



CASE STATEMENT 2009

VARSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS
P.O. BOX 332
CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS 62903
618-201-5245

RESTORING THE HISTORIC VARSITY THEATER:
PUTTING THE ARTS IN THE HEART OF CARBONDALE

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Varsity Center for the Arts: Setting the Stage for Tomorrow

The campaign to restore the Varsity Center for the Arts represents a rare opportunity to change the face of downtown Carbondale and secure the future of its cultural community. The restoration of this historic building for use by the creative and performing arts anticipates a the permanent home for two of the city's oldest cultural institutions (The Jackson County Stage Company and Carbondale Community Arts) and accessible performance and exhibit venues for cultural, civic, and educational presenters across the region.

The Varsity Center for the Arts stands in the center of downtown Carbondale, midway between the Carbondale City Hall and the campus of Southern Illinois University Carbondale. When it is renovated, it will be a symbol of the community's respect for the past, commitment to the common good, and confidence in the future. Bringing this historic landmark back to life will allow our community to recapture the grandeur that was once the Varsity Theater.

This community has long recognized the importance of the Varsity Theater to the architecture of downtown, to the history of the city, and to the personal histories of the families of the area. We now have the opportunity to rescue, renovate, and recapture the Varsity for future generations of Southern Illinoisans to use and enjoy with their families.

Marsha Ryan

Cultivating creative capital and enhancing the cultural climate:

A vibrant cultural climate contributes to the quality of life for the region's citizens, playing an increasingly important role in attracting new families, retirees, and business development to the area.

The Varsity Center for the Arts will support the institutions that nurture our community's creative capital and fuel its cultural vitality.

- **The Jackson County Stage Company**, one of the region's oldest and most revered non-profit theater companies, will have a fully equipped performance space providing organizational stability and expanded capacity to offer year-round live theater experiences for all audiences.
- **Carbondale Community Arts**, the local arts agency that spearheads events, distributes essential grant funds to other non-profit arts providers, and offers technical and program assistance throughout the region, will have a visible and accessible home base for its myriad services to the public.
- **Local arts, cultural, and civic organizations** will have access to centrally located community-friendly space for concerts, lectures, and presentations that require auditorium seating. Such groups include the African American Museum, the Southern Illinois Irish Festival, the Southern Illinois Music Festival, the Big Muddy Film Festival, Carbondale Main Street, the Art Trail of Southern Illinois, the Morning Etude Club, and the Southern Illinois Chamber Music Society.
- **Individual artists and emerging ensembles and collectives** will be able to access performance and/or exhibit space to showcase their creative talents and encourage their professional development.
- **The film-going public** will enjoy screening space for classic movies, children's films, topical documentaries, and local productions, enhancing the community's current cultural offerings and providing a nostalgic return to the Varsity of the past.

Art is not a treasure in the past or an importation from another land,
but part of the present life of all living and creating peoples.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Fostering diverse economic development and encouraging cultural tourism:

Across the United States, cities and towns of all sizes have realized the power of the arts to bring people downtown again. For example, theater-goers support local economies by spending up to seven times the price of a ticket on shopping opportunities and restaurants in the area.

The Varsity Center for the Arts will:

- become a destination for visitors from across the region and beyond
- encourage pedestrian traffic in the area
- diversify the downtown economy
- motivate additional downtown development
- bring new opportunities to existing business
- provide an additional quality-of-life asset to attract businesses with potential well-paying jobs
- add to the promotional and marketing appeal of Southern Illinois
- link with businesses that need space for their events

Begin with art because art tried to take us outside ourselves. It is a matter of trying to create an atmosphere and context so conversation can flow back and forth and we can be influenced by each other.

W.E.B. DuBois

Extending and enriching educational outreach:

The Carbondale community values diverse educational opportunities and life-long learning. The need for comfortable, accessible, technologically equipped, and centrally-located performance and exhibit spaces has been articulated by public and private arts educators.

The Varsity Center for the Arts will provide appropriately sized space that is suitably equipped for teaching classes on film, theatre, and dance; children's concerts and private music and dance recitals; and hosting performances by and for the area's school children.

The Varsity Center for the Arts will:

- Involve the public in opportunities for fulfillment through live performance
- Provide performing arts education at the highest levels of artistic achievement
- Facilitate programming for children and young people, such as master storytellers, authors of children's books, and plays for young audiences
- Expose area youth to a wide variety of art forms

The arts embody the American spirit of self-definition.

President Barack Obama

Building and building upon the public will:

When the Varsity Theater closed its doors in 2003, the outcry for community ownership and use of the space was loud and clear. When the Kerasotes agreed to donate the property to the community, the rush of public support was astounding. The goal of the VCA campaign to raise funds for the restoration of this historic building in downtown Carbondale reflects the wishes and dreams of individuals and organizations around the community.

The Varsity Center for the Arts will offer the community a sense of ownership in a landmark that is fondly remembered by thousands. It will leverage the momentum that its prospective anchor tenants have built over the years to engage the creative energies of our richly diverse and talented community. It will be a rallying cry for community pride.

In a December 2008 interview with The Southern Illinoisan, VCA donor Allen Arnold noted that the Varsity was an important part of growing up in Carbondale. He recalled turning in bottle caps for Saturday afternoon movie admission and commented,

People like me who grew up here have always had a soft spot in their hearts for the Varsity.

Projected Uses:

A Preliminary Needs Assessment conducted in the summer of 2008 indicates that potential uses for the Varsity Center for the Arts could include:

- Regular season, summer, and children's productions of The Stage Company
- Stage productions of Carbondale Community Arts
- Productions by theater companies from neighboring communities
- Gallery space for local and regional artists
- Gallery space for traveling exhibits
- Gallery space for special events with visual components
- Screenings of classic movies and children's films
- Screenings of independent films
- Screenings of documentaries presented by civic and cultural organizations
- Concert and/or lecture presentations
- Dance and music recitals for local studios and independent teachers
- Educational programming by local or visiting artists, lecturers, and performers
- Meetings and lectures sponsored by civic and community groups
- Administrative and meeting space for Carbondale Community Arts, The Stage Company, and other not-for-profit arts organizations

History of the Varsity Theater

June 1940 – Varsity opened with single screen and 1100 seats.

Late 1960's – Kerasotes Theaters purchased Varsity from Rodgers Theater Circuit.

1972 – Main Auditorium split into two theaters.

1981 – Varsity Theater fire with main auditorium destroyed.

May 2003 – Varsity Theater closed.

November 2007 – Mayor Brad Cole announced Kerasotes family donation of the Varsity Theater to the community.

May 2008 – The Stage Company and Carbondale Community Arts announced a partnership to develop the Varsity Center for the Arts.

October 24, 2008 – Grand opening of the Varsity Center for the Arts with The Stage Company production of “Star Spangled Girl” and Carbondale Community Arts sponsored exhibit of local art.

November 5, 2008 – Varsity Center for the Arts incorporated.

December 6, 2008 – Allen Arnold announced a \$50,000 gift to the Varsity Center for the Arts from his family trust.

(Sources include The Southern Illinoisan, May 30, 2008, issue.)

Varsity Center for the Arts Volunteer Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Armen Asaturian, Vice President

Laura Chamness, Honorary

David Coracy

William Crain

Jeff Doherty, Treasurer

Catherine Field, Secretary

Craig Hinde

P. Michael Kimmel

Jack Langowski, Honorary

Elizabeth Lewin

Peter Pirmann, President

Glenn Poshard, Honorary

Jo Poshard

Marsha Ryan

Stephen Schauwecker

Blanche Carlton Sloan

Carolyn A. Snyder

VARSITY CAMPAIGN STEERING COMMITTEE

Gina & Curtis Baird

Anita & Rakesh Chandra

Lin & Juh Chen

David Coracy

Michael Dahlen

Lana Davis

Marlene & Larry Dietz

Catherine Field

Craig Hinde

Mary Mechler

Lora Lee Nugent

Rebecca & Peter Pirmann

Jan & Bob Radtke

Andrea Rendleman

Marsha Ryan, Chair

Ann Marie Shepherd

Blanche Carlton Sloan

Carolyn Snyder

Nancy Stemper

Bonnie Wheeler

Stephanie Wood

Brandon Zanotti

Tammy Cavarretta, Director of Development

Alternative Sources of Funding

Jack Langowski, Chair

Robert Radtke

Carolyn Snyder

Bylaws

Armen Asaturian, Chair

Michael Kimmel

Peter Pirmann

Bob Radtke

Carolyn Snyder

Design

Ed Benyas, Advisor

David Coracy, Chair

Mike Covell, Advisor

Cathy Field

Craig Hinde

Gayle Klam, Advisor

Gary Kolb, Advisor

Jack Langowski, Advisor

Jo Poshard

Nancy Stemper, Advisor

Mark Varns, Advisor

Executive

Armen Asaturian

David Coracy

Jeff Doherty

Catherine Field

Craig Hinde

Jack Langowski, Honorary

Peter Pirmann, Chair

Marsha Ryan

Finance

David Coracy

Jeff Doherty, Chair

Craig Hinde
Peter Pirmann
Steve Schauwecker

Nominating

David Coracy
Jeff Doherty, Chair
Cathy Field

Operations

William Crain
Cathy Field, Chair
Nancy Stemper

Public Relations

David Coracy
Catherine Field
Gary Kolb, Advisor
Jack Langowski, Advisor
Gary Metro, Advisor
Peter Pirmann
Marsha Ryan, VCSC Representative
Carolyn Snyder, Chair
Bonnie Wheeler, Advisor

Special Events and Honors Committee

Susan Patrick Benson
David Coracy
Catherine Field
Lori Merrill-Fink
Gary Kolb
Peter Pirmann
Marsha Ryan
Carolyn Snyder, Chair

Strategic Planning

Elizabeth Lewin
Stephen Schauwacker, Chair

VCSC Grants Subcommittee

Tammy Cavarretta, Chair

David Coracy

Ann Hammel

Jack Langowski

Greg Legan

Carolyn Snyder

VCSC Soiree Subcommittee

Anita Chandra, Chair

Lora Lee Nugent

Becky Pirmann

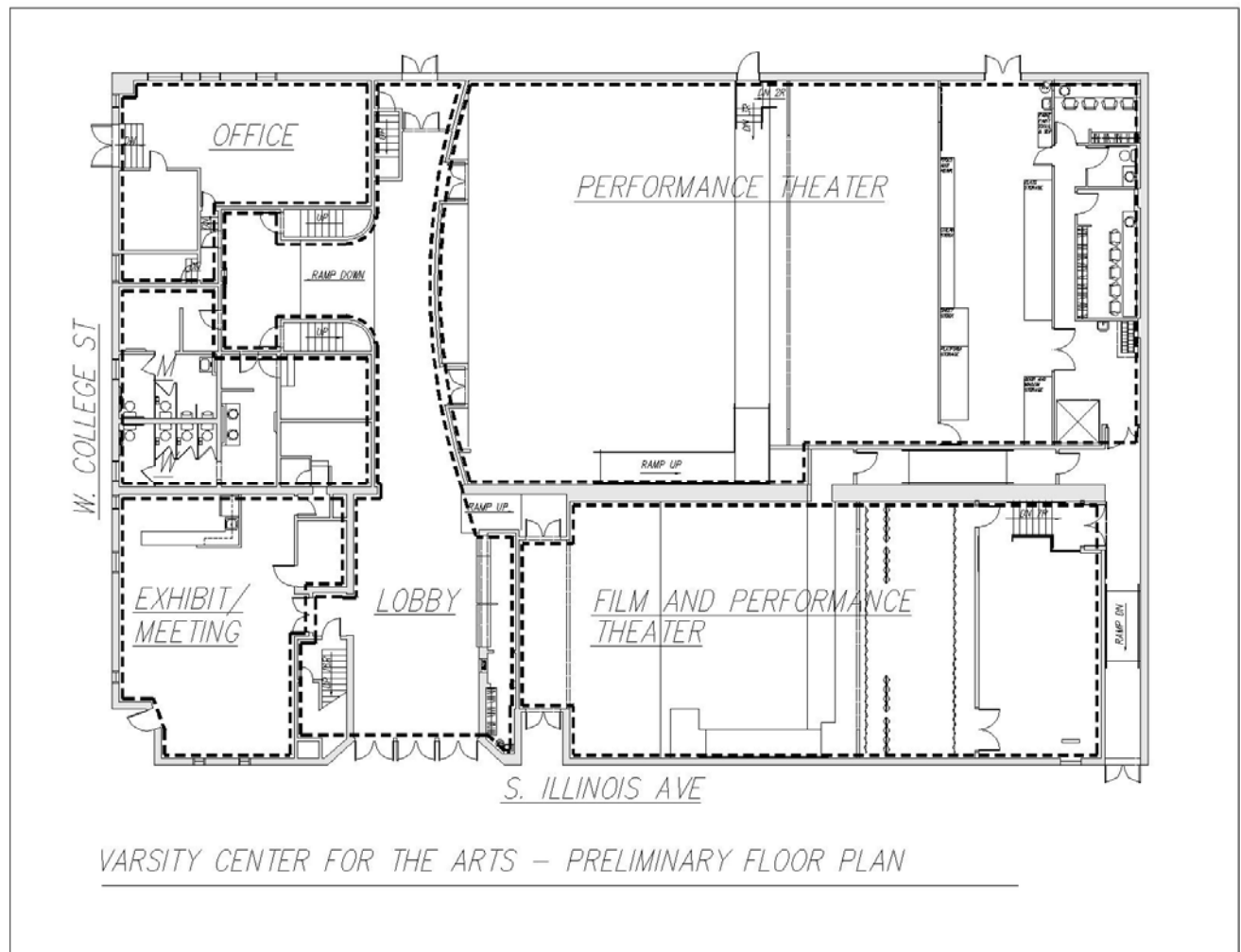
Andrea Rendleman

Ann Marie Shepherd

VARSITY CENTER FOR THE ARTS



Varsity Center for the Arts Preliminary Floor Plan



Varsity Center for the Arts Campaign Budget

EXPENSES

Construction costs¹

Phase One:	Site investigation and property acceptance	\$ 25,000
Phase Two ² :	Preparation of east auditorium, intermission room, lobby, and interim restrooms <i>for October, 2008 Stage Company occupation</i>	\$ 450,000
Phase Three ³ :	Conversion of main auditorium to performance stage, office space, and renovation of balcony theater	\$ 1,735,000
Phase Four ³ :	Final renovation of all interior space, east auditorium transformation, plus exterior façade	\$ 765,000

Operating costs

Permanent fund for operations and maintenance ⁴	\$ 2,000,000
Total:	\$ 4.975 million
Completed Phases 1 and 2:	\$ 475,000
Budget for Phases 3 and 4:	\$ 4.5 million

1 – This budget based on an update of an estimate done by White and Borgognoni in June 2004 and adjusted to include additional features such as new roof, office areas, new public restrooms, façade reconstruction, and interior décor and furnishings.

2 – Estimate includes cash value of volunteer labor (\$115,000) for Phase 2.

3 – Estimate includes an annual inflation factor of 4% commencing with 2005 through 2012.

4 – Estimate assumes an annual expenditure of earned interest of 5-10% of the total aggregate fund. It is expected that operations and maintenance expenses for salaries, supplies, maintenance, insurance, and ongoing renovations will average \$100,000 - \$200,000 annually.

Prepared by Jack Langowski, VCA Board President, March 2009.

Varsity Center for the Arts Proposed Gift Levels, Recognition, and Naming Opportunities

All Donors are Recognized in a Printed Donor Register on Permanent Display In Varsity Center Lobby

<u>GIFT LEVEL</u>	<u>RECOGNITION</u>
\$200	Name Plaque on a Seat in One of the Varsity Auditoriums
\$500 or More	Donors of \$500 or More are Recognized on <i>Gift Wall</i> in the Varsity Center Lobby with Plaques Varying in Size by Contribution Levels
\$10,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center <i>Hall of Fame</i> Named in Donor's Honor
\$25,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Box Office Named in Donor's Honor
\$125,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center East Theater Stage Named in Donor's Honor
\$150,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Main Theater Stage Named in Donor's Honor
\$175,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Balcony Named in Donor's Honor
\$200,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Exhibit Room Named in Donor's Honor <i>Brass Star in the Floor of the Varsity Center Lobby</i>
\$250,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center East Theater Named in Donor's Honor <i>Brass Star in the Floor of the Varsity Center Lobby</i>
\$300,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Lobby Named in Donor's Honor <i>Brass Star in the Floor of the Varsity Center Lobby</i>
\$500,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Main Theater Named in Donor's Honor <i>Brass Star in the Floor of the Varsity Center Lobby</i>
\$500,000 Naming Opportunity	Varsity Center Marquee Named in Donor's Honor <i>Brass Star in the Sidewalk of Illinois Avenue</i>
More than \$750,000	To Be Negotiated

Varsity Center for the Arts Website

For updates about programs, activities, and other items of interest, please visit the VCA website:

varsitycenterforthearts.org

The website design and the Varsity rendering (cover and page 11) were generously contributed by SchoolCenter of Carbondale, Illinois.

Of the many cultural objects of pride in Carbondale, the Varsity will top them all. It is becoming a multipurpose community resource, a magnet for volunteerism, a model for architectural restoration, a gem. I am so happy to be a part of it.

Blanche Carlton Sloan

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