



Arts of Southern Kentucky Ends First Fiscal Year on High Note; Organization Creates Foundation and Permanent Endowment

Success attributed to community support and exceptional leadership

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(June 20, 2022) Arts of Southern Kentucky (ASK) has announced that as a result of a successful first fiscal year of operation, it has created a Foundation and permanent endowment to solidify the organization's future in Southern Kentucky.

The announcement comes on the heels of the end of a year of great successes for the organization which manages the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center (SKyPAC), Orchestra Kentucky, BG OnStage, and the Ramsey Theatre Company. ASK has successfully completed its first full fiscal year in a strong financial position, thanks to the support of the community, Warren County government, and ASK leadership. In March 2021, Rita and Jim Scott donated \$1 million to the organization with the naming of SKyPAC's primary performance space as the Rita & Jim Scott Concert Hall. Building upon this momentum, Robert Ramsey gifted \$1.7 million to create the Ramsey Theatre Company, a professional Broadway production company. Thanks to spending controls, strong ticket sales, increased rentals, and over \$1 million in additional gifts, ASK will finish its first full fiscal year of 2022 with an operating surplus exceeding \$500,000. With an eye set towards the long term future and fiscal viability of the organization, the ASK Board made the decision to incorporate the Arts of Southern Kentucky Foundation, starting with over \$1 million in assets, and later to also establish a permanent endowment for the organization. All of this, combined with no long-term debt, positions ASK for financial viability well into the future with a stability that has not previously been available for the organization.

"As we began Arts of Southern Kentucky in uncertain times, our Board took the responsibility of ensuring the viability of the organization very seriously. We are thrilled that the hard work and conservative planning approach has proven to be successful during the pandemic," says Chair of the ASK Board of Directors Beth Sigler. "Now that our first fiscal year is behind us, we turn our efforts to the future of ASK, by focusing on the sustainability of the organization, which will allow us to responsibly grow and enhance our offerings and programs. The ASK Foundation will play a key component in that effort as will the continued support from our community."

In addition to being in a strong financial position, ASK has made great strides from increased efforts with engaging the community. In the past season, ASK launched the SKyPASS program, which provides access to programming to those who would not otherwise have the opportunity to enjoy the experience by partnering with local nonprofit organizations to distribute free tickets to their service clients. As well,

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ASK has expanded the Curtains Up! program to allow area educational performing groups free use of SKyPAC facilities and hosted over a dozen nonprofit meetings free of charge. A diversity committee was created to reach a wide variety of audiences and interests in an effort to be more representative of the full population of the Southern Kentucky community, and the Golden Chorale was formed to provide senior adults with fellowship and performing opportunities. Finally, ASK has formed partnerships with ArtWorks, Fountain Square Players, the Baker Arboretum, and the Kelly Autism Center to further its mission to enrich lives through artistic experiences.

Much of the success of the organization can be attributed to the exceptional leadership provided through guidance from a strong Board of Directors that has remained unwavering in its support, combined with the talents of Arts of Southern Kentucky President & CEO, Jeff Reed.

Jeff Reed founded Orchestra Kentucky in the fall of 2000. He has spent more than two decades creating top-notch artistic opportunities as pillar of our arts community, bringing to stage his experience with conducting orchestras in Detroit, Indianapolis, Nashville, South Korea, Milan, Italy and St. Petersburg, Russia. He has twice conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at London's Albert Hall. Bestselling author and marketer Seth Godin singled Reed out in his best-selling study of new creativity, "Small is the New Big." Godin praised his "clever" concerts and praised the "totally different way" Reed approaches programming. In 2015, the University of Louisville named Reed its Alumni Fellow for the School of Music in recognition of his distinguished work in his chosen field. In 2008, he received the Jefferson Award for public service in South Central Kentucky.

Jeff attributes the success related to the operation of the organization to a lean staff that has done an excellent job of controlling expenses while also maximizing income.

There is no doubt that Arts of Southern Kentucky's future is bright. The 2022-2023 season features over 40 events, including Orchestra Kentucky concerts, Broadway and BG OnStage productions, children's programming, school day concerts, comedians, hip hop, country, rock and Christian/Gospel acts, movies, theater, dance, and a jam-packed Christmas season. Thanks to responsible financial planning, community support, and exceptional leadership, ASK is well positioned to serve as the premiere arts organization for Southern Kentucky well into the future. Through its programs, ASK welcomes all people to create, experience, learn about and engage in the arts. With continued support from the community combined with exceptional leadership, the SKY is the limit for Arts of Southern Kentucky.

To learn more about how you can support the arts in our community to ensure the same opportunities are available for generations to come, please visit the Arts of Southern Kentucky website at: <https://theskypac.com/>.

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