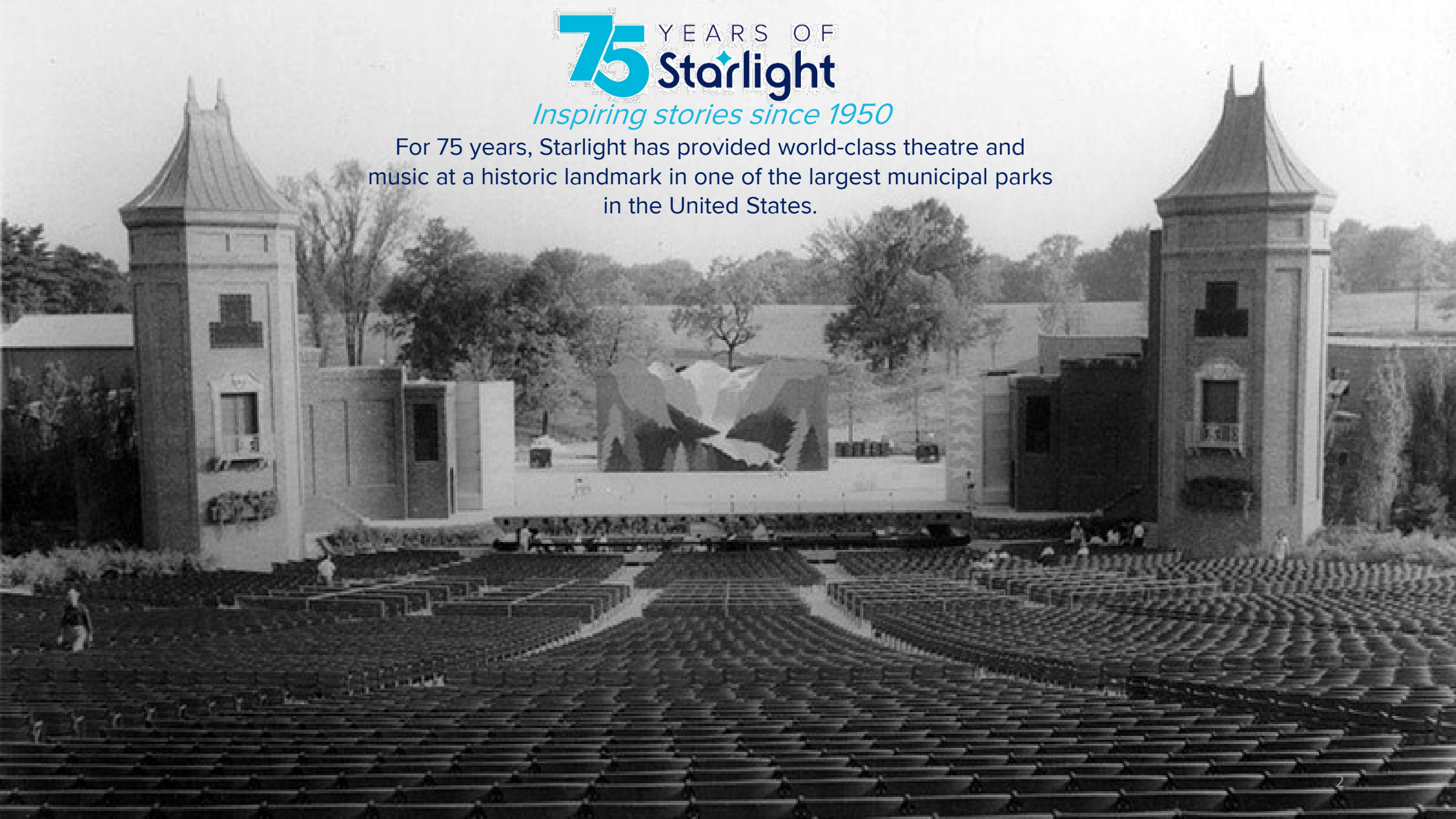
A campaign to secure a Kansas City landmark and better serve the community for future generations



Inspiring stories since 1950

For 75 years, Starlight has provided world-class theatre and music at a historic landmark in one of the largest municipal parks in the United States.

Evidence shows **the arts foster creativity**, **innovation**, **empathy**, and **resilience**; **the arts are crucial for our economic prosperity**; and **the arts enrich lives**, making us happier and healthier.*

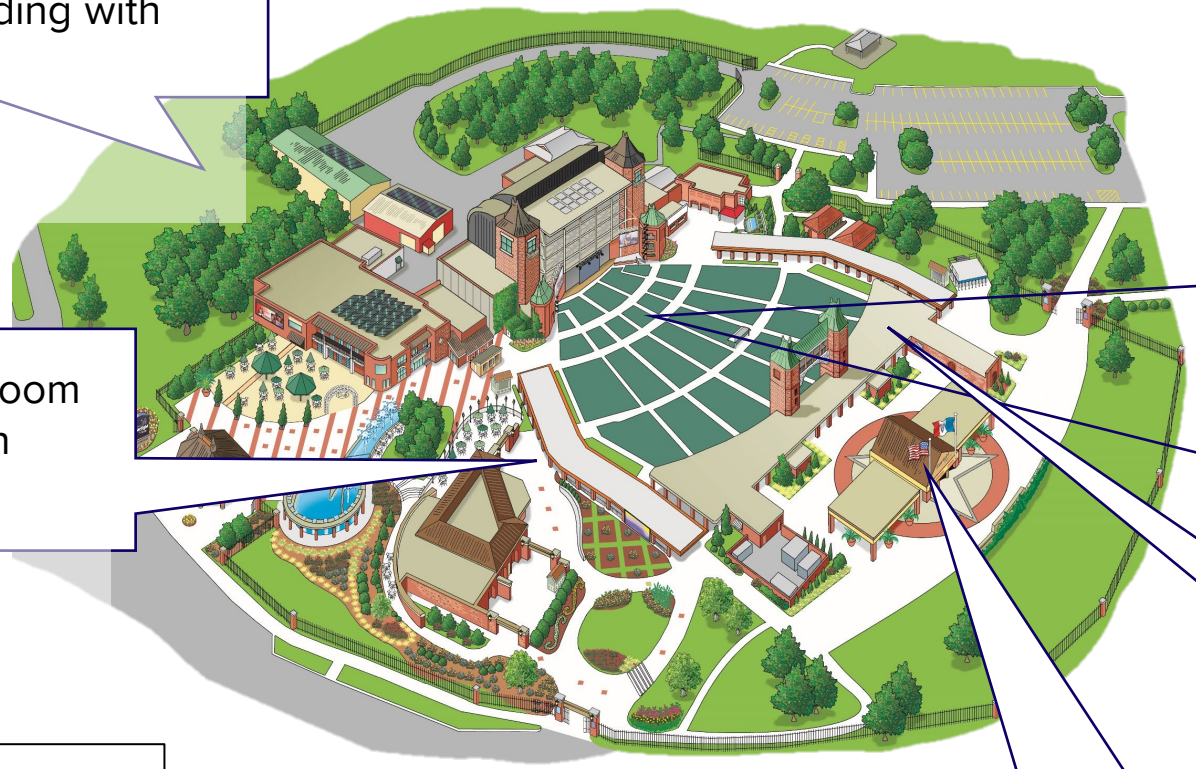
Starlight's goals are bigger than just venue improvements:

1. **Expand live arts audiences and participation**
2. **Support arts access + student educational opportunities**
3. **Support the KC arts & culture sector**
4. **Generate positive economic impact in the region**

*Source: Culture Learning Alliance

NEW paved parking + ADA lots - State matched funding with Zoo + Starlight

NEW towers, light bridge + canopy covering 3,000 seats



NEW sensory-friendly room – matched funding with Variety KC

NEW walk-out market - funded by Levy partnership

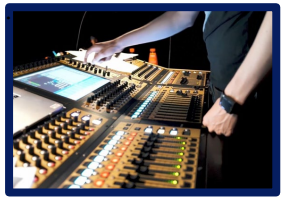
NEW concessions + merch offerings + locations – funded by Levy partnership

NEW Community Programs

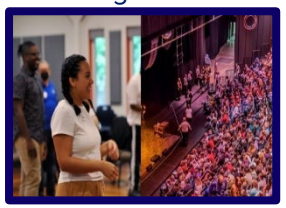
Performances for Young Audiences

Disney Musicals in Schools

Tech Theatre Training



Arts Bridge



New or Expanded Programs

Arts Bridge

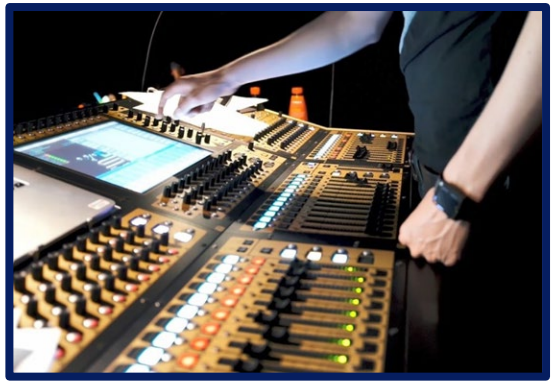
Activating Starlight's historic facilities and collaborating with arts and non-arts organizations alike to build community.

Early partners have included Center for Neighborhoods (UMKC), Community Builder of KC, Heartland Arts KC, KCFAA, LINC, and Variety KC.

Performances for Young Audiences

A performance series targeted for young audiences supporting school field trips serving 2,000 students per production and public family shows with $15 tickets.

Years 1 + 2 School partners have included KCPS, Raytown C-2, Center, Hickman Mills C-1, Independence, KCK, NKC.



Technical Theatre Training

A technical theatre workforce development/career exploration program for high school students.

Year 1 partners have included I.A.T.S.E, Arts Asylum, A to Z Theatrical, Heart of America Shakespeare Festival, New Theatre, Theatre in the Park, Spinning Tree, and UMKC Conservatory.

Community Tickets

The expansion of Starlight's existing free community tickets program to reduce barriers to participation and create more entry points to meaningful arts experiences across all Starlight programming.

Disney Musicals In Schools

A free 17-week program for under-resourced elementary schools to produce their first musical and a sustainable arts program.

This program will be announced spring of 2025 with applications launching in the fall of 2026 and first program in spring 2026 for three to five selected elementary schools.

FIFA
KANSAS CITY
FIFA
KANSAS CITY
GastingerWalker&

Timeline

Fall 2024-Spring 2025

Construction Phase I

Tech Theatre program launches

Performances for Young Audiences + Arts Bridge 2nd seasons

Fall 2025-Spring 2026

Construction Phase II

Disney Musicals in Schools launches

Summer 2026

Expanded summer theatre programming begins

Sensory room complete

World Cup in Kansas City

Canopy Project Funding + Financing

Total cash collected	$	16,974,894
Pledge collection thru April 2026	$	916,776
Starlight reserves requirement	$	1,500,000
City bridge loan	$	3,500,000
Other Starlight reserves	$	5,000,000
Perimeter fund	$	125,000
JE Dunn - not allowable	$	(916,776)
Total funding available	**$**	**27,099,894**
Spent to date	$	16,358,648
Remaining JE Dunn GMP #2	$	10,159,681
Estimated GMP #3	$	2,404,632
Other estimated expenses	$	2,577,039
Total cash needed	**$**	**31,500,000**
Net to prove to proceed	**$**	**(4,400,106)**
Pledge collection thru April 2026	$	916,776
Remaining Gap	**$**	**(3,483,330)**

Not reflected: impact of potential MDFB tax credits on fundraising in lieu of Starlight reserves ($5M) + repay bridge loan ($3.5M); does not reflect impact of up to $1.5M in additional tariffs

Uniquely KC Funding Partners

$1 million+

Hall Family Foundation
State of Missouri
Sunderland Foundation

$250,000 - $999,999

Anonymous
Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation
Mike O'Connell & Sara Hicks Family Foundation
The Deramus Foundation and Don & Jean Wagner Charitable Foundation
Gary & Sherry Forsee
The Goppert Foundation
Shirley & Barnett Helzberg Jr. Donor Advisory Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City
Harry Wilson Loose Trust, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee
McLaughlin Family Charitable Fund
The Morgan Charitable Foundation, in loving memory of Sandi Morgan
Muriel McBrien Kauffman Family Foundation
The Ronald D. Deffenbaugh Foundation
William T. Kemper Foundation

$100,000 - $249,999

Anonymous
Rick & Cathy Baier Foundation
Al & Sharon Cinelli
Howard E. & Debra L. Cohen Family Donor Advised Fund
Jeannette & Jerome Cohen Philanthropic Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Kansas City,
Ann & Gary Dickinson Family Charitable Foundation
David & Laura Hall
Howard & Ro Jacobson, and Elaine & Arlen Rubin
JE Dunn Construction
Kearney Wornall Foundation, UMB Bank, n.a., Trustee
Langdon & Emison
John & Bridget Murphy
Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts
Schreiber Charitable Trust
Daniel & Mary Schulte Charitable Fund
Victor E. and Caroline E. Schutte Foundation
The Sherman Family Foundation
The Patrick & Janna Stueve Family Foundation
Byron & Jeanne Thompson Family &
Country Club Bank

Uniquely KC: A Campaign for Starlight

Honorary Chairs
Jean and Don Wagner

Campaign Co-Chairs
Nikki and Brett Emison | Jeanette Prenger and the Prenger Family

Campaign Cabinet

Jeff Anthony
Cathy Baier
Jeff & Jen Carson
Carl & Jean Chinnery
Dr. Valerie Chow &
Judge Jon Gray (retired)
Howard Cohen

Don Dagenais
Sandi Fried & Gabbie Fried
Mark Fortino
Amy Guerich
August L. Huber, III
Jonalee McLaughlin, Cara
McLaughlin, & Anna McKee

Dan & Mary Schulte
Mark & Amy Thompson
Carolyn Watley & Ellen
Woltkamp

Sabrina Wiewel, *Starlight Board of Directors Chair*
Mike Lanning, *Starlight Board of Directors Facilities Committee Chair*

BACKSTAGE

Gastinger Walker &

Starlight

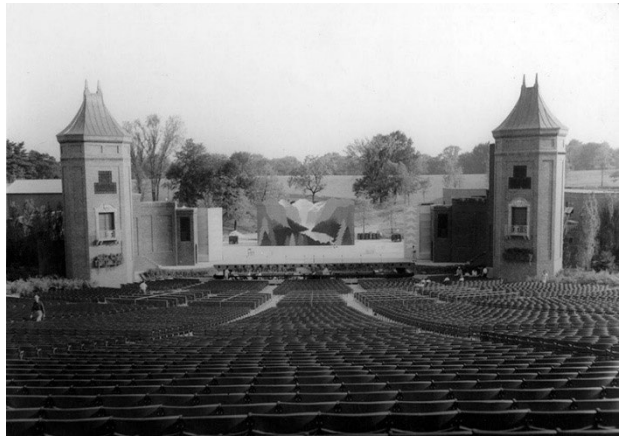
a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

VISION Be the home for accessible live arts experiences for all generations.

MISSION Connect our community through live arts experiences that entertain, inspire, and engage.

Everyone Deserves a Starlight Story

Starlight



Since 1950, Starlight, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, has provided world-class theatre and music at a historic city-owned landmark in one of the largest municipal parks in the United States.

A nearly 8,000 seat outdoor amphitheatre for summer performances with the ability to host more than 460 guests for indoor performances within its enclosed 12,000 square foot stage house, Starlight welcomes more than 250,000 guests annually to more than 50 live community events.

In addition, Starlight serves more than 60,000 people annually through programming focused on arts access, education, community-building and workforce development.

EVENTS

250,000+ guests

50+ live events

5 Broadway shows / 30 performances

22-25 concert events

ENGAGEMENT

~65,000 people engaged with 167 community activations with 200 partners

13,000+ FREE Broadway tickets distributed to 150+ nonprofits

150 Kansas City-area school partnerships with 5,000 student attendees

7,280 workforce development hours

SUPPORT

5,000+ volunteer hours

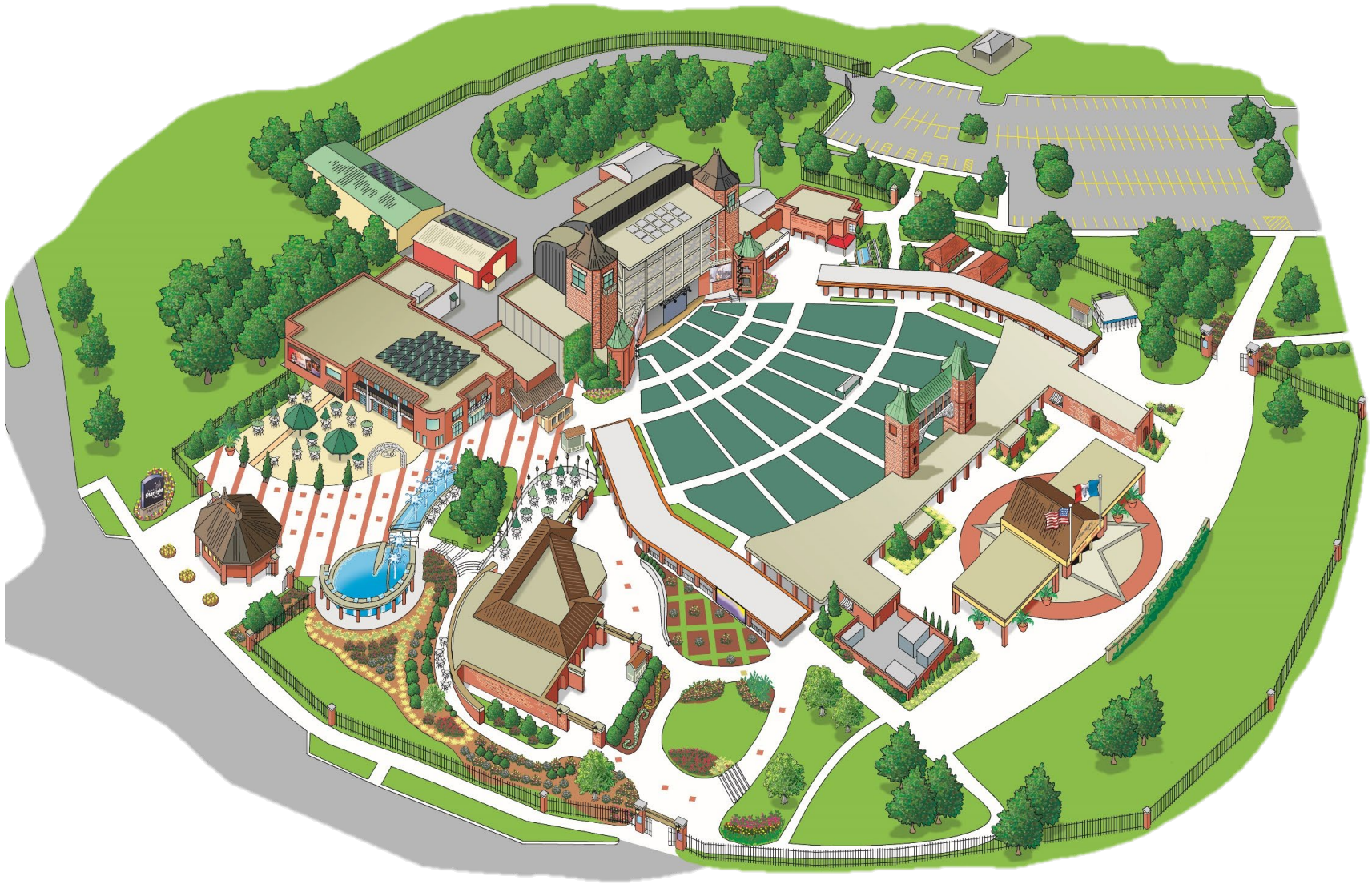
4,500+ donors

Current Starlight Campus

8,000 seats for mainstage summer performances is **4X size of largest Broadway theater** in NYC and **2X size of largest national Broadway touring venue**

16-acre grounds in one of the largest municipal parks in US, Swope Park

12,000 sq. ft. stage house is one of the largest in the U.S. and **encloses to climate-controlled** 466-seat theatre for winter programming



Current Starlight Community Programs

Bob Rohlf Summer Internships

Full-time seasonal arts administration workforce development program for college and college-aged students

Blue Star Awards Program

One of the country's largest high school musical theatre programs serving more than 60-area schools and 5,000 students

Community Tickets

10,000 + free tickets to Starlight events via 150+ community nonprofit partners

Vincent Legacy Foundation

Mentorship and needs-based performing arts training funding and support for 5 middle school students each year

Just Imagine

One hour, interactive theatre exploration community program with younger students and high school versions featuring local teaching artists serving 20 partners annually through 30+ performances

FY26 Starlight Board of Directors – Elected Directors

OFFICERS

Sabrina Wiewel, Hallmark Media
Chair

Nikki Emison, NKC Hospital
Vice Chair

Howard Cohen
Immediate Past Chair (ex-officio)

Kevin Kelly, US Federal Properties
Secretary

Heather Jones, Siegfried Bingham
Community Engagement Committee Chair

Robert Hingula, Polsinelli
Employee Experience Committee Chair

Michael T. Lanning, CPM, US Asset Services
Facilities Committee Chair

Robert Wolf, KPMG
Finance Committee Chair

Mark Coulter, Rouse Frets White Goss Gentile Rhodes, P.C.
Government Affairs Committee Chair

Carey Wilkins
Marketing & Sales Committee Chair

Amy Guerich
Philanthropy Committee Chair

Aviva Ajmera, SolveKC/C-Suite Success
Strategic Planning Chair

Mandi Wright, Starlight
Treasurer (ex-officio)

Lindsey Rood-Clifford, Starlight
President of the Association (ex-officio)

DIRECTORS

Jeff Anthony, McCarthy Auto Group

Denise Bade, Lockton Companies

Cathy Baier, Community Volunteer

Lusha Bodie, Hallmark Media

Michelle Davidson Bratcher, Film In MO: A Missouri Motion Media Association

Bill Briggs, Deloitte

Wendy Burgess, RDD Family Office

Jeff Carson, Enterprise Bank & Trust

Joni Cobb, Creative Planning

Michael Condon, IMA Financial Group

Monica Curls, Terracon

Jill Farrell, Community Volunteer

Leah Fitzgerald, CBRE

Richard Heise, Commerce Bank

Tondee Lutterman, Forvis Mazars

Jolene Mead, PortKC

Chuck Maggiorotto, Country Club Trust Company & Country Club Bank Wealth Solutions

Ramsey Mohsen EVERHANCE LLC

Diane O'Byrne, Competitive Resources Sales Coaching

Tempe Ostergren Elsberry, University of Missouri – Kansas City

Doug Spear, AdventHealth Kansas City

Emily Tilgner, PE, QCxP, WELL AP, McCown Gordon Construction

Mark Van Dyne, Burns & McDonnell

Kasey Vena, Newmark Zimmer

LIFETIME MEMBERS

Steve Doyal

Anita B. Gorman

Adele Hall**

FY26 Starlight Board of Directors – Ex-Officio Directors

PAST BOARD CHAIRS

Robert A. Bernstein Bernstein Rein Advertising (retired)

Howard Cohen Deloitte (retired)

Dianne Cleaver Urban Neighborhood Initiative (retired)

James D. Dawson Fairway Consulting Group (retired)

Steve Doyal Hallmark Cards, Inc. (retired)

Peggy J. Dunn Mayor of Leawood (retired)

Mark Fortino Hawthorn Bank

Greg M. Graves Burns & McDonnell (retired)

Shirley Bush Helzberg Helzberg Foundation

Jack W. Kennedy

Michael F. Morrissey Ernst & Young, LLP (retired)

John Murphy J. Murphy Strategies

Ora Reynolds Hunt Midwest

Carolyn Watley CBIZ

W. Russell Welsh Polsinelli (retired)

CITY OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Mayor Pro Tem Ryana Parks-Shaw Office of the Mayor of Kansas City, MO Designee

Christopher Cotten City of Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Director

Councilman Darrell Curls Office of the City Manager of Kansas City, MO Designee

Michael Meier City of Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Board of Commissioners Designee

JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

To Be Determined Jackson County

To Be Determined Jackson County Legislature

SPECIAL COMMITTEE, TASK FORCE + ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIRS

Starlight Gala 2025 Chairs
Denise Bade (Lockton) & Bill Bade
Robert Hingula (Polsinelli) & Melissa Hingula (Johnson County KS Arts & Heritage Center)

Uniquely KC Campaign Jeanette Prenger (ECCO Select) Nikki Emison & Brett Emison (Langdon & Emison)

Planned Giving Advisory Council Wendy Burgess (RDD Family Office)

Starlight

a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization