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Alive Downtowns! Appreciative of New York State Government's \$5 Million Decision to Support the Arts

(Poughkeepsie, NY) – Alive Downtowns!, a coalition of 13 downtown historic performance arts centers across Upstate New York, is excited to hear of the New York State government's decision to invest \$5 million local arts organizations. Such organizations serve over five million people annually and are cornerstones to the upkeep and improvement of their respective downtowns. Their combined annual economic impact is \$900,000,000.

"It is amazing and heartening to have focused support from our legislators and Governor Hochul to keep the performing arts centers of Upstate New York at the heart of the continuing success of upstates' downtowns!" says Chris Silva, Bardavon Executive Director.

Formed in response to the impact of COVID-19 on the arts centers, Alive Downtowns! includes members of 13 facilities with an average age of nearly 100 years. Representatives from the Alive Downtowns! coalition have been meeting with New York State legislators and the Governor's office to discuss their importance to a city's continuing attractiveness, urban education opportunities and economic viability. Upstate theatres remain understaffed and are still fighting to get back to pre-pandemic audiences.

Bardavon would specifically like to thank NYS Senators Michelle Hinchey and Rob Rolison and Assembly Members Sarahana Shrestha and Jonathan Jacobson for supporting Alive Downtowns! as well as understanding the value and priority of arts funding in these New York State cities.

Silva says "This investment allows local arts organizations to move fully forward sustainability plans that will allow these organizations to ensure full time staffing by providing funds for competitive salaries and annual raises for full-time staff, who operate these historic venues. It will also allow them to tackle critical building projects, such as structural repairs to historic theaters.

Alive Downtowns! not only brings brilliant performances to their respective areas, but are paramount in bringing together their local communities with arts and education in the arts. Alive Downtowns! members include Bardavon 1896 Opera House (Poughkeepsie), Clemens Center (Elmira), Palace Performing Arts Center (Albany), Proctors Collaborative (Schenectady, Albany, Saratoga), The Reg Lenna Center for the Arts (Jamestown), Rochester Broadway Theatre League's Auditorium Theatre (Rochester), Shea's Performing Arts Center (Buffalo), The Smith Center for the Arts (Geneva), Stanley Theatre (Utica), State Theatre of Ithaca, Syracuse Area Landmark Theatre, Troy Savings Bank Music Hall and Ulster Performing Arts Center (Kingston).

More information about Alive Downtowns! can be found at afairgame.net.

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