



April 2, 2020

Dear Crow families and patrons,

First and foremost, we want you to know that we are thinking of you and hoping you are all healthy and safe. During this public health crisis our first concern is that you are taking care of yourself and finding ways to connect with your loved ones.

The COVID-19 pandemic has required us all to take unprecedented precautions. We are continually assessing the future of our spring and summer seasons as new information emerges from the CDC and national, state, and local governments. At this point, Upstart Crow is left with no choice but to cancel our spring theatre classes and remaining Wizard of Oz performances, as well as postpone our current productions of Footloose and Annie JR.

As a small nonprofit arts organization, this necessary step places Upstart Crow in a very tough situation financially. We have laid off our entire staff. Those who are working now are doing so as volunteers. Even though our doors are temporarily closed, we continue to incur basic monthly expenses, such as rent, utilities, and other business expenses. Those expenses will soon exceed our cash on-hand.

This is nothing compared to the risk of loss of human life. However, such extreme losses coming all at once threaten our survival as an organization. In the nonprofit arts industry, profit margins are slim, and we invest roughly 90% of the cost of an event up front, funds we cannot recover. When events are cancelled, refunding the related

revenue results in a complete loss.

In this unprecedented and unexpected moment, we are asking our community to rally around us.

At this time our goal is to push our current theatre productions (Footloose, Annie JR) into Summer or Fall. All Spring classes are canceled. Registrations for our Summer camps remain open. However, we have reduced the required tuition deposit for Summer camps from 50% to a flat \$25. The balance for Summer camp tuition will not be due until the first day of each scheduled camp. We will continue to evaluate new information from the CDC and national, state, and local governments as we begin to plan our Spring, Summer, and Fall offerings and will update you with any plans at the beginning of May.

Here are 4 ways YOU can invest in the future of Upstart Crow Studios right now:

1. Become a monthly sustaining donor. Setting up an automatic payment with your credit card is easy, and you can cancel at any time. Email our office at [info@upstartcrowstudios.org](mailto:info@upstartcrowstudios.org) for details.
2. Make a one-time gift to Upstart Crow Studios on our website at [www.upstartcrowstudios.org](http://www.upstartcrowstudios.org). We will gratefully send you a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.
3. Donate back the value of your purchase for tickets to Wizard of Oz or spring tuition to support Upstart Crow. We will gratefully send you a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.
4. Accept a credit toward or pay in advance for a future production or class. We are offering a 25% bonus to those who accept a credit for Spring tuition for canceled spring classes, productions, or tickets to performances (Wizard of Oz). We also have online gift certificates available for 25% off that may be used toward future classes or productions.

\*Tuition credits will be applied to your account for future classes or productions. Example: Accept a credit to be applied to your account for a canceled Spring class \$155 tuition, receive a credit for \$193.75.

\*Credits for tickets purchased for Wizard of Oz will be issued as a redeemable code to use toward future ticket purchases or may be

credited toward your student's account to use toward future classes or productions. Example: Accept a credit for a canceled performance \$12 ticket, receive a credit for \$15.

\*Online gift certificates are available in any amount. Example: Purchase a gift certificate for \$50 and you will receive an online gift certificate redeemable for \$62.50.

If you are a ticket-holder for Wizard of Oz, or if your student is registered for any of our Spring classes or productions, please check your email for a survey request to let us know how we may best serve you.

We love our Crow families. We love what we do. Over the last 20 years, we have heard countless stories of the profound impact our program has made in the lives of youth in our community. We have endured many difficulties over our history and have emerged stronger for it.

Through your caring generosity, we will continue to work together to serve our community. YOU are the reason Upstart Crow Studios will remain a vital youth arts organization beyond this extraordinary time.

Thank you for your help in ensuring a future for Upstart Crow Studios and preserving a place in our community where "every child plays a role."

Please be aware the Upstart Crow email account is being monitored by a single volunteer staff member. Please be patient if you have a question and don't hear back from us right away.

Warmly,

Heidi Knight Meigs  
Artistic Director

Michelle Cady  
Lynne Given  
Peggy Whalen  
Barbi McLain  
Upstart Crow Board of Directors