

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 60

Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

West Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

West Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

943949-Roberts2020

Organization Name

University of Saint Joseph

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

060646829

Principal Contact Name

Steven Raider Ginsburg

Title

Director, Autorino Center for the Arts & Humanities

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[Map It](#)

Website

<http://autorino.usj.edu/>

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Amount requested this application

\$13,500.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

The University of Saint Joseph, founded by the Sisters of Mercy in the Catholic tradition, provides a rigorous liberal arts and professional education for a diverse student population in an inclusive environment that encourages strong ethical values, personal integrity, and a sense of responsibility to the needs of society.

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

Founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, the University of Saint Joseph has always been dedicated to educating and preparing its students for a life of compassionate service and leadership. Thousands of USJ graduates have become nurses, educators, social workers, and other dedicated professionals. Today, the University of Saint Joseph enrolls over 2,600 students per year in its coeducational (as of 2018) undergraduate and graduate academic programs, as well as providing vital services to the community through its two laboratory schools (the School for Young Children and the Gengras Center), its Art Museum, and the Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities. As the University of Saint Joseph has evolved into a vibrant educational complex, it remains dedicated to fulfilling a mission that strongly resembles that of its original founders: providing a rigorous liberal arts and professional education for a diverse student population in an inclusive environment that encourages strong ethical values, personal integrity, and a sense of responsibility to the needs of society.

Since 2001, the Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities has been an acclaimed presenter of music, dance, theatre, film, and other performing arts, including many nationally and internationally renowned performers, for the USJ and Greater Hartford communities. The mission of the Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities is:

- To provide transformative experiences which affirm the arts as essential to the human endeavor and to an understanding of human life, and to serve as a cultural resource for University of Saint Joseph and the greater Hartford community;
- To create interdisciplinary projects that link curricula with the arts and humanities, to provide a liberal arts context for all fields of study and professional programs, to heighten an awareness of international cultures and the importance of diversity in society, and to serve as a forum for the examination of campus, regional, national, and world issues;
- To support and present the work of student, pre-professional and professional performing artists;
- To stimulate and foster creativity and scholarship by serving as an arts presenter, and by providing a professional structure and environment where the University and greater Hartford communities learn, experience, and participate in the visual and performing arts;
- To conduct partnership activities with academic departments and programs, and outreach activities with arts and community organizations; and
- To provide cultural access for persons with disabilities and the underserved.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

The University enrolls approximately 2,500 students per year in graduate and undergraduate programs. A rapidly diversifying institution, USJ's population of students of color has increased from 21% in Fall 2013 to 33% in Fall 2019. Approximately 38% of USJ's undergraduates are from low-income families, and 32% are first-generation college students.

Audience demographics at the Autorino Center of the Arts & Humanities (including students and general public, approximately 6,500 event attendees per year) are approximately 62% White, 23% Black, 13% Latinx, and 2% Other. Approximately 27% of our audience is under 25 (student/youth), 42% 26-65 (adult), and 31% 65+ (senior). We have noted that diverse audiences increase with the provision of diverse performances, and have endeavored to increase representation of performers from various cultures and artistic styles.

Describe your organization's governance.

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The University is overseen by a Board of Trustees composed of community leaders, University alumni, and Sisters of Mercy, currently numbering 32. The Board meets four times per year; in 2018-19 (the most year for which the most recent data is available), average Board meeting attendance was 84%. In 2019-20, 100% of Board members contributed financially to USJ. There have been no significant leadership changes since our last application.

Describe the diversity of your board.

The 2020-21 USJ Board has 32 members, consisting of 21 women (66%) and 10 men (33%). Board members are 25% ethnic minority, including 6 Black and 2 Latinx members.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

In FY 2019-20, 100% of the USJ Board contributed financially to USJ.

Project Name

Let's Dance: A Season of Celebrating Dance and Supporting Movement

Project Description

The Autorino Center for the Arts will focus on dance for our 2020-21 performance season, which will be a hybrid of virtual and live offerings. The COVID-19 lifestyle restrictions we have all experienced during 2020 have radically decreased physical movement and social connection, which is why we feel it is imperative to focus on dance, movement and choreography now. Through celebrating dance and supporting movement, we aim to encourage a healthy lifestyle of movement, imagination, creativity, and renewed connection.

Let's Dance will feature outdoor performances, virtual master classes and choreographer talks, streamed performances, artist-residencies, new academic essays, and partnership events with the Connecticut Dance Alliance and others.

Specific projects include:

- Pilobolus (engagement both prior to grant period and during)
- Artist-In-Residence Program (Fall & Spring)
- Music From The Sole (Brazilian-American tap dance)
- 5x5 Connecticut Contemporary Dance Festival

Total estimated project budget

\$63,150.00

Project start/opening

11/04/2020

Project end/closing

05/31/2021

Project venue

Bruyette Athenaeum, USJ; outdoors on the USJ campus; virtual

Project town

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West Hartford and virtual engagements

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Ticket prices vary per event. Music From The Sole will range from \$10 to \$35, with comp tickets for students and low-income individuals (estimated audience 700, including virtual). The 5X5 Dance Festival tickets are \$8/student, \$15/senior, and \$18/adult, with comp tickets for low-income individuals (estimated audience 750 over 2 shows). Artist-in-Residence activities are free (donations encouraged), with an estimated attendance of 5,650, at minimum (as part of a Kennedy Center virtual event).

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

The Autorino Center will lead the marketing effort through obtaining publicity in local media, generating flyers and posters, and postings on social media. The Autorino Center has over 6,000 people who receive email blasts and over 1,200 fans on our Facebook page. A physical mailer may be delivered to over 10,000 audience members. Partners such as Pilobolus, CDA, the 5x5 dancers and companies, and the artist-in-residence companies will also share and publicize the events.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

Roberts Foundation funding will be used to support artist fees and contracted technical support staff for dance performances from November 2020 to May 2021.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation will be identified as an event sponsor everywhere there is an opportunity, including press releases, posters/flyers, programs, and social media/website posts. For live and livestreamed performances, the Roberts Foundation will be recognized in introductory speeches by Autorino Center Director Steven Raider-Ginsburg. Filmed performances will include an acknowledgment caption.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

The University of Saint Joseph's definition of artistic excellence is embodied in the mission and programming of the Autorino Center for the Arts and Humanities, which opened in 2001 and has attracted over 270,000 campus visitors. Public programming has included performances, master classes, lectures, films, and other artistic ventures by world-renowned artists such as Jacques d'Amboise, George Winston, Ben Vereen, and the Afro-Cuban All-Stars, as well as respected local performers including the Sonia Plumb Dance Company, Capital Classics Theatre Company, and Opera Connecticut. Audiences come to the Center to enjoy quality experiences in all art forms.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

This project will provide and facilitate a stimulating environment fostering creative collaboration, diverse artistic expression and critical learning experiences for students and the community while striving for artistic excellence--all of which are included in the Autorino Center's mission. It will also help the University build and cultivate an innovative, enthusiastic and thriving dance community based on artistic vision and community access to dance.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

Dance is an expressive and empowering tool to both the dancers and audience. The University of Saint Joseph can make an impact on its surrounding communities by bringing people of diverse backgrounds together, collectively sharing a common

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space and experience. Dance and movement as a form of nonverbal communication can help build partnerships in diverse communities. As we learn about one another through experiencing dance together, dance can help promote social communication through its creative and expressive form. The versatility of the integration of dance-making, dance-sharing and dance performance--through partnerships including professional dance artists, students and the community--will promote the intrinsic, holistic values of healthy lifestyle through physically inclusive movement. Finally, dance can help teach us the value of collaboration through collective movement experiences, whether we participate physically, virtually, or as audience members.

How will this project be evaluated?

As with most public events at the Autorino Center, the success of Let's Dance! will be measured by attendance (live and virtual) and audience response. At live events, brief audience surveys will be distributed with programs and collected in stationary collection boxes. Follow-up emails to addresses collected during the event via the box office will include access to an online survey. Livestreamed or virtual events will include online survey links at the streaming site.

Cover letter

- [USJ-Cover-Letter-Roberts-Fdn-July-2020.pdf](#)

Board list

- [USJ-Board-of-Trustees-List-2020-21.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [USJ-Proof-of-Nonprofit-Status-2019-20.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [USJ-Audited-Financial-Statements-FY-2019.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [USJ-Prior-Year-Operating-Budget-2019-20.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [USJ-Current-Year-Operating-Budget-2020-21.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [USJ-Balance-Sheet-June-30-2020.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [USJ-Autorino-Center-Lets-Dance-Project-Budget-2020-21.pdf](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

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Yes

Annual report

- [USJ-Annual-Report-2019.pdf](#)

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- [USJ-Strategic-Plan-2020-Executive-Summary.pdf](#)

Grant Report

- [University-of-Saint-Joseph-Grantee-Reporting-Form-2020.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [Supplemental-Information-Season-Details.pdf](#)
- [Supplemental-Information-Season-Details.pdf](#)

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes