

The Friends of the Alger Theater (FOTAT) is a volunteer driven, non-profit community-based organization comprised of neighborhood residents and businesses whose mission is to address the decay and deterioration encroaching the neighborhood and preserve the historic significance of the Alger Theater. **The organization's goals are to refurbish and reopen the Alger Theater as a viable community arts and neighborhood movie theater center.** The Alger Theater will serve as a catalyst for the continuous revitalization of the surrounding neighborhood and adjacent businesses by promoting local creative arts and stimulating local economic activity

From its opening to the public in 1935 until its closing in 1985, the “stately art deco movie house” known as the Alger Theater provided Detroit eastside residents with artistic and cultural enrichment. The 12,000 sq. ft., 800 seat theater was convenient, affordable and a state of the art facility- offering family friendly live performances and motion picture features. Neighboring merchants along East Warren Avenue were patronized by theater goers creating a vibrant, thriving community.

Although the Alger Theater marquee is lit daily to announce community news – block club meetings, births, graduations, anniversaries, etc., the lobby and auditorium remain dark and uninhabited. **Friends of the Alger Theater have kept the significance of the theater prominent in the minds of the community by offering a broad range of yearly off site arts and cultural programming events.** Grass roots funding support has financed minor repairs on the theater. Major restoration needs have not been met, however.

Since its inception, the ultimate goal of The Friends of the Alger Theater has been the restoration and reopening of the Alger Theater. FOTAT has successfully established programming partnerships with local and regional organizations to produce and present on and off-site events that expose the community to a diverse range of arts and culture. The ongoing programming continues to remind area artists and patrons of the theater's importance and need in the community.

FOTATs current goals include expanding partnerships and programming to include arts education, after school and senior programming, and the development of dance, music, theater, and a variety of performing arts groups. The restoration and reuse of the Alger Theater will enable FOTAT to realize the totality of its mission – to enhance the quality of life through arts and culture and encourage community economic revitalization. As the landmark anchor tenant on East Warren Avenue, the Alger Theater will provide a venue to establish broad appeal arts and culture programming and attract renewed commercial and residential investment.

Within the neighborhoods surrounding the Alger Theater, there exists a very large population of youth who are under-served in terms of opportunities to partake in activities that enrich, educate, and entertain. Parents, of whom many are single parents, and other caregivers of our youth need an accessible and affordable resource to help them provide positive experiences for their families outside of normal school hours. **There is a need for a structured and safe environment where children's artistic abilities can**

be nurtured. Arts and cultural activity is a vital need for the growth and development of well-rounded youth. Furthermore, sources of cultural activity, which create a healthy and vital community, are very limited even for adults in the Alger Theater area. There is a need for a neighborhood source of diverse and wholesome quality entertainment for people of ALL ages.

The Friends of the Alger Theater believe a thriving Performing Arts Community Center can energize our East Side area, and help attract investment for nearby commercial improvement. Residents will have a real sense that our neighborhood is alive and well - an attractive place to live. We want to give residents a reason to be on East Warren Avenue, whether to attend a performance, actively participate in a workshop or just come together as neighbors for a multitude of events at the Alger facility. By promoting social interaction we will help build strong and lasting relationships among the citizens of our community.

The Friends of the Alger Theater expect that a fully functional Alger facility will deliver a variety of quality programming and have a tremendous positive impact. Children and youth will begin at an early age to be introduced to a variety of performing art forms. This exposure will aid in their individual development, addressing curiosities children normally have, as well as stimulating thought to produce learning in a fun and creative environment. Those who are teens or older will have a place in the immediate community where they can come to share in the collective cultural experience of their neighbors and participate in inspirational programming geared to their age group. Adult-aged participants may themselves act as advisors and mentors in some of the planned children activities.

Programming costs for workshops, performances and a variety of other cultural activities sponsored by the Friends of the Alger Theater are expected to total approximately \$50,000 over the course of a two-year planned introductory schedule. Projected revenue generated through ticketed events, concession sales and other fund sources will help offset expenses incurred by the “Friends” organization allowing for the possibility of an even greater offering of programming in addition to that already planned.