

APAP | MetLife Foundation Case Study  
Excellence in Arts Access

# KENTUCKY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Louisville, KY

## Contact

Stacy Ridgeway

[access@kentuckycenter.org](mailto:access@kentuckycenter.org)

502-562-0111

[www.kentuckycenter.org](http://www.kentuckycenter.org)

[Accessibility Information](#)

## Contents

Click a link below to jump to a section.

[Contact](#) | [Take Note](#) | [Overview](#) | [Commitment](#)

[Effective Practices](#) | [Advice](#)

## Take Note

- The Kentucky Center serves as the primary resource for ADA and 504 information for the arts organizations in the state.
- With funding provided in part through the National Endowment for the Arts – Challenge America – Access to the Arts program, the Kentucky Center worked on the “Access Statewide Outreach Project.” Through this project, the Center increased its statewide outreach efforts by collaborating with three performing arts centers in different regions of the state. Kentucky Center staff conducted ADAAG site surveys, and provided equipment and training on audio description and captioned theater services. They also gave the participating organizations alternate format materials, audio described tours of each performing arts center, and workshops on marketing access services.

## Overview

The Kentucky Center is a premier performing arts center and cultural catalyst that exists to enhance the quality of life for all people by providing diverse artistic performances, broad educational programs and rich cultural experiences.

The Kentucky Center was conceived as a major arts and cultural focal center which would promote the growth and development of the arts, tourism, and convention trade industry in Louisville and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The building provides a performance home for five of the state's acclaimed arts companies: Kentucky Opera, Louisville Ballet, Louisville Orchestra, PNC Bank Broadway in Louisville, and Stage One Children's Theatre. The Center also offers artistic presentations that complement and enhance the work of Kentucky's impressive regional performance companies, and are reflective of the diversity of its audiences. As a presenter, the Center schedules performances that match the organization's mission, offering new art to the community while continuing to support Louisville's arts programs and activities.

The Kentucky Center believes that all people have the ability to express themselves through the arts, and all people should have access to quality art experiences.

## Commitment

### Strategic Concepts

- The Kentucky Center Access Services is committed to providing access to the arts for all people in the community.
- The Kentucky Center has institutionalized its commitment to access and recognizes it, along with programming and education, as one of three primary focuses for the organization.

### Professional Development

Kentucky Center staff have attended a number of trainings in ADA issues, both locally and nationally.

### Leadership in the Community

The Kentucky Center serves as a statewide and national resource on arts and accessibility by:

- Offering training and coordinating the loan of equipment to organizations throughout the Commonwealth through a partnership with the Kentucky Arts Council.
- Providing workshops on ADA legislation and arts accessibility, workshops for artists and educators, a monthly electronic newsletter on arts access, and technical assistance for organizations throughout the state.

- Establishing the Arts Access Forum (AAF) to increase art opportunities for organizations that work with individuals of diverse abilities in the Louisville Metro community. Representatives of member organizations meet monthly to develop arts opportunities, and share information and resources.
- Publishing the *Directory of Organizations Serving People with Disabilities and Older Americans*, a marketing tool that lists over 800 Kentucky organizations that work with people with disabilities. The directory includes population statistics for people with disabilities divided by region, county, and disability.

The Kentucky Center is also one of the founding members of the ADA/504 Accessibility Coordinators in the Arts, now known as the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability, and Access Services staff have presented at a number of national conferences.

## Effective Practices

### Community Engagement

The Kentucky Center established an Access Committee to increase awareness of the Center's accessibility services and to support the Center's mission to provide access to the arts. The committee includes members of the Center's Boards, individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, professionals representing organizations for people with disabilities, and older Americans. The role of this committee is to advise the Board(s) regarding access services, recommend ways to promote local services, and raise awareness of the Center's statewide access programs. Members also work with Center staff in the development of special activities surrounding access services and ongoing evaluation of access programs.

In addition, the Kentucky Center has developed relationships with a number of organizations including the American Printing House for the Blind, the Kentucky School for the Blind, the Kentucky Assistive Technology Network, and the local Hearing Loss Association of America (formerly Self Help for Hard of Hearing People) chapter.

### Implementation

- The Kentucky Center offers many accommodations for patrons and visitors including:
  - Infrared assistive listening devices;
  - Loaner wheelchairs;
  - Volunteer greeters, who are available to assist patrons using wheelchairs to their seating or event location;
  - Audio description service, provided by volunteer describers;

- Captioned theater service, provided by a volunteer who controls the flow of the text to match the actor's lines;
  - "Images for the Ear," an audio recording describing the artwork of the Kentucky Center; and
  - Alternate format materials in Braille, audio tape, and large print format, available upon request.
- The Access KCARD provides reduced-price tickets to individuals with disabilities and groups that work with the disability community.
  - A monthly Arts Access Newsletter serves as an ongoing educational tool for over 100 individuals working in the arts in Kentucky.

## Evaluation

The Kentucky Center Access Services evaluates its trainings and services primarily through surveys:

- Participants in audio description and captioned theater training workshops complete written surveys that assess the value and efficacy of the training.
- In 2002-03, Access Services surveyed all patrons that utilized audio description, captioned theater, American Sign interpretation, alternate format materials, and assistive listening devices.

## Advice

- It is always wise to include knowledgeable people with disabilities in an advisory capacity.



Association of Performing Arts Presenters

**MetLife  
Foundation**



**The Kennedy Center**