



— THE —
KLEIN
— MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM —

The Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation Receives \$2.65 Million State Bond Award

November 15, 2016 - In a special meeting, the Connecticut State Bond Commission voted today to approve a \$2.65 million request for significant capital improvements to the Klein Memorial Auditorium in Bridgeport. Just last week The Klein celebrated its 76th year of continuous operation as the region's largest performing arts center. Chief sponsor of the legislation is State Representative Ezequiel Santiago. It was endorsed by Governor Dannel P. Malloy with additional support from Representative Steve Stafstrom, Mayor Ganim's administration and other members of the Bridgeport state delegation. "I am pleased to see this funding approved for improvements to The Klein Memorial. This is something I have been advocating for a while in Hartford and I am sure it will be put to good use by the dedicated people at The Klein," stated Representative Santiago.

The improvements include: an elevator to transport patrons from the lobby to the mezzanine and balcony; upgraded audio and lighting systems, digital projection system, new carpets and safety handrails, and an outdoor digital billboard to announce upcoming attractions. Earlier this year The Klein received a \$25,000 grant from the Bridgeport Rotary Club, which will also be applied to the purchase of the projection system. All the work is expected to be completed by March 2018.

In announcing the authorization Representative Betty Bokus, co-chair of the subcommittee on bonding, stated to Governor Malloy, "This project, like so many other projects that you do, enhances the quality of life in that environment. It not only does that, it provides jobs for people in that area." Laurence A. Caso, Executive Director of The Klein said, "On behalf of our board of directors and staff, all of us at The Klein are extremely grateful to Rep. Santiago and his colleagues, and to Mayor Ganim, whose team lent us invaluable advice and support. We view this funding not as a gift but more as an investment from the state. With that comes the responsibility to apply the funds toward the betterment of Bridgeport." He added, "These improvements help everyone connected to The Klein. Our audiences will benefit from the physical additions of the elevator and handrails, while our concert

promoters will enjoy a state-of-the-art audio system that will eliminate equipment rental costs and augment our already renowned acoustics. The projection system will finally enable us to present film festivals and screenings, and the outside marquee will contribute greatly to our marketing efforts. These additions will enhance our after school program and lead to more events at The Klein, which will generate new jobs and increased economic activity. I hope and trust the increased attendance will also encourage more patrons to discover the wonderful restaurants now available in Bridgeport."

Upcoming events at The Klein include: "Back to Broadway" performed by the students of After School at The Klein this Friday, November 18th; Fairfield Children's Choir winter concert (December 4th); multiple performances of "The Nutcracker" by New England Ballet (December 10th and 11th with an additional special adaptive performance with developmentally challenged students on December 9th; Greater Bridgeport Symphony performs "Christmas Eve in Paris" on December 17th; The annual Christmas concert by the Children's Choir of the Bridgeport Archdiocese (December 18th); The All Stars Project of Bridgeport performs "Have You Ever Seen a Dream Rapping?", their annual tribute to Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. (January 16th); Salsa singer Frankie Negron (January 21st) in his Bridgeport debut; Comic Elizardi Castro performs his original show, "Law & DISorder" on February 11th as a joint benefit for After School at The Klein and Turn Around Arts; Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestras (March 5th), and the multitalented Jazzical musician Joel A. Martin returns on April 28th in "Footsteps of Peace" a musical celebration of peace and reconciliation featuring 65 musicians in gospel, jazz and classical music. Tickets to these and other events at The Klein can be purchased by calling 800-424-0160 extension 2, or online at: www.theklein.org.

More About The Klein: The Klein Memorial Auditorium is a 1,450-seat performing arts center that serves as a hub for Bridgeport and surrounding communities. Built in 1940 as a gift to the City of Bridgeport from the estate of Jacob Klein, it is one of only 7 Broadway-sized stages remaining in Connecticut. The Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation, Inc, a non-profit 501c3 corporation, is responsible for management of the operations.

The Klein houses 5 resident companies: Greater Bridgeport Symphony, New England Ballet Company, All Stars Project of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestras, and Fairfield County Children's Choirs. It also is home to City Wide Church, numerous dance companies and concert promoters, civic ceremonies, including International Institute of Connecticut's naturalization ceremony, and graduations. In the past 24 months, The Klein has brought such diverse talents as Vienna Boys Choir, the original concert series Footsteps of Peace, the Parris Island and Quantico Marine Corps Bands, Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Ensemble, and its own 75th anniversary concert hosted by Paul Shaffer. In 2016 The Klein presented two-time Emmy Award recipient Loretta Swit of M*A*S*H in a 1-woman play entitled, "Eleanor Roosevelt: Her Secret Journey", as well as the satiric comedy troupe Capitol Steps, and many more.

After School at The Klein (ASK) is an arts education program for Bridgeport students in grades 6 through 12. Now in its fourth successful year, ASK is totally tuition-free, and this summer it expanded with the creation of the Klein Dance Company, which so far has made five public appearances in Bridgeport. A stagecraft course begins in January that will be taught by union stagehand members of I.A.T.S.E.



From Left: State Representative Ezequiel Santiago, The Klein's Executive Director, Laurence Caso, Governor Dannel P. Malloy, The Klein's Director of Development Diane Generous and Representative Steve Stafstrom.