Toward Strategic Plan Goal #3 – Elevate the Beck Brand

- In recognition of Walter and Joyce Senney for their extraordinarily generous gift of over $1 million for the Creating Our Future capital campaign, Beck Center’s Board of Directors voted in to change the name of the main theater to The Senney Theater. The Senney family’s history with the organization goes back to 1915 when they constructed the Lucier Movie Theater and Maheu block which became the home of Lakewood Little Theater in 1938.

- Beck Center WON Cleveland Magazine’s Best of the Best in April, 2021, a competition which involved 160 companies & non-profit organizations from Best of the West, Best of the East, and Best of Cleveland. This is a testament to Beck friends who voted and Beck Center’s extremely effective marketing department and social media campaign.

- Thanks to Marketing Director Julie Gilliland and Associate Director of Theater Education Sarah Clare and others, Beck Center was featuring in a WKYC commercial about "coming together to uplift the community." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jSJKX665dl.

- Beck Center’s Spotlight gala took place July 17, 2021 at the beautiful new Gordon Green venue in Gordon Square. This year’s theme, “All the World’s a Stage,” highlighted the legacy program of the organization - theater. During the pandemic, it has become especially evident that live performances had been greatly missed, and people need theater in their lives to provoke thoughts and feelings through experience and observation. Honorees of Spotlight 2021 were Wally and Joyce Senney, lead donors to the capital campaign, and Artistic Director Scott Spence, as this marks his 30th season at Beck Center. 250 people attended the celebration and raised valuable dollars toward the Center’s arts and education programming.

Toward Strategic Plan Goal #4 – Evolve the Beck Model

- Pandemic relief funds enabled Beck Center to continue its programming and retain talented faculty and staff during the pandemic year. Beck Center received Payroll Protection Plan funding from the federal government, CARES Act funds from the State of Ohio through Ohio Arts Council and also from Cuyahoga County through CAC. Grant applications also went to County Executive Armond Budish and County Councilman Dale Miller for allocating Federal relief funding to the arts through Cuyahoga County. An application has also been submitted to the SBA for Shuttered Venue Operations Grant.

- Grant funding was received to continue the diversity, equity, and inclusion journeys with Gradient Think Tank. During the upcoming months, they helped the Board develop a customized DEI strategic plan with measurable goals and outcomes, collaborative input and buy-in, accountability, and long-term sustainability. They also helped us align the work of Beck staff and faculty with the organization’s DEI goals and be more vocal publicly about the work being done, to be more outspoken about Beck Center’s values of accessibility and inclusion.

- The following “North Star” was adopted for Beck Center in March, 2021: “Beck Center for the Arts welcomes and engages every individual who shares the goal of enhancing the human spirit through arts experiences. We believe in the transforming and transcending power of the arts, the strength of collaboration, an inclusive and safe environment, and diversity as an essential component in all we do. We are committed to continuous learning for deeper understanding of equity and inclusion, using this understanding to create an environment that connects all people, communities, and cultures through the arts.”

Cindy Einhouse
President & CEO
August 2021

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATE: 2021

Accomplishments during FY21 (September 2020 – August 2021)

This past fiscal year has tested the stamina and adaptability of Beck Center’s board, faculty and staff, and everyone’s efforts resulted in fantastic arts experiences for the community!

- Leading up to the beginning of the 2020-2021 fiscal year – September 1, 2020 – after having closed the Beck campus in March, created free online arts programming (#BeckAtHome), crafted communications to hundreds of individuals cancelling performances, rehearsals, classes, and started working on pandemic safety protocols, Beck Center prepared for the next season not knowing what the environment would allow.

- Starting at the beginning of September 2020, a number of in-person classes were provided (maximum of 9 per class with 6-foot distancing and masks enforced) alongside the online offerings, but then in November 2020, once again Beck Center was forced to close the campus and return to all online programming due to the County advisory and alert regarding the high number of COVID cases. In January 2021, both in-person and online classes were offered, although the in-person classes sold much more than the online experiences. People expressed a craving for safe, in-person experiences and trusted Beck Center to provide this.

- Over the course of the past year as things evolved, the organization spent a lot of time advocating for relief funding for the arts at the national, state, county, and local levels. Members of the management team got involved with numerous task forces and advocacy groups, communicating the devastating impact of the pandemic on the arts, while noting the economic impact and critical need for the arts in the lives of individuals, especially considering the dramatic increase in the problem of depression and isolation.

Toward Strategic Plan Goal #5 – Enhance the Arts Experience

- Beck Center’s first ever video on-demand professional theater production “Fully Committed” opened November 13, 2020. While revenue for on-demand ticket sales was limited, production expense was relatively low, and feedback from constituents was overwhelmingly positive.

- Likewise, the online Youth Theater production of “Zopp” was a very positive experience for the students and audiences, including recognition from Northeast Ohio Parent Magazine. Unfortunately, filming of “The Nutcracker” in November 2020 had to be postponed due to the shift back to all online activity, but the Dance Department was able to successfully stream a beautiful production March 12-14, 2021.
visual arts. Funded by the Three Arches Foundation, the programs include music and
on the closed circuit TV of Lakewood Service Corporation's senior centers. The Arts Therapies department began producing a video series to be shown
• Led by Director of Education Ed Gallagher, Beck Center's Creative Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing”, as it paved the way for region to bring union actors back to the stage with the July production “This Association to produce live theater once again, and thus was the first in the
• In July 2021, Beck Center received permission from Actor's Equity sales; this was necessary because the previous ticketing system company
A new ticketing system was installed in time for summer 2021 ticket freshen the air flow in large gathering spaces.
• In preparation for the return to live performances, ionization units were installed in the Senney Theater, the lobby, and the Studio Theater to refresh the air flow in large gathering spaces.
• A new ticketing system was installed in time for summer 2021 ticket sales; this was necessary because the previous ticketing system company went out of business due to the pandemic.
• In July 2021, Beck Center received permission from Actor's Equity Association to produce live theater once again, and thus was the first in the region to bring union actors back to the stage with the July production “This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing”, as it paved the way for opening the 2021-2022 season in September.
• Led by Director of Education Ed Gallagher, Beck Center's Creative Arts Therapies department began producing a video series to be shown on the closed circuit TV of Lakewood Service Corporation's senior centers. Funded by the Three Arches Foundation, the programs include music and visual arts.

Toward Strategic Plan Goal #2 – Energize the Arts Destination

• August 2020 marked the long-awaited beginning of the renovation project made possible by the Creating Our Future capital campaign. Only restricted funds that were given for this purpose were used, and the priority was to make the Education Wing of the main building ADA accessible and more energy efficient. It was a smart and bold choice of the Board and Chair of the Board Patricia Oliver to begin the renovation project in August 2020, at a time of tremendous uncertainty around the country due to the pandemic. However, Beck Center was able to save time and money by undertaking this very messy and disruptive work while there were a limited number of people in the building, due to remote programming capability, and most of the staff working from home.

• Artistic Director Scott Spence did a series of short videos on site to keep everyone updated on the progress, and Director of Development Dena Adler’s development team created communications along with Director of Marketing Julie Gilliland to keep the public informed.

• Beck Center was granted $300,000 through the State of Ohio’s capital budget for the renovation project, thanks to the leadership of Senator Nickie Antonio and Representative Michael Skindell.

• Renovation of the Education Wing was complex due to the age of the building (vintage 1915), but the team managed to complete the work by February 2021, under the guidance of Immediate Past Chair of the Board Douglas Hoffman.

• In November 2020, Beck Center’s newest sculpture “Flora Bella” was installed near the front entrance, having been created by and donated by artist David Deming, retired President of Cleveland Institute of Art.

• In March 2021, Beck Center marked the achievement of a significant milestone – a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of the first phase of the renovation project – the newly renovated Fowler-Spellman Education Wing. The celebration marked the one-year anniversary of the kick-off of the public phase of the campaign (March 2020), when attainment toward the goal was 50% (over $3,000,000). By March 2021, during the height of the pandemic, an additional $1,000,000 had been raised, which caused the Board to raise its sights and increase the goal of the campaign to $6.7M! The Capital Campaign Committee, Co-Chairs Doug Hoffman – Immediate Past Chair of the Board, Sandra Sauder and Ellen Todila, seek to raise the remaining $2M by Dec 2021 so the final segment of renovations can take place in 2022-2023: Building an ADA accessible main entrance, a new marquee, restrooms near the front door, and finally raising the roof of the main building to accommodate two new state-of-the-art dance studios.

• A “Pocket Park” renovation was completed in March 2021 in Beck Center’s front yard, thanks to a grant from Cuyahoga County, in partnership with the City of Lakewood. Beck Center is grateful to County Councilman Dale Miller for his leadership and advocacy. Special thanks go to Board Member Jeff Poore for overseeing the many details involved with that project.

• In May 2021, the Beck Center Board voted to move forward with the next stage of renovations - the back building on campus, a former armory, to create a Center for Music & Creative Arts Therapies. Work began on August 13, 2021, and is expected to be completed by the end of the fall semester.