

2001 Rudy Bruner Award

SILVER
medal winner



PHOTO: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO

NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Newark, New Jersey

This is an excerpt from:

PLACEMAKING FOR CHANGE: 2001 RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

BRUNER FOUNDATION, INC.

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2001 RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

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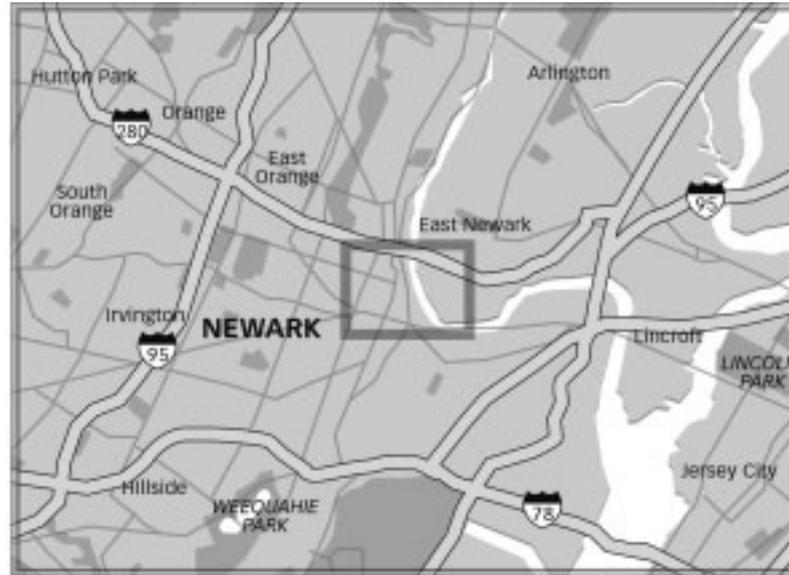
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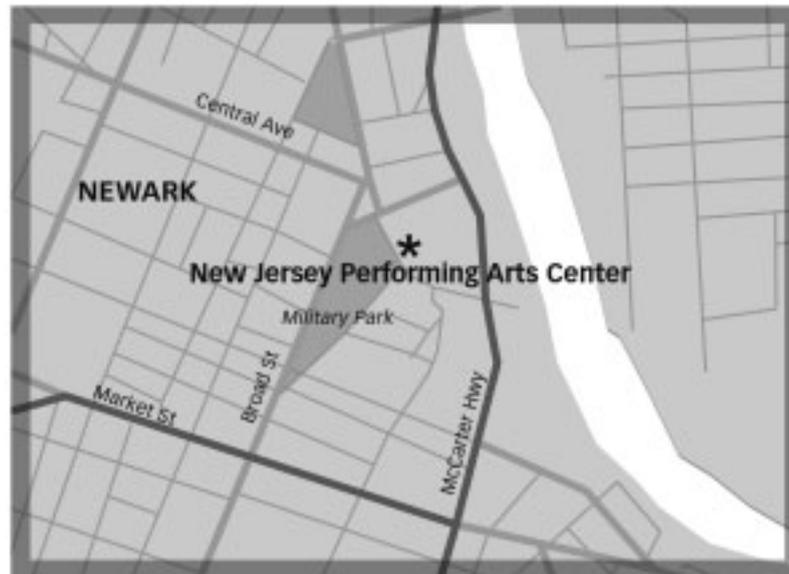
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SILVER MEDAL WINNER

New Jersey Performing Arts Center



Project location



Project location (detail)

NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER AT A GLANCE

SUBMITTED BY:

New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Lawrence P. Goldman,
President and CEO

WHAT IS THE NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER?

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) is a downtown performing arts complex that includes:

- A 2840-seat multi-purpose concert hall.
- A 514-seat theater.
- Two restaurants.
- An outdoor plaza.
- A gift shop.
- Rehearsal space.
- Banquet spaces.
- A 1700-space parking garage.
- The Lucent Technology Center for Arts Education, which houses practice rooms, classrooms and performance space for students.
- Extensive arts education programs for residents of Newark and other communities throughout New Jersey.

MAJOR GOALS OF NJPAC

- To present world-class performances to diverse audiences.
- To promote New Jersey's best artists.
- To provide arts education opportunities for children and their families.
- To bring diverse communities together through the universality of the arts.
- To serve as a revitalization engine for Newark.
- To improve the reputation and image of Newark and contribute to a new sense of community pride.

CHRONOLOGY

1986

Governor Thomas Kean commissions study to assess needs and prospective sites for a performing arts center. Newark Mayor Sharpe James establishes Mayor’s Performing Arts Center Task Force.

1987

Consultant study recommends creating the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) and locating it in downtown Newark.

1988

Raymond G. Chambers (Chairman of the Amelior Foundation) heads a committee appointed to advance NJPAC and guarantees funds from private sector to match state support.

1989

Lawrence P. Goldman named President of NJPAC; Amelior Foundation pledges \$5 million, state commits \$20 million to purchase site; New Jersey State Senate approves funding for planning, design, and site preparation.

1990

Prudential pledges \$3 million; Barton Myers selected as architect.

1991

Master plan for site unveiled.

1992

Victoria Foundation pledges \$2.5 million.

1992

Phillip S. Thomas joins NJPAC as Director of Arts Education.

1993

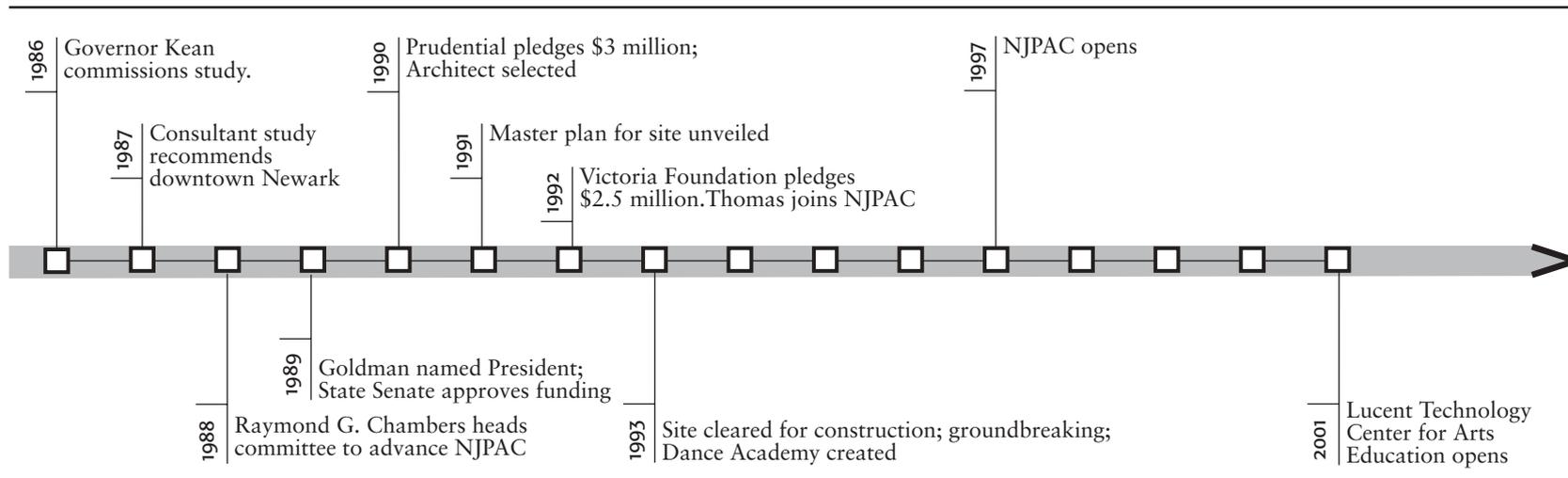
Military Park Hotel imploded, clearing site for construction; groundbreaking; creation of NJPAC Dance Academy in cooperation with Alvin Ailey Dance Theater.

1997

NJPAC opens.

2001

Lucent Technology Center for Arts Education opens.



KEY PARTICIPANTS

Persons who were interviewed are indicated by an asterisk (*).

NJPAC

Lawrence P. Goldman,* *President and CEO*

Phillip Thomas,* *Vice President of Arts Education*

Mary Oleniczak,* *Arts Education*

Donna Bost-White,* *Arts Education*

Jeremy Johnson,* *Assistant Vice-President of Development Initiatives*

Gustav Heningburg,* *Gus Heningburg Associates*

Peter Hansen,* *Vice President of Development*

Bobbie Arbesfeld,* *Vice President and CFO*

M. John Richard,* *Vice President and COO*

Gail Thompson,* *former Vice President, Design & Construction*

Public Agencies

State of New Jersey

Governor Thomas Kean* (1982-1990)

Governor James Florio (1990-1994)

Governor Christine Todd Whitman (1994-2001)

Caren S. Franzini,* *New Jersey Economic Development Authority*

Mayor Sharpe James,* *City of Newark*

Raymond G. Chambers,* *Amelior Foundation*

Catherine McFarland,* *Victoria Foundation*

Gabriella Morris,* *Prudential Foundation*

Architect/Designer

Barton Myers,* *Barton Myers Associates*

Community Groups

Cynthia Banks,* *Deputy Director of Operations, Boys and Girls Clubs of Newark*

Pastor Robert Jeffries,* *University Bible Center*

James Kriedle,* *Assistant Dean, Student Affairs, Rutgers University, Newark*

Dr. Clement Alexander Price,* *New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Rutgers University*

Professional Consultants

Albert Milano,* *Milano Ruff & Associates*

James Abruzzo,* *formerly of A.T. Kearny*

Others Interviewed

Arthur Stern,* *Owner, 744 Broad Street*

Cory Booker,* *Newark City Council*

Ray Codey,* *Director of Development, New Communities Corporation*

Mark Gordon,* *Vice President for Capital Improvement, New Jersey Transit*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

HISTORY OF NJPAC

Newark Context

Newark is the third oldest city on the eastern seaboard. Founded in the seventeenth century, Newark is known for its history as an important shipping and industrial city. Although it has long been in the shadow of New York, Newark has its own cultural identity as a jazz center and home of strong ethnic neighborhoods. It is also a major transportation hub located at the convergence of several major interstate highways and serving as an entry and exit point for New York City by rail.

In the mid-twentieth century, Newark became a major settlement site for African-Americans migrating from the South. At the same time, there was significant migration of white citizens to suburban communities, and by 1967, African-Americans made up the majority of the city's population. In the mid-1960s, Newark had the highest percentage of substandard housing; the heaviest per capita tax burden; the highest rate of sexually transmitted disease, maternal mortality and new cases of tuberculosis; and the most crime per 100,000 people. The city was second in birth rate and infant mortality and seventh in the number of drug addicts per capita in the United States. The unemployment rate was more than 15% in the black community. (Hayden, 1967) During the riots of 1967, in three days, 26 people were killed, 1,500 were arrested, and hundreds of

businesses were destroyed. The riots both underscored and accelerated the deterioration process. (Strom, 1999)

Newark has taken decades to begin to recover from the effects of those riots and improve the built environment, image, and social fabric of the city. Newark's population has dropped by more than 25% since the mid-1960s, and the downtown has felt the decline in the loss of major businesses and street life. Some rebuilding occurred in the 1980s, but this development was mainly in the form of office buildings connected to parking garages by enclosed walkways, clearly a concession to the nervousness of suburban white-collar workers commuting to the city.

In the late 1980s, when NJPAC was being planned, Newark remained a very poor city with a small middle class and, except for



Typical Newark enclosed building connector

a few pocket neighborhoods, a largely African-American and Hispanic population. Its Symphony Hall was run down and under-utilized (the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra played many concerts in other sites to attract suburban audiences), and there were few reasons for suburbanites to visit.

Newark was also a city with no clear plan for urban revival. There was at the time no city planning department *per se*, and redevelopment had long had an *ad hoc* quality, taking whatever offers of building came its way. A minor league baseball stadium, for example, opened in 1999, shortly after NJPAC, and is located next to a commuter rail station, effectively minimizing visitor interface with the central city.

The Idea of a Performing Arts Center for Newark

By all accounts, the initial concept of building a world-class performing arts center in New Jersey came from former Governor Thomas Kean. Governor Kean had a strong and longstanding interest in the arts and chafed at the absence of a serious venue for music, dance and drama in New Jersey. In 1986, he proposed a state effort to fund and develop such an enterprise and commissioned a feasibility study by a private consultant group. Newark philanthropist Raymond G. Chambers commented that “we were all surprised when Shaver [the consultant] selected Newark” as the most appropriate spot for such a center, and, as a former state official noted, “we set out to address cultural deficits in the state, not to save Newark.” (in Strom, 1998, p.427) Kean notes that he had always

thought a performing arts center would make sense for Newark but needed the findings of an outside expert to provide credibility.

Newark’s reputation at that point could hardly have been worse. A white or middle-class presence in the downtown was almost negligible, save suburban-based office workers who rarely used the city and who fled back to the suburbs as soon as the workday ended. Once Newark was formally proposed as a possible site and the potential positive impacts began to be recognized, Mayor Sharpe James became a strong advocate of the project.

The case for Newark was based largely on location. Over 4.6 million potential patrons (not counting New York City residents) live within 25 minutes by highway, rail and bus. Still, in spite of Shaver’s research, there were many skeptical and seemingly contradictory responses to the idea of placing a performing arts center in Newark. Some felt that suburban concertgoers would be too afraid to travel to Newark for a performance, and the center would therefore fail to attract enough visitors to make it viable. Conversely, others argued that any benefits of NJPAC would accrue only to wealthy suburbanites, since the “elitist fare” shown would be of no interest to the poor and largely minority citizens of Newark.

Other New Jersey communities used these same points to lobby for the center to be placed in their area, diminishing the legislature’s already lukewarm enthusiasm. The turning point came with the

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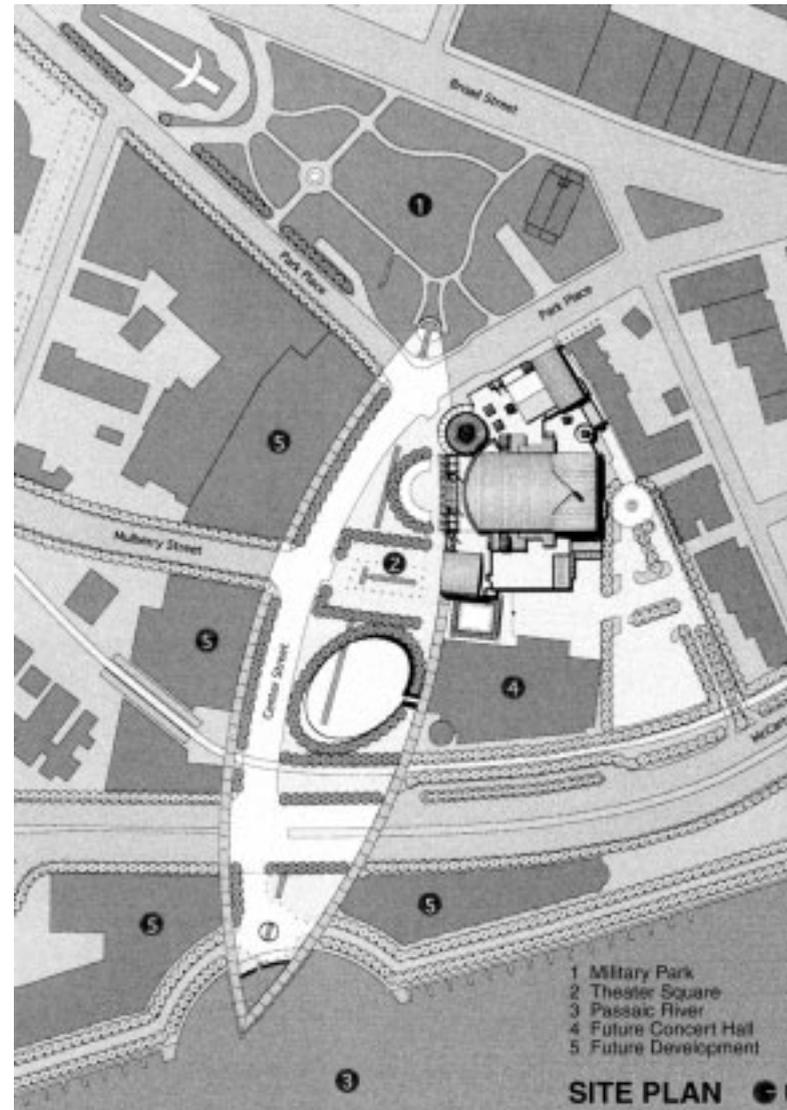
New Jersey Performing Arts Center

promise of support from the private sector. Chambers, a longtime Newark businessman and philanthropist, met with Kean and pledged \$5 million toward construction of the performing arts center in Newark. More significantly, he lent his credibility to the effort to raise another \$33 million from private and non-profit sources. With that inducement, and support from Newark's mayor and legislators, the state agreed to fund construction.

The early planning process was also compromised by the fact that it spanned the terms of three New Jersey governors. When Kean, a Republican, left office, Democrat Jim Florio replaced him. Florio, not known as a strong supporter of the arts, was not inclined to invest significant state funds in a project strongly identified with his predecessor. Mayor James, however, had been an important resource to the Florio campaign and was effective in lobbying the governor to maintain funding and keep the project alive. Four years later, the governorship changed parties again with the election of Republican Christine Todd Whitman. Elected as a tax and cost cutter, her initial inclination was to cut back on the funding for NJPAC. This time, Republican supporters like Chambers were able to lobby successfully to maintain funding.

DEVELOPMENT

In 1988, with the assurance of \$20 million in state funds, development began in earnest. The first important step in the process was the hiring of Lawrence P. Goldman, then vice president of Carnegie Hall. Goldman has consistently been described as the



NJPAC plan drawings, Barton Myers Assoc., (Webb, 1998)

creative force behind NJPAC, bringing to the project a commitment to creating a “world-class” facility while achieving meaningful social change through programming, hiring, and arts education. Goldman began his tenure with the promise that he would not compromise on quality and would hire and build “the best,” even at the political cost of seeking talent outside of New Jersey. Architect Barton Myers of Los Angeles was hired after a national search because he was deemed to have both the design skill and the social sensitivity to respond to NJPAC’s agenda.

The planning process began with interviews of nine nationally esteemed performing arts leaders, first individually and then in focus group sessions run in Newark. The leaders were asked, “What is ‘world class’ and how do you get there?” They emphasized, first, that “world class” performing arts always fail to cover expenses with ticket sales and that the more “cutting edge” you are, more likely you are to run in the red. “Even if you are great and successful,” the message went, “you will lose money.”

The focus group also supported Goldman’s belief that NJPAC should focus heavily on community needs, suggesting that “world class” for Newark had to include a significant commitment to the local community. Goldman insisted that the programming should include not only the well-known “marquis performers” but should also reach out to the community with a variety of top-quality performances that would attract diverse local audiences.

At the same time, the concept of arts education as integral to NJPAC began to develop. Planning consultant James Abruzzo says that the arts education philosophy started to percolate well before the Victoria Foundation offered funding for that purpose. Goldman had learned of arts education programs in other cities and already had a strong commitment to developing youth and family programs to bring the arts to local inner-city residents. He concluded that a quality education program would be good for the organization, for the community, for community relations, and for fundraising.

In planning NJPAC, community input was solicited through advisory groups formed to represent a wide range of interests. These groups had real input in the programming mix that today reflects the interests of a broad audience. Ethnic and international performances appeal to the diverse cultural heritage of Newark residents, who are largely African-American, Hispanic, or Portuguese. Nationally and internationally renowned performers bring audiences from a wide geographic radius as well as from the local community. The programming developed for NJPAC has demonstrated initial success in attracting diverse audiences to the center.

Job Equity and Affirmative Action

NJPAC made a strong commitment to affirmative action programs during construction and to minority hiring for the long-term. To manage the affirmative action program in the construction phase, Goldman hired Gus Heningburg, a civil rights and affirmative action activist, experienced in dealing with construction unions. In

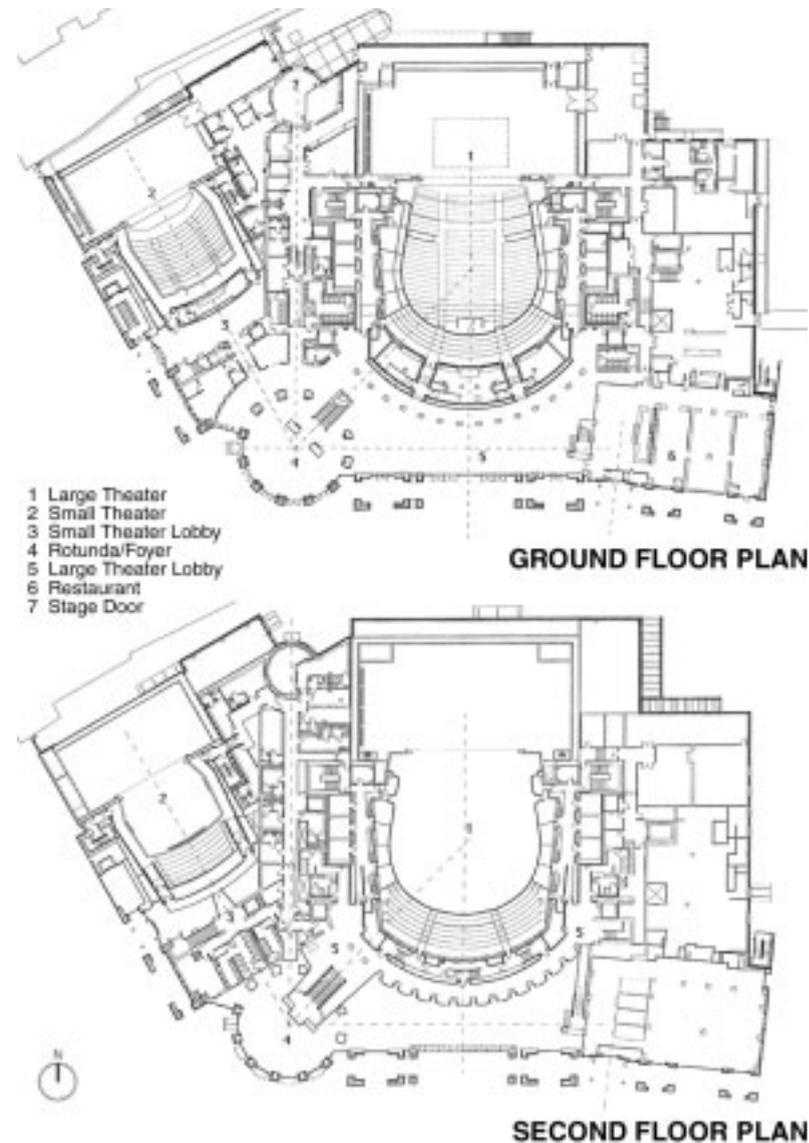
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addition, as noted by Heningburg, Goldman's selection of Gail Thompson, a young African-American woman, as vice president for design and construction was an important symbol to the community and the contractors. Thompson had previously been responsible for planning, design and construction at the American Stock Exchange.

Minority participation in construction was made a contractual obligation based on percentage of actual hours worked. Minority and women tradespersons provided 42% of the person hours worked for each trade; 24% of the subcontract awards had to go to minority-owned firms, and 7% had to be awarded to women-owned firms. Ultimately, 37% of the contracts were awarded to minority and women-owned enterprises. This reliance on an objective standard made the goals sanctionable. Historian Clement Price commented that the job site "looked like New Jersey," with Hispanics, blacks, and women in hard hats. The community liked seeing minorities in both skilled and management positions on the job site and began to develop a sense that NJPAC was serious about its commitment to diversity. The first concert in the hall, two months before the official opening, was given for union workers and their families, further underscoring NJPAC's community orientation.

Heningburg and Goldman felt that it was also critical to have diversity within the skilled labor pool and so worked closely with the unions representing backstage operations. The stagehand union was not experienced in minority hiring, but, according to Goldman, "The union cooperated, and together we achieved something



NJPAC plan drawings, Barton Myers Assoc., (Webb, 1998)

unique in the performing arts.” Minority workers now comprise 50% of the backstage workforce at NJPAC.

NJPAC’S VISION

NJPAC began with the simple but challenging vision of bringing world-class performers and diverse audiences from New Jersey and New York to a well-designed performing arts facility in Newark. The developers hoped that a successful project would add prestige to a state caught in the media shadow of New York and Philadelphia and would help overcome the negative image of Newark as a dangerous, riot-torn city.

As the plan developed and it became clear that the center would be located in Newark, the concept became layered with other goals. A vision emerged of a non-elitist facility with a warm and inviting design, a management and operations team that reflected Newark’s cultural and racial diversity, and significant cultural programming that would be inclusive of all potential patrons. Further, planners hoped the performing arts center might serve as a catalyst for the revival of Newark’s downtown. Last but not least, the plan expanded to make use of the center and the talent it attracted as a platform to lift the quality of arts education in Newark and the state.

DESIGN

Design issues for NJPAC encompassed interrelated questions of urban planning, the symbolism of the architecture, and the functionality of the interior spaces. The first decisions were concerned with where and how to site the facility in relation to

downtown Newark and the local streets. The final site was attractive in part because of its proximity to the Passaic River, an idea suggested by developer James Rouse. (Plans have since been developed to create an esplanade along the river, a project that has the potential to open Newark’s main waterway to its citizens for the first time in its modern history.) The presence of an 1100-space underground garage across the street also argued persuasively for the site. The 11 acres that were purchased provided enough area to construct the proposed buildings and still leave over five acres untouched (essentially land-banked) for future development.



Entry elevations



PHOTO: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO

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NJPAC lobby

The visual and symbolic aspects of this building were considered crucial. Because of the extent of Newark's negative image, the building needed to give a striking impression of change and quality; it needed a "wow factor" to help attract suburban audiences. At the same time, Goldman was convinced that the facility had to appear unthreatening, warm, and inviting to help make members of the local community feel it was accessible to them. The glass front of the rotunda reveals warm colors, steel, painted stucco and includes "accents of copper in handrails, light sconces and elevator doors." (Webb, 1998, p.85) Decorations have themes from community cultures, including a Portuguese design for the inlaid patio and African themes in etchings on elevator doors, in the carpet, and in various artifacts throughout the building.



Night view of NJPAC

PHOTO: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO

The architect, Barton Myers, wanted to make NJPAC a contemporary building for Newark, but not a “space ship,” or a “temple on a podium.” To avoid monumentality, significant setback from the street was avoided; the façade was brought right up to the sidewalk so that users could drive to the front door. The large expanses of glass and transparent lighting at night were intended to make the space feel open, safe, and inviting. An attached plaza provides open public space for outdoor presentations and contains an entrance arch reconstructed from the demolished Military Park Hotel that previously stood on the site.

Myers sought to create within the lobby a semblance of the active street life that is not yet common in downtown Newark. The

rotunda serves both theaters and is designed to bring their respective audiences together before, during, and after performances. The lobby has a theatrical motif; the “show begins on the sidewalk” (Webb, 1998, p.76), and faux boxes on the upper levels of the lobby allow patrons to watch the traffic and interactions below. The lobby is a “carapace of glass and brick wrapped around a wooden core and tied together by its arched steel truss,” (Webb, 1998, p.76) reflecting the structure of the nearby bridge over the Passaic River.

Prudential Hall, the larger of the two theaters, was designed to meet Isaac Stern’s dictum (learned by Goldman during his Carnegie Hall years) that the concert space should “hug the performer.” There is a broad upper gallery that wraps all the way around the hall to create



Lobby interior



Prudential Hall

PHOTO: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO

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a unified look and feel. Again, part of the experience is seeing other patrons. The room is designed with many adjustable acoustic features, such as the ability to extend or retract the curtains that cover most walls. There are moveable ceiling sections and back walls that also adjust to meet specific acoustical needs by changing the degree of reverberation. Thick plaster and joints assure that each room within the facility is acoustically separate, allowing no infiltration of sound. Twenty-four boxes and private salons were included to support fund-raising. Gifts of \$1 million or more bought a personalized box and salon with telephone, TV, and wet bar adjacent to Prudential Hall.

The original plan called for three theaters – a major concert hall, a smaller 350-seat stage, and a small “black box” space for intimate productions. This changed for several reasons. First, the complete site including all three theaters would have cost at least \$200 million, \$20 million more than the board thought it could raise. Second, discussions with artists and producers suggested that a 350-seat hall was too small. A somewhat larger stage with about 500 seats would allow for more economically viable productions. In response, the second theater was scaled up to 500 seats and the black box space was eventually scrapped in favor of converting the adjacent seminary building into a much less expensive arts



Victoria Hall

PHOTOS: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO



Lucent Technologies Center for Arts Education

education center. Built on a restricted budget, the Lucent Technologies Center for Arts Education opened in February 2001 and features bright graphics and simple finishes.

ORGANIZATION/LEADERSHIP

Lawrence Goldman is the inspirational leader of NJPAC. Chambers brought him in as the first paid employee, and Goldman has been at the helm of NJPAC ever since. He reports to a board of directors that includes not only major funders but also individuals with a long history in Newark and others, like Chambers, who were part of the creation of the original concept.

While Goldman is clearly in charge, he has been described as a manager who delegates and empowers the strong individuals below him in the organization and seeks to infuse a creative tension among his staff. A management review was conducted, leading to a reorganization in which John Richards, who was the first person hired by Goldman in 1989, was named executive vice president and chief operating officer. In addition, there are seven vice presidents.

Goldman has been very deliberate in shaping a diverse management and operations team. NJPAC has 114 full-time and 32 part-time staff, of whom 44% are African-American, 7% Hispanic, 73% female, and 25% Newark residents. Persons of color run major program elements of NJPAC, such as programming and arts education, and NJPAC was insistent that local residents of color be employed in the formerly white stagehand union, a feat of which Goldman is very proud. NJPAC's goal of being distinct from New York City theaters



President and CEO, Lawrence P. Goldman



NJPAC and Bruner Foundation staff at site visit

in the way it treats its guests has permeated all levels of staff as is evident in the smiles and greetings from the concession stand vendors, ushers, and ticket agents.

PERFORMANCES

NJPAC has completed its fourth season of arts performances. In the 2000-2001 season, NJPAC presented 423 performances, including 143 adult presentations, 45 FamilyTime sessions and 113 SchoolTime sessions to over 562,000 patrons. At these events, 18,000 ticket holders were series subscribers and over 100,000 were children, educators, or parents in special programs.

The performance calendar is full and varied and includes Broadway productions, classical music (opera, concerts, symphonies), popular music, theater, dance and jazz. There is a significant emphasis on culturally diverse productions, including NJPAC's annual World Festival of International Culture (which offered "Spanish Routes and Rhythms" in 1999-2000 and will present "Dance and Culture of Taiwan" in 2001-2002). NJPAC is the home base of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and presents an array of both renowned and lesser-known New Jersey artists.

Audiences were to a significant extent local (26% from Essex County and another 40% from neighboring counties, with smaller amounts from more distant counties). Only 2% came from New York. About one-fourth of the audience members were minorities. Fifty-three performances were rated at or near sellout (up from 30 the year before).



NJPAC ushers

Abruzzo, an early consultant to the project, noted that NJPAC has also been responsive to other cultural institutions in the state. It has supported the New Jersey Symphony, for example, as a key tenant with prime weekend time slots.

NJPAC also had great success last year with its "Absolut Sounds of the City" free outdoor concerts on Thursday nights throughout the summer. Fifty-two bands, most of which were local groups, were selected by tryout. Those concerts became summer happenings, attracting up to 3,000 white-collar workers (earlier in the evening) and residents (later in the night), and crowds often spilled out into local streets. The success of those concerts was noted by the local

press and the *New York Times*, prompting them to call Newark the newest “hip” venue.

Both programming and ticket costs at NJPAC are designed to attract and welcome diverse audiences, including many who have had little or no exposure to the arts. In Goldman’s view, art is a universal language that can and should help to build bridges among diverse populations. NJPAC’s Bildner Ticket Fund provides performance tickets at \$5 each to qualified organizations. Last year, 4,000 tickets were distributed for forty-four performances in all sections and ticket price ranges. James Kriedle, head of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Newark, indicated that some of his club’s members had been to a number of concerts and were feeling quite at home within the Prudential Hall.

In marketing NJPAC, Goldman adopted what Price calls a “suburban strategy,” appealing to New Jersey chauvinism by pointing out that residents could see better performances with greater ease in Newark than in New York. As part of this strategy, NJPAC has had to provide guarantees of convenient and safe parking, which it achieved by gaining control of the adjacent parking garage under Military Park, and to attract world-class performers who might be difficult to see elsewhere. The strategy seems to have met with significant success.



Summer concert crowd

ARTS EDUCATION

One of the key early decisions for NJPAC was to place a heavy emphasis on the arts education program, which was launched and in operation five years before NJPAC even opened its doors. Chambers and Goldman are credited with having the vision to make NJPAC more than a theater. Arts education presented itself as a tool through which NJPAC could have an impact on its community and address some largely unmet needs in the public school performing arts curriculum. While a special focus was given to local Newark schools, the Arts Education Department's program, centered on the performing arts, also allowed NJPAC to spread its reach and reputation to many other communities throughout the state.

Arts education also made good economic sense. While a number of supporters note that the concept came prior to and not as a demand of the funding, financial support for arts education has been strong and has helped the organization's broader campaigns. Fundraisers say that arts education has been the easiest item for which to find support, and it has attracted a broad range of givers.

Arts education has also been an effective way for NJPAC to gain support and build trust in the community. Because the Arts Education program began before NJPAC formally opened, for years it was the only part of NJPAC that residents actually encountered. NJPAC was fortunate in the hiring of Phillip Thomas, who began developing programs shortly after the project was founded. Thomas was experienced, sophisticated, and highly effective. Three years before its first concert, NJPAC had the fourth largest arts education



Director of Arts Education, Phillip Thomas

program in the country. The Arts Education program has been an important way for NJPAC to establish a local reputation as an organization that keeps its word, and programming opportunities have continued to grow and expand.

At the outset, Thomas conducted a needs assessment with educators, state officials, and parents to find out which populations were not being served and what performing arts genres were under-represented. He discovered that New Jersey schools offered little in music, dance, and theater arts, so the program has been designed to focus on those areas. At the same time, the Arts Education program committed itself to providing New Jersey children, families, and educators exposure to local, national, and international artists.

The Arts Education program cover four major areas:

Performances for Children

- *The Verizon Passport to Culture SchoolTime and FamilyTime Performance Series.* In the previous season, this series included 170 events, encompassing music, theater, puppetry, dance, and holiday shows serving kindergarten through twelfth grade students. NJPAC provides curriculum materials and professional support workshops “designed to reinforce the educational value of each program.”
- *Meet-the-Artist* sessions are also offered as parent-child workshops prior to selected weekend performances. The workshops, for up to 35 participants, are led by artists and

attempt “to enhance the appreciation of the performance participants are about to see.”

Residency Programs

NJPAC has formal partnership arrangements to bring artists to 70 New Jersey schools to help fulfill arts curricula. Services include planning sessions, professional development workshops, curriculum materials, and live performances. Typically, NJPAC pays half of the program cost. Programs include:

- *Arts Academy*, a 10-week program that brings theater and dance instruction into the classroom.
- *Early Learning through the Arts*, co-sponsored by the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts, which teaches three- to five-year-old children “basic academic and life skills through the performing arts.”
- *United Way Partnership*, a 10-week program providing two 90-minute classes per week in various arts for organizations sponsored by the United Way .

Arts Training Programs

At the yearly *Young Artist Talent Search*, students audition for entry into one of six NJPAC arts training programs:

- *The Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts* provides \$80,000 in college tuition and internships for Newark high school seniors.

- *NJPAC/WBGO Jazz for Teens* provides master instruction for 13 to 18 year olds, culminating in a performance in the Victoria Theater.
- *NJPAC/Jeffrey Carollo Music Scholarship* provides scholarships to attend the Newark Community School of the Arts.
- *NJPAC/NJSO Youth Orchestra Festival and Workshop* alternates two programs: a three-day festival where students study with members of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and a workshop in which each youth orchestra in the state is invited to play at Prudential Hall and receive feedback from New Jersey Orchestra members.
- *Summer Youth Performance Workshop* offers teens 13 to 18 year old five weeks of study in music, theater, and dance with professionals.
- *NJPAC/WYACT Summer Musical Theater Production* is a series of summer musical workshops in which students put on fully-staged performances with a cast of 40 student performers and 25 student musicians. The program culminates in eight professionally presented-performances in NJPAC's Victoria Theater.

Professional Development Programs

- *The Arts Basic to the Curriculum Conference* is a two-day conference in arts education for teachers, parents, and artists.
- *Professional development workshops* offer two professional development days for teachers in the New Jersey public school system.
- *Curriculum materials* provided by NJPAC address and enhance New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards.
- *Internship programs* are also available in arts education and administration for college students.

In some programs, students pay a portion of the cost, but all programs are subsidized to some degree. For example, the Jazz for Teens program raises about \$10,000 from tuition but also solicits another \$45,000 from sponsors.

Arts education remains a significant effort for NJPAC in terms of budget, time, fundraising, and staffing. In the 2000-2001 fiscal year, it accounted for 13% of all expenses, with about half of that cost covered by user fees and the rest by outside fundraising. The new Lucent Technology Center for Arts Education, adjacent to NJPAC, provides rehearsal, lesson, and recital space and should allow new and expanded possibilities for on-site programs. That building has a 100-seat black box theater, a 50-seat recital hall, eight classrooms, nine practice rooms, two dance studios, a library resource room, a distributed technology room, and a technology classroom.

CONSTRUCTION BUDGET

SOURCES		
CITY		\$10,000,000
STATE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY	105,200,000
	NJ STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS	1,600,000
FEDERAL	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	1,166,000
	FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEV. ADMINISTRATION	3,800,000
SUBTOTAL		121,766,000
CASINO REINVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY		5,000,000
PRIVATE	<i>LARGEST GIFTS INCLUDE:</i>	60,502,141
	AMELIOR FOUNDATION	5,000,000
	PRUDENTIAL FOUNDATION	3,600,000
	VICTORIA FOUNDATION	2,395,000
TOTAL AMOUNT RAISED		\$187,268,141
USES		
PLANNING		1,333,000
SITE PREPARATION		3,159,060
LAND		20,012,696
INFRASTRUCTURE		13,674,444
THEATER		107,570,800
GARAGE		5,000,000
FF&E		1,250,000
ANTICIPATED ADDITIONAL CAPITAL EXPENSE		4,000,000
CAPITAL RESERVE		1,000,000
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS 1988 THROUGH 1995		9,600,000
FUNDRAISING EXPENSES 1988 THROUGH 1995		3,650,000
INTEREST EXPENSE		2,500,000
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS 1996 THROUGH 1997		6,300,000
FUNDRAISING COSTS 1996 THROUGH 1997		1,700,000
OPERATING DEFICIT (1ST SEASON)		4,500,000
ARTS EDUCATION AND SPONSORSHIP (1ST SEASON)		1,735,000
TOTAL		\$186,985,000

FINANCES

Construction

NJPAC's construction was financed with approximately two-thirds public funds (from a variety of local, state, and federal agencies) and one-third private donations. The most unusual and creative aspect of the financing was the approximately \$27 million that was folded into the capital campaign to cover nine years of administrative and operational expenses as well as the costs of the first season of the Arts Education program and the anticipated first year operating loss. By including these in the capital campaign, NJPAC was able to focus on one fund-raising effort at a time (thus avoiding asking donors both for capital and operational funds) and to eliminate much of the financial pressure on its initial season.

Annual Budget

NJPAC recognized early on that it would require significant additional revenue to fulfill its mission of trying to serve multiple communities with a wide mix of traditional and contemporary programming. In fact, ticket and other earned income only covers about 55% of costs in the \$23 million budget. The remaining expenses are covered by an annual campaign, currently raising about \$11 million per year.

Programmers are given a fixed amount of projected loss each year, allowing them significant discretion in their choice of artists. While the first season reached projected revenue and expense figures, the second season expanded too quickly from 130 to 175 adult

SILVER MEDAL WINNER

New Jersey Performing Arts Center

performances, and NJPAC had “a tough year”—average attendance was too low. In the third year, therefore, the schedule was cut back to 130 NJPAC presentations, although in the fourth year NJPAC expanded again to 147 performances. In addition to NJPAC

presentations, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra calls NJPAC home and performs in Prudential Hall 70 times per season. There are also over 50 “rental” performances each year. SchoolTime and FamilyTime performances account for an additional 150

LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES CENTER RENOVATION

CONSTRUCTION SOURCES

LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES FOUNDATION	\$1,000,000
VICTORIA FOUNDATION	1,000,000
AMELIOR FOUNDATION	500,000
INDEPENDENCE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	250,000
WOMAN’S BOARD ASSOCIATION	250,000
OTHER FOUNDATIONS	58,000
TO BE RAISED	1,300,000

TOTAL	\$4,358,000
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USES

HARD COSTS	\$3,237,000
ASBESTOS ABATEMENT	125,000
GRAPHICS AND SIGNAGE	155,000
FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	60,000
TELECOMMUNICATION	104,000
PROJECT MANAGEMENT	244,000
ARCHITECT	323,000
THEATER EQUIPMENT	80,000
ALL OTHER	30,000

TOTAL	\$4,358,000
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NJPAC FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2000

OPERATIONS

EXPENSES

PERFORMANCES AND RELATED EXPENSES	\$9,041,230
ARTS EDUCATION	2,679,906
THEATER OPERATION	3,876,060
MARKETING/PR	1,071,875
GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	2,817,435
BUILDING-RELATED	1,515,167
DEVELOPMENT	1,466,468

TOTAL	\$22,468,141
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REVENUE

PERFORMANCES	\$9,432,730
ARTS EDUCATION	1,305,321
OTHER	1,504,630
CONTRIBUTIONS, GRANTS	10,476,033

TOTAL	\$22,718,714
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performances annually. A healthy endowment of \$100 million or more could reduce fundraising \$11 million per year to \$6 million per year and give programmers more room for experimentation. NJPAC's financial future may also be considerably aided by the eventual development of its remaining 5.5 acres.

IMPACT ON THE CITY

The long period of planning for and developing NJPAC, and the considerable expense of making it a reality, have often been justified by its projected economic impact on downtown Newark and, to a lesser degree, on the region and state. The range of effects that have been predicted or discussed include transforming the image of the City of Newark, improving the streetscape and immediate physical and business environment of downtown Newark, and serving as a catalyst to increase development and attract new business to the center city. Planners also hoped that NJPAC would promote a ripple of new housing development in neighborhoods adjacent to downtown. There was also concern in some quarters that NJPAC would encourage gentrification or siphon money and attention from other worthy areas, projects and programs, but to date this has not proven to be the case.

Psychological Impact and Image

NJPAC has clearly changed the way many see Newark. The *New York Times* has recently printed articles about NJPAC's impact on the city, describing Newark as a "hip" community. Many suburbanites and those further out who had studiously avoided the city are now coming to Newark to see performances. Mayor James

stated that "we built a better mouse trap and they [suburbanites] are coming." For example, one couple we spoke to had driven over an hour to attend a concert and "to see what all the fuss [over NJPAC] was about." For Newark, that is a very big change.

It isn't just the people associated with NJPAC who feel that it has created a more positive image for Newark. Cory Booker, an independent city council figure and frequent critic of the mayor, believes NJPAC has been successful in changing how Newark is perceived and even how residents see themselves. He does have reservations, however, about a downtown strategy that consistently focuses on mega-projects, such as the baseball stadium and the proposed basketball/hockey arena.



Summer concert crowd at NJPAC

SILVER MEDAL WINNER

New Jersey Performing Arts Center

The head of the local Boys and Girls Clubs feels NJPAC is the “best thing to happen to Newark” and believes the frequent visits to performances there have helped the children’s self-esteem and pride. The dean of students at Rutgers’ Newark campus feels that NJPAC has given local residents and the university community additional pride. Price believes NJPAC has “ratcheted up expectations, especially among the Rutgers administration.” Many professionals who work downtown reported that their own image of Newark had been changed for the better by NJPAC.

Impact on Downtown

NJPAC has had a dramatic impact on its immediate area. Visible along the length of Broad Street, Newark’s central commercial street, NJPAC adds a striking visual terminus to a street that has suffered from disinvestment and crime. Since the opening of NJPAC, street life has improved. The Robert Treat Hotel has been renovated and several high-end restaurants have come into the neighborhood. Office buildings are leasing newly renovated space, and office workers are coming to the center city for lunch and shopping.

Elizabeth Strom, a Rutgers University professor who is studying the impact of arts centers on cities, predicts, however, that the direct financial benefits to the city or state from NJPAC are likely to be marginal. She feels like NJPAC does not provide the number of jobs or the level of additional spending by customers that could alone justify its costs. Its impact is likely to be in the tangible but

secondary ripple effects on other development and in the less tangible areas relating to art, including enlightenment, culture and pride.

NJPAC seems to have had some success serving as a catalyst for development, although the direct causal effects are somewhat unclear. Several significant companies, such as IDT and MBNA, have recently moved into downtown Newark, and the leasing rate for office space has increased several-fold since NJPAC’s inception. Arthur Stern, a New York real estate investor, has purchased and renovated several prominent office towers on a nearby section of Broad Street. According to Stern, when his first building, 744 Broad Street, came up for sale, he had never been in Newark. Nervously, he came across the river to



NJPAC in context of downtown Newark

PHOTO: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO

inspect the property. Later that day, he walked two blocks to look at the construction of NJPAC and now claims that this view convinced him to proceed. He felt he could use NJPAC to attract tenants to a “new” Newark.

Stern notes that when he first started leasing space in his new facility, the toughest job was to convince prospective tenants that Newark was a reasonable place to locate. Now, because of NJPAC, he argues, he can skip that part of the sales pitch completely. Stern has leased out 400,000 square feet, has seen rental rates go from \$11 per square foot to \$102, and has added “Empire State Building” exterior lighting to 744 Broad. He has since invested in two other



Hanes building

buildings in the area (over \$150 million in total) and is optimistic about downtown Newark’s future. Gabriella Morris of the Prudential Foundation notes that there is a group of real estate “young Turks,” spurred by NJPAC, who are developing projects in downtown Newark. “Newark has,” she says, “turned the corner on downtown growth.”

Many of those responsible for NJPAC have founded the New Newark Foundation, which aims at facilitating the development of the land between NJPAC and University Heights and acts as a kind of private urban renewal agency in lieu of a comprehensive public plan for urban development. New Newark has purchased an abandoned department store several blocks from NJPAC and has received several credible proposals to renovate it for retail and residential re-use. If successful, this would be the first new market-rate housing in the area in 20 years. New Newark’s goal is to provide a bridge between NJPAC and the Rutgers campus and to create a university village setting for students and faculty.

It is not clear exactly how much recent financial activity can be attributed to NJPAC. These developments occurred when the national economy was nearing the end of a long period of economic growth, and all areas on the fringe of New York City were benefiting. There have been other additions to downtown, such as the minor league baseball stadium. Many, including Goldman, presume that it will take several more years to see the true scale of NJPAC’s impact on development. Still, most observers seem to agree

that NJPAC stands out as the most prominent and positive of the changes to Newark. Caren Franzini, director of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, feels that NJPAC has played a major role in downtown Newark and that the IDT and MBNA facilities would not have come to the area without it. James Kriedle, Rutgers' dean of students, sees NJPAC as the final piece in the puzzle of major projects (Rutgers' campus, Essex County Community College, and the Newark Museum) in downtown Newark, the piece that allows the area to reach a critical mass that will allow private sector development to proceed on its own.

For all the emphasis on symbolism, culture, design, and real estate, it may be the educational impact of NJPAC that is the most widespread. The Arts Education group now has its own building and a staff of 12 devoted to developing and delivering programs. These programs focus on Newark but are spread throughout the state. Nearly every school child in Newark is touched by NJPAC each year, benefiting from free or low-cost performances, teachers in the school, summer academies, and other programs. For Newark's youth, NJPAC provides, in the words of Mayor James, a chance to "step over the crack vile and onto the stage."

Potential Negative Impacts

Due to the long-term social and economic difficulties faced by Newark, there does not seem to be any significant risk of gentrification because of NJPAC. New development is still being actively sought. Most leaders of community organizations with whom we spoke are pleased with NJPAC, citing its impact on

children and education, jobs, and Newark's image. "We all thought it would be isolated - something we would see from afar." Many parents felt their children would never get inside the building, "but we were wrong," says one community organizer. Many children are "aware of scholarships only because of NJPAC," he added, noting that NJPAC offers job fairs in the spring and is generally good at sharing information with community groups.

The only prominent critic in Newark to argue that NJPAC is a significant drain on the city's neighborhoods is the New Communities Corporation (NCC) — a well-established community development corporation that has been operating out of Newark's impoverished Central Ward for over 30 years. Ray Codey, NCC's vice president for development, argues that NJPAC monopolizes both funding and attention with relatively little benefit for Newark's communities in jobs (it produces relatively few jobs per dollar spent) or culture (according to Codey, most residents, especially adults, never go to a performance). To a significant degree the issue for NCC isn't the quality of NJPAC's architecture or its success as a performing art center, or even how powerful a stimulus it is for downtown development. NCC is posing a broader question to city, state, and national policy makers about priorities and methods in rebuilding cities.

Several of NJPAC's biggest supporters, such as Chambers, McFarland, and Morris, are also longtime supporters and funders of NCC. They tend to sympathize with NCC's perspective but disagree with its conclusion. Chambers, for example, agrees that Newark

neighborhoods are ignored and badly underserved but argues that most of the state and private funds that supported NJPAC would not have been available to neighborhood efforts. Supporters also suggest that the choice should not be between neighborhoods and downtown and that a successful city needs both to thrive. Art, several informants noted, adds a special element to city life by providing “something to get up and go to work for.”

FUTURE PLANS

The main focus for NJPAC now is an endowment campaign intended to raise funds to support NJPAC’s core missions and ease the burden on annual fundraising efforts.

NJPAC also expects to continue to expand the range and number of performances offered. The highly successful summer program is likely to grow, and the addition of the new Lucent Technology Center for Arts Education should provide major new capabilities for the Arts Education staff, especially allowing significant expansion of in-house efforts. In the long-term future, NJPAC still has development options for its remaining 5.5 acres. When and how they are developed may depend upon the growth of the surrounding areas and may also have a major impact on the downtown.

Major projects being planned for downtown Newark include the mixed-use development by the New Newark Foundation, on whose board Goldman serves, and the more controversial arena for professional hockey and basketball. There are also plans for an

esplanade along the Passaic River which would extend up to NJPAC. A new federal building along that waterfront is under construction. Several have noted, however, that Newark does not have a planning department. Changes to downtown are often made on an *ad hoc* basis, leaving a void to be filled by private developers, who may or may not have an understanding of the city’s broader needs.



NJPAC entrance lobby

ASSESSING PROJECT SUCCESS

HOW WELL THE PROJECT MET ITS GOALS

NJPAC has done an extraordinary job of achieving the goals it set for itself and in supporting the revitalization of Newark. NJPAC presents nationally and internationally known performers and offers a large and varied range of programming. It has attracted audiences in significant numbers and from diverse populations. The Arts Education program is large and reaches thousands of children in Newark and across the state. NJPAC's impact on downtown development is, if anything, larger and occurring more quickly than expected. NJPAC is well known in the New York metropolitan area and has been regularly featured in the *New York Times*.

Promoting New Jersey's best artists.

New Jersey artists are featured regularly in NJPAC's traditional programming and are also found via audition for outdoor summer concerts, thus providing local artists with the opportunity to perform for several different audiences.

Providing an arts education environment for children and their families.

Arts Education is one of the most innovative and successful aspects of NJPAC. Its arts education programs are numerous, well funded, and inventive. The program was successful well before NJPAC gave its first concert and has touched almost every school-age child in Newark.

Bringing diverse communities together.

NJPAC works hard to serve a diverse community through specialized programming and events. It does not pretend to be a panacea for social problems. There are racially and ethnically mixed crowds often, but not always. Some argue that the poor from Newark's neighborhoods rarely go, despite NJPAC's low-cost ticket program. Summer concerts, however, seem to be attracting both professional downtown workers and resident minorities, although with some stratification in time of day.

Serving as a revitalization engine for Newark.

For many, NJPAC is an important symbol of change in Newark. It has clearly been an important influence in the renewal of the office market in the downtown area and has brought people and some retail (restaurants) to the area. Most observers are impressed with the change but say it is too soon to know how broad the impact will be.

Providing a workable model for affirmative action.

As part of its commitment to representing its community, NJPAC strove for full representation of women and minorities during construction as well as for hiring its own staff. It established a sanctionable standard by requiring contractors to demonstrate the required number of minority hours on the job before bills would be paid. NJPAC was also successful in integrating the unions that operate back stage as well as having a diverse workforce of its own.

SELECTION COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The Selection Committee was tremendously impressed by the breadth of vision and quality of NJPAC, as well as with the difficult environment in which project proponents had to work. Creating a “world-class facility” in Newark was no small feat, given the city’s history and image. Committee members saw NJPAC as a model for other cities undertaking mega-projects — a model for “doing a big project right.” NJPAC’s building is very well designed, uses handsome materials, and reflects both cultural sensitivity and NJPAC’s goal of serving local residents.

Committee members applauded NJPAC’s efforts to provide diversity and equity in employment for the construction workers and, after completion, for the facility staff, including stage unions. NJPAC showed a “commitment to diversifying all stages of the process from administration to nail pounding.” Committee members noted that NJPAC used innovative approaches to assure that contractors made sufficient use of minority workers, methods that can be modeled by other construction projects.

The Selection Committee recognized the Arts Education program as a significant accomplishment, both locally (in the Newark metropolitan area) and throughout New Jersey. The involvement of New Jersey children in concerts and arts education is both broad and deep and shows a number of innovative ways “to provide classes and do things for kids in the schools where art programs are being seriously curtailed.”

NJPAC may also be an important model for other communities in demonstrating the possibilities of arts as an engine for community development. The Selection Committee noted that “depleted northeastern cities that try development gimmicks to jump-start their downtown economies or just their physical environments” have not succeeded as NJPAC has. “What is really important,” the committee concluded, “is the idea that one of these big projects could have the same type of revitalizing impact on a community as a more traditional community development project.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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RELATED RUDY BRUNER AWARD WINNERS

Readers who are interested in The New Jersey Performing Arts Center may also wish to read about these gold and silver award-winning projects from previous years:

Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco, CA (1999)

ARTScorpsLA, Inc., Los Angeles, CA (1999)

Center in the Square, Roanoke, VA (1997)

Project Row Houses, Houston, TX (1997)

(For full bibliographic citations of Bruner Foundation books, please see Introduction. Information on all RBA winning projects is available at www.BrunerFoundation.org.)

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