

# HANOVER THEATRE & CONSERVATORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Exciting Next Chapter for Jean McDonough Arts Center; JMAC Reveals New Access Grant Recipients

**Worcester, Mass.** (July 28, 2025). Today, [The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts](#) (THT), owned by the Worcester Center for Performing Arts, announced it has fully assumed management and programming of the [Jean McDonough Arts Center](#) (JMAC). The JMAC began as an initiative of the Worcester Cultural Coalition (WCC) operating in partnership with THT. Last year, WCC and THT's boards voted unanimously to transition the facility to THT, and that change became official as of July 1.

Since opening in 2020, the JMAC has become a hotbed of activity. Located in the heart of downtown Worcester at 20 Franklin Street, the JMAC houses the ever-changing [Worcester PopUp](#) gallery and intimate [BrickBox Theater](#), along with support spaces and equipment including dressing rooms, a rehearsal studio, concert grand piano, LED lighting plot, and more. In 2024 alone, 88 different organizations and individual creatives used spaces in the JMAC over 400 times—inclusive of public performances, receptions, private events, visual art exhibits, classes, workshops, and rehearsals. Importantly, 55% percent of all presenters at the JMAC identified as being from or serving communities of color, the LGBTQ+ community, and youth from Worcester County.

“This is an exciting next phase for the JMAC, and we are committed to continuing its mission of presenting a wide range of arts, culture, and events to audiences from our community,” said Alan Seiffert, President and CEO of The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory. “Undertaking stewardship of the JMAC furthers our vision of offering spaces where creativity flourishes, diverse voices thrive, and transformative experiences connect and uplift our community. I look forward to deepening our role in downtown Worcester through integration of this dynamic cultural institution into our company, and by instilling its voice into all our programming across all our stages and classrooms.”

During the transition, THT worked with key funders to secure ongoing support to ensure the JMAC continues to flourish. The McDonough Family Foundation reinforced its commitment to the venue by pledging \$500,000 per year for three years. The Barr Foundation likewise renewed

its commitment to the JMAC, including through its support of the Access Grant Program, which provides selected cultural organizations and individual creatives with the resources needed to share their work with Central Massachusetts audiences.

Administered through a new partnership with the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the latest cycle of JMAC Access Grants awarded \$115,000 across six projects for 2025-26:

- Karen Kempskie-Aquino's "A Cultural Mosaic in America Created Through Middle Eastern Music and Dance"
- Xiang Li's "Watercolor Multi-Sensory Chinese Empress Art and Culture Experience"
- Smokey Bruja's "The Poet's Cauldron Presents World-Renowned Poet Ursula Rucker"
- Worcester Hip Hop Congress's "Words You Can See Vol. 5"
- Rare Rebel Gallery's "Multimedia Presentation of Imperfect Joy"
- Bodies Moving's "MILK Gallery Exhibit and Live Performance"

"From the very beginning, The Hanover Theatre has been deeply committed to the vision for the Jean McDonough Arts Center, which is why we embraced a managerial role in its early days," explains JMAC's Managing Director Olivia Scanlon, who played a crucial role in the transition process. "As we assume full responsibility for the venue, we want to thank the McDonough Family and the Barr Foundation for their continued investment. We look forward to growing Worcester's Theatre District, hosting our Access Grant recipients, and continuing to serve the diverse cross-section of local creatives and nonprofits who have come to rely on the JMAC as an accessible, equitable space."

Performance dates for these powerful events will be announced in the coming weeks, and additional rounds of JMAC Access Grant funding will be open for submissions in late 2025.

### **About the Jean McDonough Arts Center**

Comprised of the ever-changing Worcester PopUp and intimate BrickBox Theater, the Jean McDonough Arts Center (JMAC) is a program of The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts. Individuals and groups can present or develop a wide range of work at the JMAC, including but not limited to work in theater, dance, film, music, performance art, visual art, fashion design, and video game design. [JMACWorcester.org](https://JMACWorcester.org). 20 Franklin St, Worcester, MA 01608.

### **About The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts**

Since opening in 2008, **The Hanover Theatre** has entertained more than two million guests with Broadway musicals, comedy headliners, music, dance, and more. POLLSTAR consistently ranks

The Hanover Theatre as one of the top theatres in the world. The award-winning historic theatre continues to establish its place as a world-class center for the performing arts, a venue for local cultural and civic organizations, and a catalyst for the revitalization of downtown Worcester, MA. The Hanover Theatre's facilities at 551 Main Street house function spaces, offices, [The Hanover Theatre Conservatory](#), and produces free programming at the Francis R. Carroll Plaza and the Bank of American stage in downtown Worcester.

**Worcester Center for Performing Arts** is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, which owns and operates The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts. It also operates and manages the Jean McDonough Arts Center, The Hanover Theatre Repertory, and produces free public programming at the Francis R. Carroll Plaza in downtown Worcester. All [donations](#) are fully tax deductible as allowed by law.

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