



IMPACT REPORT

2025-2026

**ZOELLNER
ARTS CENTER**
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY



ARTS HAVE IMPACT

It is important for an organization to take time to reflect on its accomplishments and the people who made them possible. At Zoellner Arts Center at Lehigh University, we are proud to share with you some of the highlights and impact of our 2025-2026 season.

Our goal of **Connecting Urban, Suburban, and Rural Communities Through the Arts** can be seen throughout this report. This year, our educational programs impacted more than 10,000 K-12 students. Through the Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital Family Series, part of Jefferson Health, we continued our commitment to provide **Access to the Arts for All** by creating a welcoming space where all families can experience the joy of the arts together. You will also see how we continued to **Partner with Purpose**, working alongside numerous campus and community organizations throughout the Lehigh Valley.

As a university arts presenter, Zoellner has the unique opportunity to share the extraordinary work happening at Lehigh University with the broader community, while also serving as the civic infrastructure that brings the community onto our campus. With more than 70,000 people engaging with our programs and building this year, we are creating opportunities for the campus and community to come together through the arts.

Sometimes the impact that this work has can be seen most clearly in individual moments.

This was our first year partnering with Vet Tix, providing veterans with opportunities to experience performances at Zoellner. It was incredibly rewarding to see the joy on the faces of veterans entering our building for the first time. Several sought me out personally to thank us for opening this opportunity to them. Those conversations were a reminder that access and belonging matter.

Our Arts & Wellness Initiative also made a greater impact than we anticipated during its pilot year. We brought together partners from across the community around a shared goal of supporting health and well-being through the arts. Through our Lullaby Project, parents shared their stories, hopes, and dreams for their children and worked with artists to transform those words into original lullabies. The experience was deeply moving not only for the parents, but also for the artists, partners, and others who were there to support them.

Participants in our Well-Being Concerts told us they left feeling rejuvenated, refreshed, and more connected. Just as importantly, many of the artists who participated told us they left with a renewed sense of purpose and joy. These experiences continue to demonstrate that the arts can be more than entertainment; they can be a tool for individual and community well-being.



Marc Falato '87 & Mark Wilson

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to recognize Lehigh University alumnus Marc Falato '87 for his extraordinary generosity in endowing the Executive Director position. His investment represents more than financial support. It reflects his trust in the direction of Zoellner Arts Center, the work of our staff, and the future we are building together.

None of what you will read in this report could have been accomplished without **you**.

To those who purchased tickets and helped us achieve the highest ticketing revenue in Zoellner's history, thank you. To those who volunteered their time and helped create a welcoming experience for everyone who entered our building, thank you. To those who invested their resources so that we could reach thousands of young people, remove barriers to participation, develop innovative programs, and continue bringing artistically excellent experiences to the Lehigh Valley, thank you.

The numbers throughout this report tell an important story, but they are only part of our impact. Behind every number is a person, a student experiencing a performance for the first time, a family enjoying the arts together, a veteran entering Zoellner for the first time, a parent singing an original lullaby to their child, or an audience member finding a moment to breathe.

Together, we are building a place where the campus and community come together through the arts. Thank you for being part of that work.

Mark Wilson

Marc Falato '87 Executive Director of Zoellner Arts Center

MISSION & GOALS

OUR MISSION

The mission of Zoellner Arts Center is to infuse the arts into the life of Lehigh University and the greater Lehigh Valley community by presenting high-quality multi-disciplinary programs, by fostering life-long patronage of the arts, and by integrating our educational resources to enhance our human experience.

OUR GOALS

- **Connecting Urban, Suburban & Rural Communities Through the Arts** by working consistently with area school districts to integrate arts and education.
- **Access to the Arts for All** by removing physical, economic, and emotional barriers to participation.
- **Partnering with Purpose** by actively seeking out partnerships with organizations that share our values and beliefs.



SCAN TO DONATE

MAKE AN **IMPACT**
PLEASE **DONATE**

PRESENTING SERIES



“

Wonderful performance. I was happy to note the collaboration with the English Department and Humanities areas-- nice to see this kind of interdisciplinary academic collaboration with Zoellner events, which allows for a spotlight on Lehigh's academic areas, too.



Your staff is beyond nice. I love the customer service. We have so little of it today. Everyone I ever spoke with is incredibly kind. The shows are wonderful. The theatre is so accommodating. The parking garage is clean, easy, safe. Selection of performances is varied and diverse. Lots of choices.

Amazing performance, I brought my children one that has autism both of which have ancestral lineage to Benin and being able to have them experience this performance seeing some of the cultural aspects of the show was really something special. My son who is on the spectrum was inspired by the music and movements mimicking some of them. I loved it!! Thank you.

”

18,516

Total Number of
Presenting Series Patrons

“Baker Hall, at Zoellner Arts Center, is an exceptional setting for world-class music and dance performances, with excellent acoustics and comfortable seating. The Lehigh Valley is lucky to have this venue!”



PURPOSEFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Expanding on our annual Veteran's Day ticket giveaway, Zoellner is now a Vet Tix partner, providing tickets to events to reduce stress, strengthen family bonds, build life-long memories and encourage service members and veterans to stay engaged with local communities and American life.



“

Thank you Zoellner Arts Center and Lehigh University (my alma mater) for the tickets to this wonderful performance.

.....

We want to say thank you for donating the tickets for the show. We love coming here. So thank you again for your donation.

Had an amazing time with my daughters at the Zoellner arts center. Thank you Vet Tix!!

Many thanks for the opportunity to be with my wife to attend this amazing musical event. God Bless the USA.

Thanks to Lehigh University and Zoellner Arts Center for the great tickets!

Thank you #VetTix! Great concert!



Thank you Zoellner Arts Center. This event was very family friendly. The pre show event was awesome with lots to do for the kids. The kids got to make masks and color them as seen in the picture (above). We had great seats.

”

318

Tickets for Veterans

“Thank you for your kindness in donating the tickets for the concert. Since it's Valentine's Day, we are enjoying a date night out. So thank you again for donating the tickets.”



FAMILY SERIES



“

Our family loves Zoellner Arts Center and the shows they offer to the families. Thank you for providing us such a beautiful theater and encouragement to the community.

.....

Thank you again for inviting Bright Horizons to be a part of the day and we are looking forward to the upcoming shows and having you come back to read.

I took my son to “Click Clack Moo” yesterday and I just wanted to send a note and tell you all how FANTASTIC it was!! So good and so engaging. The cast was very sweet and kind - chatting and taking pictures with my son afterwards. 10/10!

Wonderful performance. Attended with guests ages 4-46. Everyone enjoyed it. Performers were professionals.

”



1,940+

Attendees

5

Family Series Shows

STORY TIME EVENTS

396

Attendees

14

events

Outreach at:
12 Libraries
2 Pre-schools

FAMILY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

36

Attendees

2

Meetings

KID FEEDBACK BOARD

94%

of children

Enjoyed attending
the shows

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

290

Organizations
connected with for
outreach

30

Local and Campus
Partners at Family Day

EDUCATION CONNECTIONS



“This was a great celebration of joy! I loved that my children started to learn several songs in Spanish.

.....

The event was so well organized for school groups, starting from when our bus pulled up, to when we were dismissed at the end. We loved the seating chart.

I teach K-2 Autistic Support and field trips can be especially challenging for some of my students. ALL of my students LOVED the play, they were engaged, remained in their seats (for the most part), and clapped along to the songs. Thank you for providing an amazing experience for my students, many of which have never attended a play. We appreciate all of your hard work!!!



INSPIRING FUTURE MAKERS



Sparking Creativity: After seeing a show in Baker Hall (courtesy of PPL), Hayes Elementary students toured Lehigh's Mountaintop Campus and created drawings about their community.



10,148

Total Number of Student Attendees

29

Events

2025-2026 STUDENT PARTICIPATION*

EVENTS	#
17 School Shows and Workshops	9,512
11 Traveling While Black VR Exhibit	498
1 Mountaintop Campus Tour	138

*Encompassing 14 School Districts and 13 Independent Schools (Charter, Parochial, Private and Home School) in grades K-12

Each year, **The Long Family Endowment for Community Outreach in the Arts** makes high-quality live arts experiences accessible to K-12 audiences across our community. For many students, these performances are their first experience attending a live concert, creating lasting moments of curiosity, connection, and inspiration.

ANY GIVEN CHILD BETHLEHEM

(Ensuring the Arts for) Any Given Child Bethlehem (AGCB) is a collective impact initiative, led by Zoellner Arts Center in collaboration with the City of Bethlehem, the Bethlehem Area School District (BASD), and a network of Bethlehem's finest arts organizations.



“ It never gets old to watch a student, regardless of age, light up when a meaningful connection is made: when they are able to articulate their thinking, emotions, and lived experiences, and when they feel seen and capable within the learning community. ”

Vision

A learning environment where every child experiences, creates, and values the arts.

Core Values

- We believe in the arts as a powerful tool for transformative change.
- We believe in community collaboration and transformative community impact.
- We believe in integrity and equity at all costs.
- We believe in building an engaged learning community.

Accomplishments

1. Facilitate curriculum-based arts experiences in community arts venues.

BASD students had over 10,500 individual arts experiences in community arts venues during the school day.

2. Provide community-based teaching artists for in-school and after-school arts experiences.

Approximately 100 students engaged in in-school programming and 500 students in after-school programming during the 2025-26 school year.

3. Support professional learning for BASD teachers.

138 teachers from 4 schools engaged in Creative Teaching Strategies professional learning opportunities in the 2025-26 school year, impacting over 2,000 students.

Approximately

6,400

students

engaged in Any Given Child arts programming.

During the 2025-2026 school year,

88

classroom teachers, and by extension, approximately...

1,760

students were directly impacted by the Creative Learning Initiative.

Any Given Child Bethlehem directly impacts every K-8 student in the Bethlehem Area School District, in addition to teachers, administrators, local artists and arts organizations, and members of the community at large.







WELL-BEING CONCERTS

To support individual and community health in more holistic and effective ways, we must reframe the role of the arts. Beyond enrichment or entertainment, the arts are powerful, evidence-based tools for reducing stress, supporting mental health, and strengthening social connections.

727

Total Attendance

“

The immersive experience was so ethereal beginning with the breath, intention setting, and then enhanced by the energy exchange between musicians and audience. The setting was a key factor and the guidance by the facilitator kept this focus.

I felt a strong sense of community with everyone around me, and it was a very peaceful time. I felt a great deal of well-being overall, mentally and physically.

”



THE LULLABY PROJECT

CARNEGIE HALL
Weill Music Institute



“My doctor told me,
I could open up and
trust you. This was very
powerful to be here
with you and have this
experience.

.....

As a creative person who performs in front of sold out crowds, The Lullaby Project allows me to fuel both sides and give back to the community.

*I will never let go of her hand, the baby is
the best thing to happen to me. I feel lucky
that I am picked to be your mom.*

- Lullaby Lyric Sample



14

Lullabies Created

8

Written in Spanish

80+

Attendees

32

Mothers

Sessions at:
LVHN 17th Street
LVHN Cedar Crest
Pinebrook Family Answers
Louis E. Dieruff High School
William Allen High School

Our inaugural teaching artists included Regina Sayles, Dina Hall, Khalid Taylor, Miguel Perez-Soto, and Lisa Perez-Soto.

We partnered with the Mindful Child Initiative to introduce mindfulness practices into Lullaby Sessions.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

10,547 85

Connections

Community Engagement Events



“ Thank you for coming out to our library to run a fun storytime with our families! I always appreciate the wonderful program you come up with for the children! ”

– Melissa Burlingame-Sutyak
Southern Lehigh Library
Story Time Event

“ Thank you for all the photos. The presentation was excellent and was a new video experience for most of us. We have a new insight into what “traveling while black” was like. ”

– Krista Hollingsworth
Traveling While Black

COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: MINDFUL CHILD INITIATIVE



Wellness event held at Capital Blue Cross Connect in Center Valley.

13

Well-Being Concerts

16+

Lullaby Project Sessions

“

“At the Mindful Child Initiative (MCI), we believe mindfulness and the arts are powerful pathways to well-being. Our partnership with Zoellner Arts Center creates meaningful opportunities for children and families across the Lehigh Valley to slow down, connect, and experience the arts as a source of creativity, reflection, and emotional well-being.”

”

- MCI's Co-Executive Directors,
Sara Martinez and Jason Sizemore



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Engagement statistics for social media (Facebook and Instagram) for the months of September 2025 - June 2026. During that time, the center gained approximately 1,000 followers.



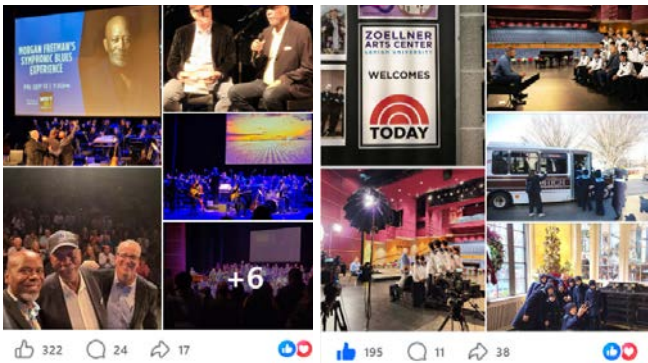
1,894,227

Total views on Facebook

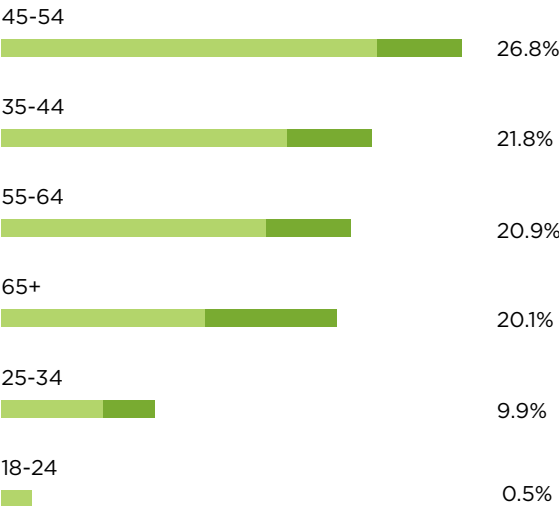


474,731

Total views on Instagram



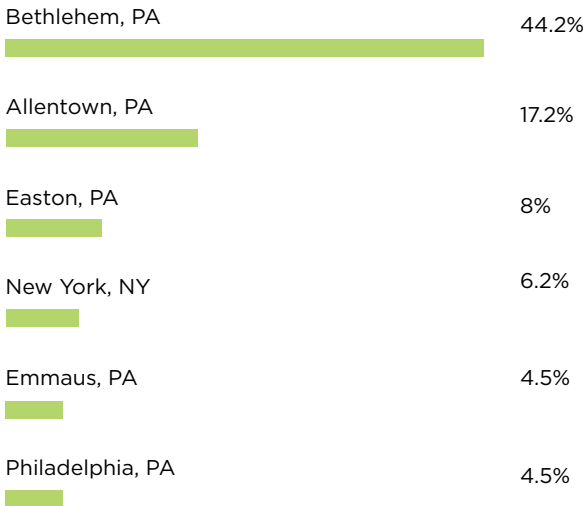
AUDIENCE INSIGHTS



Women Men

(Facebook statistics)

CITIES



VOLUNTEERS

With over 175 events each season—from the Presenting Series to Lehigh's Music and Theatre departments, campus groups, and community programs—Zoellner Arts Center thrives thanks to our dedicated volunteers.



4,100

Volunteer
hours

76

Number of
volunteers

AUDIENCE SERVICES

Behind every performance—on stage, throughout the building, and beyond our walls—is the dedicated Audience Services team. They work tirelessly behind the scenes and with our patrons to ensure Zoellner Arts Center remains a vital common good resource for our campus and community.



6,000+

Hours engaging with patrons

IN THE NEWS

Lifestyle

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 • THE BROWN AND WHITE

Morgan Freeman brings blues to Zoellner Arts Center

By GRACE CULLUM
B&W Staff Reporter

As the lights dimmed, a 29-piece chamber orchestra filled the stage, joined by a six-member blues band flown in from Mississippi. Above them, a massive screen displayed aged photographs and videos from Mississippi and other places shaped by Delta Blues from the early 1900s.

Guiding it all was Morgan Freeman's distinct voice.

Lehigh welcomed Hollywood legend Freeman to Zoellner Arts Center on Friday for a sold-out blues concert that blended live music, narration and multimedia storytelling.

Each time Freeman introduced a new song, the audience was captivated by his story brought to life through multiple art forms.

Before the performance began, Eric Meier, the co-owner of Ground Zero Blues Club, conducted a short interview with Freeman while wear-

ing a Lehigh baseball cap. Meier asked questions about Freeman's career and his connection to blues.

Zoellner Arts Executive Director Mark Wilson said months of planning, coordination and promotion went into making the performance one of the most memorable events of the semester.

Wilson said they began planning for the event in February, and he said it was complex to merge two ensembles who had never performed together before.

Wilson said the concert manager recruited top musicians from the Lehigh faculty and professionals from the Lehigh Valley to be part of the orchestra.

"When they hear they have an opportunity to be on stage performing something that's connected with (Freeman), a lot of people want to be a part of that," Wilson said.

He also said Lynn Farley, the director of marketing and communications for Zoellner, conducted outreach cam-

paigns that helped sell out and build a waitlist for the show.

"It takes a lot of different parts of our team to make it work," Wilson said.

Farley said she works to connect with the community, making sure the arts are infused on campus and the surrounding Lehigh Valley.

She said she worked with Freeman's management team, specifically his agents, managers and publicists.

Over the last decade, Farley said she has watched event marketing shift from print-based promotions to digital-first strategies.

She said promoting an event with a celebrity of Freeman's stature was thrilling.

"Freeman's team has been wonderful to work with, and frankly, there weren't any challenges with regards to promoting," Farley said. "This particular event went really smoothly and it sold out."

Wilson laughed as he recalled a stu-

dent recognizing him around campus as "the guy who brought Morgan Freeman to Lehigh."

Cole Wenig, 26, attended the Symphonic Blues experience and said he felt lucky to get a ticket from the waitlist. He said he recently became a fan of symphonic blues.

"Coincidentally, I started listening to symphonic blues last semester, so when I saw it was happening here I thought it was perfect," Wenig said.

Students can attend events like Freeman's for free, and Farley said Zoellner always reaches out to let students know about upcoming events.

Wilson said it's important to invite students to learn about the behind-the-scenes aspects of project management and event production.

"We are a part of a university and learning environment, so we would want and love to have students who want to know more about what we do and see how we do it," Wilson said.



Lehigh President Joseph Hebl sits among the crowd prior to the start of Morgan Freeman's Symphonic Blues Experience on Friday. The performance at Baker Hall at Zoellner Arts Center was sold out.



Vocalist Keith Johnson (left) and guitarist Vasil Jackson (right) are pictured performing during Morgan Freeman's Symphonic Blues Experience on Friday. Johnson, in addition to singing, plays the guitar and the harmonica.



Morgan Freeman (right) is pictured speaking with Eric Meier (left) prior to the start of the Symphonic Blues Experience on Friday at Zoellner Arts Center. Freeman took part in a brief ten-minute interview before the show began.



Griffin Sawyer/B&W Staff
Morgan Freeman (right) and Eric Meier (left) are pictured discussing Freeman's career on Friday at Zoellner Arts Center. Meier also asked Freeman about his connection to blues.

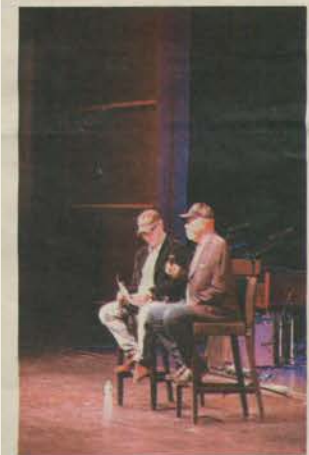


Lullabies of Love: Music in the NICU



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Griffin Sawyer/B&W Staff
Morgan Freeman (right) and Eric Meier (left) are pictured discussing Freeman's career on Friday at Zoellner Arts Center. Meier also asked Freeman about his connection to blues.

Free backpacks, haircuts, and face-painting: Hispanic Center Lehigh Valley kicks off school year with community bash

Cierra Genette Aug 17, 2026 Updated Aug 17, 2026 0



THE MORNING CALL

DECEMBER 4, 2025 THURSDAY Being with choice. 17° 78° Morning Page 17

LIVE ADVENT CALENDAR



Paul and Kristin Doreff of Texas Interior cards sang by Alex Radus, the night's entertainer, Tuesday at Bethlehem's Live Advent Calendar in the Sunken Courtyard. The half-hour celebration, sponsored by the Downtown Bethlehem Association and Hunk, Bethlehem Museum & Store, takes place at 5:30 p.m. daily through Dec. 23 in the courtyard, with a different local business providing surprise entertainment each day. [JANET BERNARDI/PHOTOGRAPHY.COM](#)

Focusing on the season



Touhou Theater performers sing carols.



Alex Radus performs.



ON THE SHOW SHOP HEALTH START TODAY PARENTS FOOD LIFE



CRAIG'S DAY WITH THE VIENNA BOYS CHOIR



Craig Melvin Sings 'Silent Night' With the Vienna Boy's Choir

Dec. 25, 2025

The Vienna Boys Choir is one of the most famous choirs in the world with voices like angels known for their pure and pristine sound. TODAY's Craig Melvin joins the group in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for their Christmas in Vienna concert and sings "Silent Night" with them.

SEASON TOTALS

70,708

Total number of people
impacted by Zoellner Arts Center

99%

Agree or Strongly Agree they would
recommend the center to others

11,045

New patrons

94%

Agree or
Strongly Agree
they saw a high
quality program

Number of tickets for
Lehigh University Students

7,339

Undergrad
6,564

Graduate
775

288

Subscribers
(122 new)

10,148

K-12 students
impacted by
educational
programs



FUNDING SUPPORT

Leadership Funding: **Victoria E. and Robert E. Zoellner '54 GP'15**

WITH SUPPORT FROM



ENDOWMENTS

Claire and Theodore L. Diamond '37 Endowment Fund • Marc Falato '87 Executive Director of the Zoellner Arts Center Endowed Fund • Marc A. Falato '87 Presenting Series Endowment Fund • The Arnan and Marlene Finkelstein Endowment Fund Richard H. Johnson M'73 • Klees Family Instrumental Ensemble Endowed Fund Anne R. Kline '81 Endowed Fund • Lehigh University Creative Writing Program The Long Family Endowment for Community Outreach in the Arts • Lancaster Fund Zoellner Arts Center Children's Arts and Science Education Endowed Fund Zoellner Advisory Council Director's Endowment Fund

MEDIA



SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT



Zoellner Arts Center received funding from Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts.



WHO WE ARE

Administrative Office:

Robert Flowers, Herbert J. and Ann L. Siegel Dean of College of Arts & Sciences

Greg Reihman, Vice Provost for Arts & Libraries

Mark Wilson, Marc Falato '87 Executive Director of Zoellner Arts Center

Isabel Barone, Artistic & Administrative Coordinator

Audience Services:

Sandra Anderson, Director of Audience Services

Robin Perry, Audience Services Coordinator

Ryan Sevenski, Ticket Services Manager

Nick DeSanctis, Ticket System Administrator

Amie Januszkiewicz & Katrina Miller, House Managers

Marketing & Communications

Lynn Farley, Director of Marketing & Communications

Ventura Ortiz, Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Community & Education & Any Given Child

Candi Staurinos, Director of Community Engagement & Impact

Lenore Pitsilos, Education Engagement Coordinator

Dimitra Panagopoulos, Community & Campus Engagement Coordinator

Adam Ercolani, Program Manager, Any Given Child Bethlehem

Business, Scheduling & Rentals

Jennifer Mack, Business Manager

Becky Eshelman, Scheduling & Events Manager

China Wygant, Administrative & Production Coordinator

Technical Services:

Joshua Kovar, Production Manager

R. Elizabeth Miller, Assistant Production Manager

Kyle Rudgers, Assistant Production Manager

Justin Burns, Lighting Coordinator

Phillip Ingle, Audio Coordinator

Cole Becker, Assistant Lighting Coordinator

Zoellner Advisory Council:

Anne Baum

Ellen Baker Ghelardi

Marc Falato '87

Oldrich Foucek II '72 P'05 P'09, chair

Michele McGrath

Maddie H Scheler '08 M'09



