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Stewart's Shops/Dake Family Foundation announces \$25,000 contribution to the Palace Theatre's Community Engagement Initiative

ALBANY, N.Y. — Stewart's Shops/Dake Family Foundation has announced a \$25,000 contribution to the Palace Theatre's Community Engagement Initiative. The Palace Theatre's Community Engagement Initiative is an intentional effort to make the Palace Theatre more accessible to the individuals and organizations that live and operate in the community immediately adjacent to the theatre. The initiative focuses on making the Palace a community resource for the Capital Region. By subsidizing expenses associated with using the facilities, area groups that participate in theatre/dance/step/film can practice, rehearse, and develop programs at the theatre during dark days when there are no other events or performances scheduled. Our Community Engagement Initiative also provides workforce development training to members of the community and assists with becoming trained NYS certified security guards, while also offering paid internship opportunities to expose candidates to the business of arts and entertainment. This initiative allows us to collaborate with other non-profit and community-based organizations that serve the youth and families in the community throughout the summer months by providing a safe space to keep cool and enjoy family friendly programming with our Summer in the City Movie Series, Annual Block Party, Safe Trick or Treat event and various other community centered programs throughout the season.

Susan Dake, President of Stewart's Shops/Dake Family Foundation commented, "Stewart's Shops is committed to giving back to all our shops' communities. We are proud to support the Palace Performing Arts Center's Community Engagement Initiative. Together, we can create a stronger, more inclusive Albany, harnessing the transformative power of the arts to uplift lives and inspire positive change."

Kevin Johnson, Executive Director of the Palace Theatre stated, "Live entertainment is the cornerstone of what we do at the Palace, but collaboration and community engagement are also pillars of our success. When an organization has great partners like Stewart's Shops and the Dake Family, we are able to provide access to the Palace Theatre and present it as not just a place for great entertainment, but also a community resource to the Capital Region.

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About Stewart's Shops

Founded in 1945, Stewart's Shops is an employee and family-owned convenience store chain based in Saratoga Springs, NY. Stewart's is known for offering milk, ice cream, coffee, food to go, gasoline, and other convenience items. Today there are over 355 Stewart's Shops located across 32 counties across upstate New York and southern Vermont.

About the Palace Theatre

The Palace has been Albany's iconic downtown landmark for the past eight decades, bringing the biggest names in entertainment to the Capital Region. The history and programming of the Palace is a unique and often untold story with roots dating back to the period of the Great Depression. The Palace Theatre, built in 1931, originally presented vaudeville acts, feature films and became a civic auditorium before closing its doors in 1969. The theatre maintains its original beauty and design and is a historical landmark in the City of Albany. The Palace Performing Arts Center, Inc was established in 1987 and incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1988, to operate the Palace Theatre. The mission of the Palace Performing Arts Center is to bring world-class arts and entertainment to New York's Capital Region, greatly enhancing the area's cultural and economic development. Our mission is carried out through core programming that includes performing arts entertainment & family-friendly performances and community engagement initiatives including free summer movies, an annual block party, a safe community trick-or-treat event and more. The Palace has a significant economic footprint in the Capital Region of New York, with over \$3.5 million in ticket sales, which has a significant impact on the local restaurant and hospitality industry and over 180,000 visitors a year.