

# Shea's Performing Arts Center Volunteer Program

## OVERVIEW

Shea's Performing Arts Center boasts one of the largest Volunteer groups in the Western New York region. Volunteer support helps Shea's to fulfill its mission to restore this magnificent facility as well as present the finest live theatre from Broadway and across the country.

In support of Shea's Staff, the goals of the Volunteer program are:

- 1) To ensure the finest possible experience for the almost 300,000 Patrons who attend performances at Shea's annually. Events may include: Broadway shows, national touring performers/artists; speaking engagements, films, on-school time performances and concerts.
- 2) To be prepared to assist Patrons in the unlikely event that the building must be evacuated.

## VOLUNTEER CATEGORIES

### **Usher Volunteers:**

Usher Volunteers Seat, Direct & Assist Patrons for all performances at Shea's Buffalo Theatre. Usher Volunteers elect to join one of eight Teams: Tuesday Evening; Wednesday Evening; Thursday Evening; Friday Evening; Saturday Matinee; Saturday Evening; Sunday Matinee or Sunday Evening. As a Team member, individuals make a commitment to Volunteer at Shea's for every event that falls on their assigned day and time. All events are vital to the success of Shea's and it is of utmost importance to have a full Volunteer Usher team for every engagement. Each Usher Volunteer team will support at least 10 events per season.

### **Spotlight Volunteers:**

The Spotlight Committee is fundraising entity whose members Volunteer to support performances at Shea's Buffalo Theatre by: selling concessions, champagne or raffle tickets; operating the coat check/hearing enhancer station & player piano; and, staffing the Member's Lounge. Bi-annually, Spotlight Members will sign-up to Volunteer at the performances of their choice. Funds raised by Spotlight Volunteers during performances, as well as the annual 5K Race, help to preserve, assist and promote Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

### **Shea's 710 Theatre Volunteers:**

Volunteers at Shea's 710 Theatre seat, direct & assist Patrons at all performances as well as sell concessions, operate the coat check/hearing enhancer station and staff the merchandise counter. Approximately 90% of the Volunteers from Shea's Buffalo Theatre support the performances at Shea's 710 Theatre as well.

All **Usher/Spotlight/710 Volunteers** are also given the opportunity to support: performances at SHEA'S SMITH THEATRE, the ANNUAL GALA, the WINE, BEER & FOOD FESTIVAL, JUNIOR THEATRE CELEBRATION and KENNY AWARDS DAY.

## RECRUITMENT & TRAINING

The Director of Operations generates new volunteer leads throughout the year by: seeking referrals from current Volunteers and receiving standard applications submitted in-person, via direct mail or electronically.

After the commitment is explained through initial correspondence, potential Volunteers are invited to attend an Orientation Session. These sessions provide a detailed overview of Shea's policies and procedures as well as hand-on experiences so that individuals can determine if our program is the right fit. A ***Volunteer Handbook*** is also given to each potential Volunteer--it is an essential tool and reference point. The handbook outlines expectations and explores: **Theatre Policies, General Facility Information, Volunteer Roles & Responsibilities, Patron Issues** and it includes an **Evacuation Plan**

Hospitality Staff, the House Manager, Front of House Manager and Usher Captains oversee the Volunteer work at each performance to make sure that best practices are being maintained at all times.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Each year, Shea's staff members come together to develop a presentation that provides a comprehensive update of the theatre. New & Current Volunteers are thoroughly informed so that they can better engage Patrons and answer questions. Content includes: restoration projects underway/completed; operational matters; policy & procedure reminders, emergency preparedness and a fire drill. While additional information will be shared throughout the year in person or electronically, this session helps Volunteers to maintain a Patron-centered focus so that Shea's can continue to provide a world-class experience.

## **RESTORATION**

### **Restoration Volunteers**

After a difficult period of time, including a foreclosure and threat of demolition, Shea's Buffalo Theatre was in significant disrepair. Through the tireless efforts of Shea's leadership, a multi-million dollar Restoration project and the hard work of Volunteers (under the guidance of Restoration Consultant Doris Collins), Shea's Buffalo Theatre has returned to its original splendor. Restoration Volunteers are trained by Doris and assist in painting, sanding, plastering and cleaning techniques to maintain the facility while following historic preservation guidelines. Hundreds of Restoration Volunteers throughout the past two decades has helped save the theatre a significant amount of money.