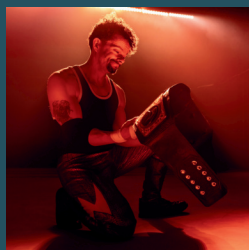
7 total plays

9,922

audience
members

1,099

season
subscribers



over

400

students served

from **9** schools

614

individual
donors

118

artists and
staff
employed



5

community
outreach
partners

35

years
of Next Act

2024-2025 Season Programming

Directed by Michael Cotey and featuring Adrian Feliciano, Dimonte Henning, Levin Valayil, David Ccesarini, and Vince “The Demented Chucky Bates” Nygro, **THE ELABORATE ENTRANCE OF CHAD DEITY** by Kristoffer Diaz opened the 2024-25 season. CHAD DEITY was sponsored by Ildy and Skip Poliner, Derin Bjugstad and David Paris, and Lori Morse and Rob Gardenier.

Partnerships with Brew City Wrestling and Blizzard Lighting brought a true wrestling experience to the Next Act Stage for each powerbomb and pin.

“I can't remember having such a joyful, exciting, surprising, FUN and thought provoking theater experience in a long time - not to mention that the whole spectacle (authentic wrestling ring and all) is mind-blowing!” - CHAD DEITY Patron



Dimonte Henning and Adrian Feliciano, photo by Michael Brosilow.



Rachael Zientek and Jake Horstmeier, photo by Michael Brosilow.

ALMOST, MAINE delighted audiences with heart-warming, wintry stories of love, joy, and true connection.

“Almost Maine is one of the most thought-provoking plays I have seen, and definitely my favorite from Next Act (although there have been so many memorable plays, it isn't easy to choose a favorite).” - **ALMOST, MAINE** Patron

Filling in our holiday spot was John Cariani's **ALMOST, MAINE**, featuring Bree Beelow, Rudy Galvan, Jake Horstmeier, and Rachael Zientek. **ALMOST, MAINE** was sponsored by Donna Martynski, Patty Compton, and Christine Symchych and Jim McNulty.

Directed by Marie Kohler, Lucy Kirkwood's **THE CHILDREN** featured Mary MacDonald Kerr, Brian Mani, and Shariba Rivers. **THE CHILDREN** was sponsored by Bob Balderson, Judges John and Jean DiMotto, Marianne and Sheldon Lubar, and Susan and Howard Schoenfeld.

THE CHILDREN transported audience members to a quaint English seaside cottage before presenting them with timely and thought-provoking questions about what we leave behind for our children.

"When theater isn't just entertaining but forces you to dig inside and reevaluate your place in the world, that's impressive. I found the play quite uplifting. When a playgoer is still thinking about the performance days afterwards, you are to be commended on your choice!" - THE CHILDREN Patron



Mary MacDonald Kerr, Brian Mani, and Shariba Rivers, photo by Michael Brosilow.



Reese Madigan, Chloe Attalla, Tami Workentin, Mark Ulrich, and Elyse Edelman, photo by Michael Brosilow.

CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION welcomed audiences behind the scenes of a community center acting class, and demonstrated all of the ways that a simple human connection can change a life.

"Authentic human relationships and personal growth emerge through sharing our stories and anxieties no matter how difficult this may be. If we want to grow as persons and have more meaningful relationships, we must be willing to share our stories and have courage to jump in and risk rejection; warts and all." - CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION Patron

The final show of our season was Annie Baker's **CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION**, directed by Next Act's own Artistic Director, Cody Estle, and featuring Tami Workentin, Mark Ulrich, Elyse Edelman, Reese Madigan, and Chloe Attalla. **CIRCLE MIRROR** was sponsored by Sandy Zingler, Mike Reavis, and John McGivern.

Next Actors: Summer Theatre for Teens

The 2024 Next Actors welcomed 24 students across three different sessions. In each session, students wrote, edited, and staged their own short plays. The Next Actors held two showcase performances for friends and family before spending one final week touring local senior centers and Boys and Girls Clubs followed by a final performance.



The 2024 Next Actors take their final bow at their last performance. Photo by A.J. Magoon.



Next Actors Natalia, Lily, Lottie, and Mi'Yanna. Photo by Tawnie Thompson.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation, in April of 2024, four of the Next Actors were welcomed to an all-expenses-paid weekend in New York City to participate in the Broadway Student Summit. The Next Actors joined dozens of students from around the country in workshops led by Broadway professionals and were treated to an off-Broadway play before finishing the weekend with a performance of the Tony-award winning **THE OUTSIDERS THE MUSICAL**.

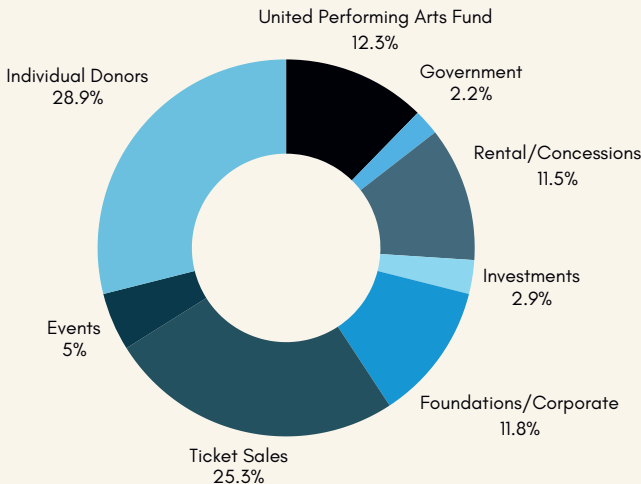
Matinees and Workshops

Our high school matinee series provides low- to no-cost performances for productions in our season. This year, we welcomed 222 students from Alexander Hamilton, Rufus King, Oak Creek, Reagan, Case, and Brown Deer High Schools to **THE ELABORATE ENTRANCE OF CHAD DEITY; ALMOST, MAINE; and CIRCLE MIRROR TRANSFORMATION**.

Pre- or post-show workshops were held at select schools whose students attended a matinee performance to open discussions about the plays and their meaning.

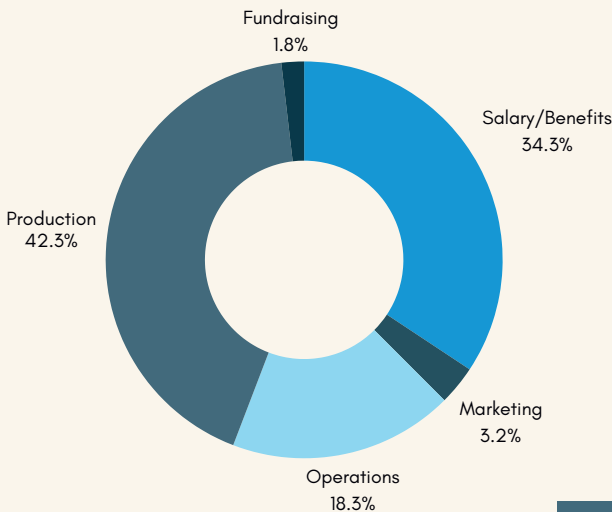
Financial Overview

Income



TOTAL: \$1,151,970.52

Expenses



TOTAL: \$1,371,696.57

2024-25 Donors

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organization, Next Act Theatre relies on the generosity of hundreds of supporters each year whose contributions allow us to create exciting live theatre, offer free arts education programming and provide employment for artists, arts administrators, and teaching artists. The following supporters of our 2024-25 season donated \$1,000+:

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Bader Philanthropies
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Sandra Zingler

Planned Giving

In honor of Next Act Theatre's Managing Director from 1992 to 2014, the Charles D. Kakuk Legacy Society recognizes individuals who make a lasting impact on Next Act Theatre through their generous planned gift. Unless specified by the donor, all bequeaths will go toward the development of our endowment.

George R. Affeldt, Jr.
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Bob Balderson
Haly and Michael Besaw
Judges John and Jean DiMotto
Michael and Ericka Burzynski
Dave Glenn
Clifford Heise
Annie Jurczyk

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Ross Lloyd
Sally Marks*
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Milan and Gordana Racic*
Marian Weinberg*
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Bettie Zillman*

*Bequest Received

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Cody Estle

Marketing Director
A.J. Magoon

Production and Facility Manager
Katie Anderson

Development Manager
Tawnie Thompson

Administrative and Artistic Manager
Caroline Norton

Managing Director
Libby Amato

Patron Services Manager
Wyatt Meyer

Artistic Associate
Elyse Edelman

Ticket Office Manager
Christine Yündem

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Artisan Partners Limited Partnership (ret.)

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Vice President
Haly Besaw
RW Baird

Secretary
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Terri Alioto
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Libby Amato
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John DiMotto
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Elizabeth Elving
Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren

Cody Estle
Ex Officio

Anna Fig
Rufus King High School

Tracy Harrington
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Cathy Jakicic
My Write Mind

Jane Lukic
Consultant (Wheel & Sprocket, Kegel's Inn)

Donna Martynski
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Moriah Pierce
Rockwell Automation, Inc.

Marianne Robbins
The Previant Law Firm (ret.)

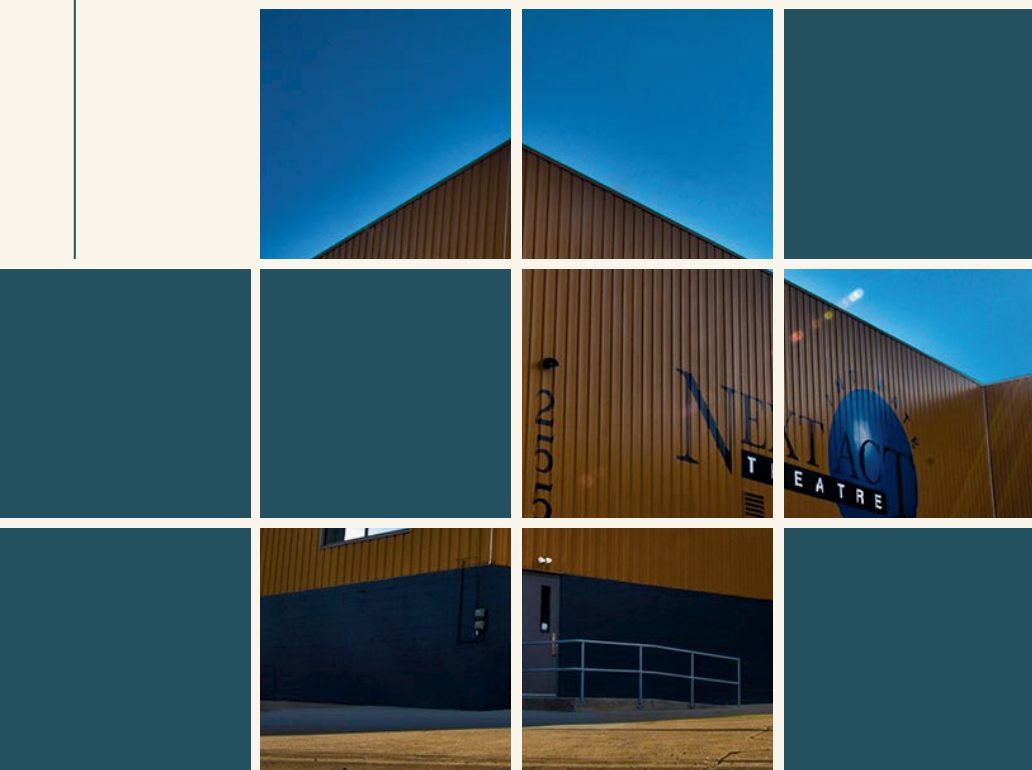
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Collins Law Firm, LLC

Susan Schoenfeld
The Leaders Institute

Barbara Tays
Retired Educator

Andrew Volkoff
Rockwell Automation

Sandra Zingler
Racine School District (ret.)



Thank You

Next Act Theatre engages the hearts and minds of audiences with intimate, compelling productions intended to stimulate thought, foster the exchange of ideas, and promote the development of new perspectives and understanding.



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