

**Rosen Performing
Arts Center *the*
at The Wayne YMCA**



**Strategic Plan
2020-2023**

**Created by Matthew Luminello
M.A Candidate – Arts Administration
Rowan University**

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Introduction

Hello,

Welcome to the strategic plan for the Rosen Performing Arts Center at the Wayne YMCA.

For 45 years, The Rosen Performing Arts Center has been serving the community of Wayne, New Jersey with accessibility to the performing arts. We are a performing arts education institution, a production company, and a presenter, all at home in our beautiful 406 seat professionally equipped theater.

Right now, our organization is on the brink of great change which is what has evoked us to create this strategic plan. As is the rest of the world, we are figuring out a new normal in the midst of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. We are facing both a new way to offer our programming virtually online and how we will be able to safely reopen once large in-person gatherings are permitted. We have no doubt that our talented and dedicated teaching artists and production staff will be able to meet the challenges at hand, and continue to enrich our community with the performing arts.

In this plan, we have also developed new goals to help our organization reach its full potential when we are able to fully reopen. We plan on hiring new staff members, developing a new marketing strategy, and instituting more diversity in our organizational language and programming.

This plan was carefully crafted with support from the Rosen PAC Cultural Arts Director Meryl Budnick. I thank Ms. Budnick for not only her guidance, and expertise throughout this process, but also for the resounding work she has done for the Rosen PAC throughout her entire career there. I am confident that the strategies that we have created together in this planning document will not only further continue the work she has done, but will usher in a new chapter for the Rosen PAC over the next three years.

Please note that this plan is meant to be a living and breathing document. It is subject to revisions and updates as needed.

-Matt Luminello
MA Candidate- Arts Administration
Rowan University

Who We Are

Mission

The Rosen Performing Arts Center, located inside the YMCA in Wayne, New Jersey, is a 406-seat professional performing arts venue and education center. By supporting and fostering the growth of the performing arts, the Rosen PAC is dedicated to keeping the arts alive in our community as a premier performance venue, and advocate for the arts. The Rosen Performing Arts Center hosts



many special events over the course of a season including theater productions for youth, teens, and adults, dance programs, other special arts programs, as well as outside presenters.



Vision

The Rosen Performing Arts Center is a multi-faceted organization, engaging our community, composed of both artists and audience members alike, in the full performing arts experience. At home in our beautiful 406 seat theater, we host a variety of performances, both of our own, and from outside professional talent. Our education program offers workshops in all

disciplines of the performing arts; theatre, music, and dance; as well. We strive to give members of our community the opportunity to perform on our professional stage with unique performance opportunities throughout the season with work created, produced and performed by the community, and for the community.

Theater

•Our beautiful 406-seat theater, wheelchair-accessible and six transfer seats, is ready to host any performance. Equipped with upstage, mid-stage, and downstage curtains, ample professional lighting and sound equipment, two large private dressing rooms, a green room, and a large indoor lobby, you can be sure your event will run seamlessly and dazzle your audience.



•Our theater is available to rent for productions, concerts, dance recitals, meetings, presentations, whatever your needs may be.

•We strive to produce all different types of productions in our theater by the community for the community.



Performing Arts Education

•At the Rosen Performing Arts Center, we believe that performing arts education is for students of all ages, from youth to adult, with concentrations in music, dance and theater

•Students will receive instruction taught by artistic professionals in all areas of including, but not limited to Improv, Acting, Voice, Audition Technique, Musical Theater, Tap, Ballet, and Jazz Dance, Technical Theater, Playwriting, Directing, Stage Management, Costuming, Hair/Makeup.

•We offer multiple workshops over the course of a season, as well as youth and teen performing ensembles.

Community Productions

- At the Rosen Performing Arts Center, we strive to produce the highest quality productions produced, and performed by and for our community.

- We offer multiple opportunities throughout the season to have our community perform on our stage. From our year-round youth and adult productions, our summer youth and teen productions, as well as our intergenerational production, there is always an opportunity for everyone to get involved and showcase their talents and passion.



Values

At the Rosen Performing Arts Center, we believe in the value of the performing arts for our community. We are a welcoming organization that values diversity, inclusion, and acceptance above all else. We pledge ourselves to honoring the dignity of each person and welcome their unique life experiences and their own unique gifts. We value creating a professional performing arts

experience for those onstage and in our audience, led by those working in the field. We believe that arts education can have a monumental impact on a student's life and ignite infinite possibilities.

Whether you enjoy the experience of the performing arts as an audience member, or you or your child, are seeking new opportunities to explore and develop your craft within your community we are here to serve.

How We Will Win

What is our Winning Aspiration?

Offer community centered performances both presented by the community and professionally that will bring people together. Cultivate performing arts educational programming that will nurture potential.

Where will we play?

All programming will continue virtually until we are given permission by our government and health officials to resume in person gatherings. We anticipate this happening until at least the end of the year. We are located inside the YMCA in Wayne, NJ. With our new online programming model, we now have the potential to expand our outreach past the boundaries of our facility.

How will we win?

We will win by continuing to serve our community, despite the challenges of virtual programming. Being able to offer any type artistic engagement or programming to the community at large, whether it be in person or virtual, is a successful win.

What Capabilities must we have?

To offer educational programming we must have teaching artists who are engaging and invested in the work they are doing to help students of all ages reach their full potential. To continue producing plays, we must have a creative team on hand. Our home base is a beautiful 406 seat, fully equipped theater. Until we can resume in person programming, we must have the proper technology and software to do so.

What Management Systems Must We Have?

Our cultural arts director who manages all of our artistic and educational programming. Proper I.T support to continue offering virtual programming. A plan of action, and proper equipment, such as PPE for when we are cleared to gather in person.

External Analysis

Within a less than 15-mile radius of the Rosen Performing Arts Center, in Wayne New Jersey, there are two established community theaters. There is the Rhino Theater in Pompton Lakes, and the Barn Theater in Montville. Both of these theatre companies have one common advantage over the Rosen PAC. Both theaters produce their own work without much of a turnaround period between productions. For example, theoretically, either theater could still be in performances for *Legally Blonde*, while holding auditions and rehearsals for *Into the Woods*, which is scheduled to open three



weeks after *Legally Blonde* closes, and this pattern repeats itself throughout the season. There are theatre education classes and youth productions held all year round on top of their mainstage season. This results in more of an allegiance, and loyal following in terms of audience, cast, and volunteers to said theaters because shows are produced at such a fast pace. If the audience enjoyed their experience at one show, they may be inclined to purchase tickets to the next show. Performers, who enjoy community theater to continue their

craft and socialize will be more inclined to participate in each show. Volunteers, who help with set build and strike, usher and so forth, will pay more attention to a theater with frequent volunteer participation opportunities and help out whenever they can.

As is the rest of the arts and culture sector of the United States, the Rosen P.A.C is also navigating their way through creating art and maintaining a business throughout this Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, the Rosen P.A.C has cancelled its summer concert series, a programming tradition since 1978. Their teen summer musical theater program has also been cancelled for this year. The Rosen P.A.C intends to follow the guidelines and restrictions set forth by Governor Murphy and has no plans to resume in person programming for the rest of the year, at least.

Internal Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Large auditorium to stage our own theatrical productions while also being appealing to outside organizations and performance groups to use as a rental.
- Part of YMCA community.
- Every adult that enters the Y is asked for their ID which goes through Raptor, which scans against the national sex offender database
- Capabilities to provide online programming in midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Strong youth theatre educational programs including workshops, productions, and summer camp.

WEAKNESSES

- No adult theatre education offerings or programs
- Understaffed
- Stronger support needed from YMCA Marketing.
- Reach broader township and local community.
- YMCA community does not seem interested nor aware of programming
- No strong loyalty to the organization
- Need a reliable volunteer base.
- Lack of diversity in programming and organizational language.
- More financial transparency.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Hire more staff members including an educational director and a costume and set designer per show.
- Get board members involved in what's happening in the theatre.
- Develop more adult programming.
- Implement a new marketing strategy,
- Develop new diversity initiatives.

THREATS

- Other local community theatres in close proximity.
- Ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and health restrictions.

Programing

Unfortunately, it will be challenge for the Rosen PAC, to compete with other theaters that have a rapid, jam packed, program filled season. We cannot accommodate or compete with this type of rapid programing due to our theater rentals, which is a great source of income for our organization. Yes, we value producing our own work for the community and by the community. However, we also cannot deny the fact that the money we make from our theater rentals goes back into the organization so that we can continue to do work that supports our mission. Because we have to accommodate our rentals, we do not have the luxury to schedule an abundance of productions when on any weekend, we could potentially have a rental scheduled. This is why we have gaps in our season schedule, which, as a result, deters a certain amount of loyalty to our organization compared to others in the area. We lose our momentum to keep our audiences, performers, and volunteers engaged and feel part of our organization.



Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, all programing has been moved to online with some success. All arts education classes, have been moved to online, however participation numbers have drastically decreased. There are plans to produce a virtual musical, “The Big One-Oh” on zoom this August. The staff is also brainstorming ideas to continue online programing and bring live theater, in the virtual sense, to audiences and

continue to bring income into the organization. The Rosen P.A.C does not see any possible in person performances or programing opportunities until given permission by the state government.

Administration

As far as administrative support and staffing is concerned, the Rosen P.A.C is drastically understaffed. Meryl Budnick is the cultural arts director for the Wayne YMCA. However, Ms. Budnick also wears many other hats when it comes to operating the Rosen PAC including Managing Director, Executive Director, Producing Director, Programing Director, and Artistic Director. She also manages marketing for the theater and operates the sound and lighting equipment, when need be. All the teaching artists manage their own education curriculums and offerings based on what their own capabilities. There is one technical director on staff. Ms. Budnick has noted she would like to see

the Rosen PAC have more technical staff support in the areas of scenic design, costume design, and hiring an additional staff member to oversee the educational programming and assist her with different administrative needs.

All staff members are paid on an hourly rate. There are no flat rate stipends for production staff, they are paid like all other employees. Under the unique human resources guidelines of the YMCA, it is almost impossible for the Rosen PAC to hire an independent contractor or seek outside assistance. All jobs within the theater or associated with a production must be given to current staff members. This creates a unique challenge. Production jobs, or jobs in the arts in general, are not typical hourly work. Work can occur for extended hours, or offsite away from the theater. A stipend, or flat rate, typically covers all of this work that is being done onsite and offsite, in rehearsal and outside of rehearsal. This can create an issue with employees accurately, and in most cases, undershooting hours on time sheets, and not getting paid fairly for the work they are doing.



Development

The Rosen PAC receives a great portion of income from theater rentals. This money goes back into the organization and allows us to continue our mission. On our own productions, we typically break even on production costs or make a small amount of profit back. The Rosen PAC also does very well when it comes to their education programs and summer musical theater programs. In a traditional summer, the musical theater program can bring in over 125 participants. The YMCA is proud to offer scholarships to their programs. No one is ever turned away from participation because of financial means.



Communication

One unique challenge that the Rosen PAC has is being run by the YMCA. The YMCA does not see the Rosen PAC as a separate theatre organization, but rather as part of the Y community. This limits what the Rosen PAC is able to do to brand themselves as a theatre organization. All Rosen PAC online communication, such as their website and social media accounts, has to be linked directly to the Y, as they do not want the Rosen PAC to be a separate brand

or entity. There is also a very specific marketing style, such a format and color pallet, that the Rosen PAC has to follow when marketing their productions or programing. This strict branding and lack of own control limits how the Rosen PAC can communicate their messaging. It limits the language they can use and how they can reach the greater northern New Jersey theatre community. Going forward, it would be beneficial to open up a dialogue with the marketing director of the YMCA about handing over control of our own marketing and branding to the Rosen PAC so that we can properly brand ourselves as a theatre organization, that is part of and supervised by the Y, with emphasis on how we contribute to the arts community. The way the Y markets themselves is not the same way an arts organization should market itself. By doing so, the Y does a disservice to themselves and to the Rosen PAC by allowing the Rosen PAC to get lost in the midst of all the other non- performing arts-based programing the Y does.

Stakeholders

The Rosen PAC and the YMCA are the only financial stakeholders in this non-profit. There is also the upper management of the YMCA and the Board of Directors. Other internal stakeholders include employees, such as, the cultural arts director, teaching artists, and artistic staff. The community itself, including the members and families the Y serves are also stakeholders. External stakeholders include the greater arts and northern New Jersey theatre community such as actors, directors, technicians, and audience members who are not Y members, but might participate in their productions.

To grasp a fuller understanding about what our YMCA members, as well as our artists, are looking for from our organization. We will be sending out an extensive survey in early 2021 to help us move forward once we fully reopen after Covid-19. The survey will cover everything from what programing our audiences would like to see, and what types of opportunities our performers might be interested in

Goals and Objectives

As are all other Arts Organizations around the country are, the Rosen Performing Arts Center is also grappling with the realities of a Covid-19 world. While we eagerly await the day, we are all given permission to gather together again, we are also planning on ways to expand our outreach and grow as an organization.

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Objective</u>
Offer community centered performances.	Continue to bring the performing arts to our community both virtually and in person, when granted permission to do so.
Cultivate performing arts educational programming.	Offer students of all ages the opportunity to participate in performing arts education classes and workshops to nurture and expand their potential.
Expand the size of our staff.	Hire a part time Assistant/Education Director on staff and create room in our production budgets to include a Set Designer and Costume Designer as part of our production team.
Rebrand our marketing strategy.	Create a new marketing strategy that is both inclusive of our YMCA identity and our identity as a performing arts organization.
Cultivate a broader volunteer base.	Organize a new volunteer committee to assist our organization with production and administrative needs.
Advocate for more diversity and inclusivity within our organization.	Incorporate diverse language in all of our written materials while incorporating more diverse programming within our seasons.



Implementation Strategies

Offer community centered performances.

- All programming will be presented online through at least April 2021. This includes our first virtual musical, *The Big One-Oh*, presented in August 2020. We will also create new virtual opportunities come this fall.
- Program will be planned according to what the regulations are at the time and will be adjusted accordingly
- Once we are granted permission by the government to expand indoor gathering capacity, programming will resume in person with restrictions including our summer teen ensemble and fall intergenerational musical
- **Accountability:** Cultural Arts Director and Production Team (Director, Choreographer, Stage Manager, Designers, local talent.)



Cultivate performing arts educational programming.

- Present an abundance of performing arts educational opportunities for students of all ages.
- We will create online, virtual experiences for students including virtual workshops and productions until in person gatherings with restrictions are allowed by our elected officials.
- Programming will be planned according to the restrictions set forth at that current time and will be adjusted as restrictions lift.
- **Accountability:** Cultural Arts Director with teaching artists.

Expand the size of our staff

- Hire a part time Assistant/Education Director and create room in our production budgets to include a Set Designer and Costume Designer as part of our production team by April 2022.
- Begin search for part time Assistant/Education Director in January 2022
- Make the Assistant/ Education Director position full time by 2023
- Once Covid-19 restrictions have lifted and in person programming has resumed (estimated date January 2022), hire production designers.
- **Accountability:** Arts and Culture Director and Human Resources

Rebrand our marketing strategy

- Work with our marketing team and/or bring in an outside consultant to design a new look and feel for our marketing materials so it is both inclusive of our YMCA identity and also specific to our identity as a performing arts center.
- Hire a production based graphic designer to design show promotional materials.
- **Accountability:** Cultural Arts Director, Marketing Director, Possible outside consultant and/or graphic designer



Cultivate a broader volunteer base for assisting with organizational needs.

- Begin our new volunteer initiative with a new committee “Rosen PAC Volunteers.”
- Our arts and culture director will communicate with the chair of the committee what volunteer needs must currently be met.
- Post call for volunteers in January 2022 or whenever in person programming resumes.
- **Accountability:** Cultural Arts Director; New Volunteers; A volunteer to chair the committee.

Advocate for more inclusivity and diversity within our organization

- Include diverse language in all organization written materials including our mission and values statement, as well casting notices, going forward.
- Acknowledge the Lenape Tribe heritage of our town, Wayne New Jersey.
- Mandate diversity training for all artistic staff.
- Begin incorporating more diverse productions and programming when in person programming resumes (January 2022)
- **Accountability:** Cultural Arts Director



Timeline

August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize first draft Strategic Plan • Finalize fall programming plan for Covid-19. • Continue all online programming and education courses indefinitely until Covid-19 restrictions lift. • Launch our first online musical <i>The Big One-Oh</i>.
September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present first draft of Strategic Plan to the Executive Director for feedback. • Discuss strategic plan with artistic and teaching staff. • Begin including diverse language in our mission and vision statement. Acknowledge the Native American heritage of our town.
October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present final draft of Strategic Plan to the Executive Director for feedback. • Submit final draft of Strategic Plan to the Board of managers
November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin designing stakeholder survey for YMCA members, audiences, and artists who have worked with us. • Begin planning spring programming
December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize stakeholders survey • Begin discussing in person reopening strategy.
January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send our stakeholders survey via email. • Finalize in person reopening plan • Finalize spring programming
February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule a meeting with the YMCA marketing director to discuss our ideas for creating a new marketing strategy for the Rosen P.A.C • Order supplies for in person reopening. • Evaluate stakeholder survey results and implement feedback into our programming.
March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and practice in person reopening safety procedures. • Begin planning summer programming. • Begin planning staff diversity training. Seek an outside instructor to lead training.
April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated date of return to in partial person programming and education courses. • Hire a graphic designer to design our new logo
May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff diversity training. • Discuss ways we can incorporate diversity into our next season when we are able to fully reopen.
June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule a midway check in meeting with YMCA marketing director and our graphic designer to discuss and finalize goals of our new marketing strategy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin researching productions, with an emphasis on shows that highlight diversity for January 2022 reopening season.
August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin planning new volunteer committee. • Meet with Human Resources to discuss new Part Time Assistant/Education Director and Production Based Set and Costume Designers.
September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize new marketing strategy and plans for volunteer committee • Draft job descriptions for new positions. • Finalize January 2022 reopening season.
October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present and introduce new marketing strategy, reopening season and volunteer committee to Board of Managers.
November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order new marketing materials to be printed. Start getting digital marketing materials ready to go for January • Announce January 2022 reopening season. • Get new job descriptions approved by Human Resources.
January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full in person programming resumes • Launch our new marketing campaign • Post call for volunteers • New Season officially opens.
February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job search begins for new Part Time Assistant/Education Director and Production Based Set and Costume Designers
March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer committee begins. • Elect one volunteer to chair committee and be the correspondence between Executive Director and volunteers. • Interview potential job candidates.
April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire and train new staff members.
May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Director will oversee summer education program. • Evaluate effectiveness of marketing strategy so far.
January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year evaluation of all programming, diversity initiatives, and marketing strategy.
April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate Part Time Assistant/Education Director and promote to a full-time position.

