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DREAMGIRLS Has Record Breaking Run at Shea's 710 Theatre

Expanded Audience Embraces Outstanding Local Talent & Renovated Space

DREAMGIRLS, co-produced by AnsariSaxon Productions and Shea's Performing Arts Center, makes history as the highest-grossing production ever at Shea's 710 Theatre. Over 7,500 tickets were sold across 18 performances, running September 10-28, 2025, the largest audience for a single engagement since Shea's assumed ownership of the theatre in 2012.

More than 44 percent of ticket buyers reside in the City of Buffalo, with the largest number of purchasers calling the Kensington, East Delavan, Masten, Central Park, and North Park neighborhoods home. From outside Erie County, the strongest turnout came from 150 purchasers living in Niagara County and 44 from Monroe County.

“**DREAMGIRLS** showcased extraordinary local talent, engaged new audiences from across the region, and celebrated the renovated Shea's 710 Theatre in the best way possible, with a history-making run that brought people together through the power of live performance,” said Brian Higgins, President & CEO of Shea's Performing Arts Center. “We are proud to partner with AnsariSaxon Productions, thankful to our sponsors, and grateful to the community for fully embracing this show.”

“We are deeply grateful to Shea’s for this remarkable partnership and filled with pride for our beloved community—both on stage and in the audience. **DREAMGIRLS** was truly a labor of love—from the first casting call to the final bow. This production stands as a testament to our commitment to bold, transformative storytelling that is culturally resonant, resilient, and inspiring,” **said Karen Saxon, Co-founder of AnsariSaxon Productions.** “The success of **DREAMGIRLS** lays the groundwork for what we hope will become an enduring and extraordinary love story between our company and the communities we serve, locally and regionally.”

Educational initiatives expanded the production’s reach. Megan Rakeepile, dance captain and member of the ensemble, led a masterclass for students at Buffalo Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts. Shea’s teaching artist, Alejandro Gómez provided a residency to students at City Honors School in Buffalo. Audience talkbacks were held following the performances on September 17 and 24. **DREAMGIRLS** also welcomed more than 700 students from 21 Buffalo Public Schools, as well as student groups from SUNY Buffalo State and Buffalo Seminary. In addition, a Black Sign Language (BSL) interpreter was featured at the September 24 performance with an audience that included students from St. Mary’s School for the Deaf.

Beyond the stage, **DREAMGIRLS** maintained a strong presence in the community, appearing at major events including the Pine Grill Jazz Reunion, the Carnegie Arts Fest, Juneteenth Buffalo, the Main Block Party, and the AKG Lipsey Summer Jazz series. On August 30, producers Naila Ansari Catilo and Karen Saxon also led a free community conversation titled: *Creative Power and the Business of Black Music*.

DREAMGIRLS was supported by lead sponsors Highmark BCBS, KeyBank, and Wegmans, with additional community sponsorship from Moog, Community Health Center of Buffalo, Buffalo Urban League, the YWCA of WNY, the African American Cultural Center, Rachael Small, Colvin Cleaners, and For Our Daughters Inc.

The show also marked a milestone as the first production to premier in the newly renovated Shea’s 710 Theatre following \$5 million in improvements that introduced a new lounge, cabaret, and outdoor patio.

The record-breaking engagement sets the stage for an exciting season at Shea’s 710 Theatre, with upcoming productions from Shea’s local theatre partners Second Generation Theatre presenting **Mamma Mia!**, Road Less Traveled Productions bringing **A Few Good Men** to the stage, and the new MusicalFare residency launching with **Come From Away** from October 23 – November 9. 2025. Tickets to performances at Shea’s 710 Theatre are available at Sheas.org.

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