

History of Theater Department

Beginnings:

- Rumor has it that Theater was at one-point part of the English Department, as Speech and Theater
- To be able to support their desire to produce plays, in 1943 Mina Goossen, a faculty member along with students started Casting Hall Productions. Casting Hall is still going strong.
- In the last 1970's the Performing Arts Department was formed- Theater, Dance and Music
- In April 2005 the program was accredited by National Association of Schools of Theater.
- Sept 2005- The Theater separated from Music to create the Theater Department in because of the NAST recommendation. Dance moved with Theater.

Theater Spaces

- The original Blackbox space was downstairs in Bishop Hall
- From 1976-1980 there was no small stage space
- Originally productions were held in Rockwell Auditorium which had a fire and was rebuilt. It was closed from approximately 1976- 1993, taking years to raise funds.
- The theater took over the old basketball court in the current Donald Savage Theater and Communications Building. It is now the Flexible Theater our Blackbox. It was a 3 year renovation that opened in 1992. The space design on renovation was overseen by Dennis and Donna McCarthy. Ribbon cutting ceremony was September 19, 1993 (photo attached).
- The proscenium theater in Upton Hall was named in XXX for Warren Enters, Theater Professor emeritus. It seats 400

Department chairs-

- The Department has had only 5 Chairs and 1 Interim Chair
 - Donna McCarthy transitioned from Chair of Performing Arts to Chair of Theater until she retired in 2008
 - Drew Kahn 2008-11
 - Donn Youngstrom 2011-2013
 - Carlos Jones 2013-2014
 - Ann Emo 2014-present
 - Dr. Anthony Chase- Interim Fall 2018

SUNY Awards:

- Distinguished Service
 - Drew Kahn- Professor March 22, 2018
- President's Award for Excellence in Teaching
 - Drew Kahn, 2006
- Equity and Diversity Special Program Recognition Award
 - Buffalo State Theater Department (<https://equity.buffalostate.edu/special-program-recognition-award>)

Student Awards

Chancellor's Award for Excellence:

Zhanna E. Reed, Bachelor of Arts, Arts and Letters, 2019
Gabiella Moreno, Bachelor of Arts, Arts and Letters, 2012
LaToya E. Codner, Bachelor of Arts, Theater, 2008

Department Scholarships:

- The Lucille and Jack Yellen Scholarship in Dance- Est. October 3, 2012
- McCarthy-Eskew Scholarship for Theater- Est. May 2007
- Fay Northrup Theater Scholarship in Design- Est. July 6, 2009
- Horace Mann Theater Arts Student Scholarship- Est. February 22, 2012
- Dr. Joseph A. Grande and Marguerite R. Grande Theater Scholarship
- Donald Savage Scholarship for College Actors of Promise Est.- October 15, 2005
- Terrence McDonald Theater Scholarship

Department Awards:

- Dean's Award for Excellence (for School of Arts and Sciences)
- Mina Goossen Award
- Michael Dominico Award
- Donald J. Savage Award

People of Note:

- Mina Goossen
- Warren Enters
- Dr. Donald Savage
- Tom Fontana
- Diane English
- Andy Anselmo
- Dr. Grande
- Terrence McDonald

Donors-Scholarships:

Mission:

Strengthened by our unique urban setting and diverse cultural community, Buffalo State Theater provides intensive individual artistic training supported by a robust liberal arts education. Numerous Presidential Awards for Advisement, Teaching,

Vision:

Through the vehicles of engagement, excellence and social responsibility we strive to develop the next generation of globally impactful artists and citizens.

Honors Programs:

Alpha Psi Omega – Carol Beckley formed the Alpha Theta Theta chapter at Buffalo State. The first induction ceremony was Spring 2016.

National Honor Society for Dance Arts - James Huggins formed the Buffalo State Dance Association to house NDEO's Collegiate National Honor Society for Dance Arts as his Arts and Letters capstone project in fall 2011. He wrote by-laws, held elections, and he and Missy Vargo were the first to graduate with NHSDA honors.



Remodeled Theater Arts Building Provides New Facility For Casting Hall Productions


On September 19, 1993 BSC opened the Theater Arts Building in what was once a campus gymnasium. The \$3 million renovation included construction of a TV production studio, seminar and rehearsal rooms, student and faculty offices, a design studio, a computer lab, backstage make-up and waiting areas, and the "Black Box Theater."

Casting Hall had wasted no time, staging its first production, "Brilliant Traces," in the theater that same weekend.

Various administration, faculty, alumni, and students took place in the ribbon cutting ceremony on the steps of the new facility. Among the

alumni present: Channel 7 sportscaster Brenda Brenon, Channel 4 anchor Kevin O'Connell, Channel 2 anchor Laurie Lisowski, Jody Sunshine from CBS's "60 Minutes," and state assemblyman Sam Hoyt.

Provost and vice president of Academic Affairs Dr. Robert Gemmett cuts a ribbon as Dr. Richard Whitaker (Journalism dean), Donna McCarthy (Performing Arts chair), and Dr. Patricia Cummins (Arts and Humanities dean) look on.

	Casting Hall Productions presents Sam Shepard One-Act Festival Thursday, December 3, 1992 8PM Theater Arts Building Buffalo State College Student/Senior Admission \$3.00	3	DEC 3 General Admission \$5.00
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BSC President F.C. Richardson jokes with the illustrious alumni on hand.

