

Good afternoon, everyone.

I have the good fortune to serve as the President of Ball State University, and it's a pleasure to welcome you to this historic event.

Thank you to all our special guests who are here today: the members of our Board of Trustees; the members of our Foundation Board of Directors and Alumni Council; our local elected officials; and our generous benefactors. I appreciate you joining us.

Today is an exciting day. A very exciting day—for our campus and for our community.

We are here to celebrate the ceremonial groundbreaking of our Performing Arts Center and the distinctive Cantio Hotel, which will be located adjacent to the Performing Arts Center. I say “ceremonial” because, as you can see, construction is already well underway.

When these two beautiful buildings are completed in 2026, our long-term vision will be fulfilled—a vision for a new premier entertainment venue and a

new boutique hotel. Together, they will make The Village a more vibrant destination for people from all across the region.

[PAUSE]

Today, I have asked three people to speak about the significance of this transformative project—a project that we have frequently described as the catalysts to our University’s comprehensive plan to revitalize The Village.

In a few moments, you will hear from Rick Hall, the chair of our Board of Trustees. He will talk about how the Performing Arts Center and The Cantio Hotel will serve both our campus and our friends and neighbors throughout East Central Indiana.

You will also hear from Bill Jenkins, the chair of our Department of Theatre and Dance. He will talk about the impact the Performing Arts Center will have on our students and our programs—and our community.

And you will hear from Greg Schahet, the president of Schahet Hotels. He will share how The Cantio will offer its guests a distinctive hotel experience unlike any other hotel in the region.

But before they speak I want to recognize the important work that occurred over many years to enable us to reach this critical stage in our ambitious plan to revitalize The Village.

This work began in earnest in 2012, when Chris Palladino and Tom Kinghorn, and other people from our University, traveled to colleges and universities across the country. Their objective was to understand how these institutions successfully revitalized the commercial districts adjacent to their campuses.

Around that same time, the University coordinated with our colleagues from the Foundation to use the resources of Cardinal Properties. And through our partnership with Cardinal Properties, we were able to acquire the parcels in and around The Village that serve as the principal sites of this project.

During this time, we also engaged the community—our team met with the neighbors and merchants who were stakeholders in this project. We also worked with elected officials to advance our vision. And then, we selected our development partner, Fairmount Properties, to help us execute our bold vision for a brighter future for The Village.

A true long-term, team effort.

[PAUSE]

To achieve our vision, we also needed the generous philanthropic support of our donors and our graduates, without whom we wouldn't be here this afternoon.

Many of you know, that last December, we received a \$35 million philanthropic investment from the Lilly Endowment—the largest gift in the history of our University and the largest gift awarded by the Endowment as part of its competitive College and Community Collaboration initiative. This gift—in combination with funds raised by our colleagues from the Foundation—has generated approximately \$50 million in private philanthropic support for our Performing Arts Center.

I am very grateful to the Lilly Endowment for their investment in this project.

I am also grateful to our local foundations—the George and Frances Ball Foundation, the Ball Brothers Foundation, the Community Foundation of Muncie & Delaware County, and the Hamer D. and Phyllis C. Shafer Foundation—for their commitments to the Performing Arts Center. We recently received a generous gift from the Patricia Schaefer Foundation.

We also have generous individual donors who have contributed major commitments to the project, one of whom has chosen to remain anonymous and several more who are here today.

Marianne Glick and Mike Woods, you have championed this project from the beginning. Thank you for your exceptional generosity.

June Schuemann, I am grateful for your continued support of our mission and, in this instance, for your commitment to the arts at our University.

Bob and Rhonda Kaspar, your gift will benefit students in our Department of Theatre and Dance for decades to come.

Tim Andrews, thank you for answering the call to beneficence in support of this project.

Donna Polcz, your gift is a reflection of your commitment to our community.

And Judy Bracken, your family's sustained generosity continues to transform our University and our community.

[PAUSE]

All of these gifts we have received—and gifts that we continue to receive—have been instrumental to this project. And today, we are witnessing our shared vision for The Village become a reality. And it is has become a reality because of our collaborative and sustained effort to this shared vision—a vision that enhances our campus and our community.

[PAUSE]

You just heard me thank some of our most generous benefactors who have chosen to support this project. But there have been many, many more people who have enabled us to reach this point in the development process—too many for me to recognize individually right now.

I do, however, want to express my gratitude to my colleagues from the University leadership team and from the College of Fine Arts for their guidance and persistence in helping us to advance this important project.

I also want to express my gratitude to our architect, RATIO Architects, and our contractor, Messer Construction. And I want to thank my colleagues from facilities for their expertise and leadership in helping with the planning and implementation phases of this project.

In a few more months, we will watch as the foundation of our Performing Arts Center and the foundation of The Cantio take shape. And we will look forward to the day when soon—very soon—we can enter both new buildings, excited for the memorable experiences that will await us inside.

[PAUSE]

I now invite Rick Hall, chair of our Board of Trustees, to say a few words.

[RICK SPEAKS AND THEN YOU RETURN TO THE PODIUM]

Thank you, Rick. I am very grateful to you and to all of our trustees for your guidance—and for the confidence you have placed in me and my team.

Now, I invite Bill Jenkins, the chair of our Department of Theatre and Dance, to the podium.

[BILL SPEAKS AND THEN YOU RETURN TO THE PODIUM]

Thank you, Bill. I know that, for you especially, today is the fulfillment of a dream that's been many years in the making.

I now invite Greg Schahet, president of Schahet Hotels, to say a few words.

[GREG SPEAKS AND THEN YOU RETURN TO THE PODIUM]

Thank you, Greg. I now invite the following to take a shovel:

[TRUSTEES (who are present); DEAN Seth Beckman from our COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS, Bill Jenkins, Greg Schahet]

Thank you all for coming out today to celebrate this milestone with us. Days like today make crystal clear—even when it's cloudy—that we have a bright future, and that is why I am fortunate—and so very grateful—to have the opportunity to serve as the President of this University.