

Volunteer Handbook

for

Mary B. Martin School of the Arts

East Tennessee State University

Website

www.etsu.edu/martin

Mailing Address

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Important Contact Information

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Mary B. Martin School of the Arts Office

Ticket Purchase and Information

423-439-8587 Gilbreath Hall, Room 211 Open Monday - Friday 10am-4:30pm

Welcome Volunteers

Mary B. Martin School of the Arts has a variety of volunteer opportunities for students and community members. In the list below you will find general descriptions of what is involved if you assist us with marketing materials distribution, the tweet squad, or general office work, as well as a detailed description of the tasks involved in volunteering for various tasks at events.

Volunteer Opportunities

Marketing Materials Distribution

Distributing posters in the community is an essential part of our marketing effort. We have an organized route and specific businesses and locations that have agreed to put up our posters. We cover Johnson City, Jonesborough, and sometimes Kingsport. Most poster runs take about two hours of your time, and are best done with two people in the vehicle. Each poster run earns two complimentary tickets to the performance of your choice.

To sign up to volunteer for the distribution run that fits your schedule email our volunteer coordinator Heidi Ehle at ehleah@etsu.edu, or call 423-439-8333.

Tweet Squad and Selfie Site - Assistants Needed

During the first 10 minutes of selected performances we will ask our Tweet Squad to go wild spreading the word @ArtsAtETSU. If you are techy and tweety, we need you! Join our tweet squad and hit Instagram and Facebook for us as well.

At some performances, we will have an event related 'photo booth' with a backdrop and props for our audience members to have fun taking selfies or having snaps taken of them with their cellphone cameras. In some cases the artists will pose with them. Bring your sense of fun and your photography and PR skills to this volunteer job.

To sign up to volunteer for the Tweet Squad or photo booth assistant, email our volunteer coordinator Heidi Ehle at ehleah@etsu.edu, or call 423-439-8333. Students...we need you!

General Office Work

Sometimes we need help with spreadsheets, documents, designing materials for marketing, collating and folding, or preparing mailings. If it appeals to you to be a part of our 'in office' team on occasion, let us know. Please email our volunteer coordinator Heidi Ehle at ehleah@etsu.edu, or call 423-439-8333.

Event Volunteers

We are very pleased that you have chosen give your time to volunteer to help at events for the Mary B. Martin School of the Arts. With your help as hosts at our events we are more able to attain our goal of having each event run smoothly, safely and professionally - with that friendly, personal touch that makes such a difference in any environment. At each event, the Mary B Martin administrative staff, house manager, tech crew, student staff and volunteers all function as a team – this is the secret of our success, and it is what makes it so much fun!

The following guidelines will help you to provide the best service to our patrons. Our goal is to enable you to feel comfortable, competent and prepared for your role in our event production. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this information.

While some of the duties of an event volunteer are very consistent and clear, other needs may arise unexpectedly. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions please do not hesitate to let us know.

We look forward to working with you during our upcoming season of events.

General Information

Scheduling

Event staff will be scheduled according to the needs of the particular event and the requirements of the venue. All volunteer requests to be scheduled on a particular date will be taken into consideration as much as possible. Once an assignment to a particular show is confirmed by the volunteer, he/she will be expected at that event. In case of illness or an emergency contact Heidi at 423-439-8333(w) or 423-440-1179(c). Dependability is a must. Please take your commitment seriously.

Dress Code

Some events will have a prescribed dress code; others will not. In the case of an open dress code for a particular event, 'dress casual' is required; well groomed, no flip flops, and no jeans (dressy black jeans ok) . Dressier slacks are ok for woman, but for students – please, no bare midribs. For men - tuck in shirts, no sweat shirts or sweatpants.

Ushers need to wear the Mary B. Martin lanyard and name badge while on duty.

When to Arrive

Ushers generally arrive one hour before the start of a performance, although this time may vary depending on the particular performance. Please sign in on arrival, and put on your Mary B. Martin lanyard and name badge. There will be a brief orientation on the particular performance 10 minutes before the house opens, which would generally be about 40 minutes before show time.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings must be left in a secure area designated by the Mary B. Martin staff. Personal items may not be carried on the floor while ushers are performing their duties.

Representing Mary B. Martin School of the Arts

Please make yourself aware of future Mary B. Martin School of the Arts events, know a little about our history, and be familiar with our staff. You may be asked questions by the patrons, and you will want to be able to answer in an informed way. You can always refer people to the House Manager or a staff member if you don't know the answer to a question.

The House Managers Role

The House Manager is directly responsible for coordinating the timing and tasks involved in each performance. He/she communicates with the ticket sellers, ushers, tech crew, and artists, and makes the final call on show start time, opening and closing of doors, usher assignments, handling of special needs patrons, and any other issues that may arise. Ushers report to the House Manager, and the house manager is usually the only person on staff who has knowledge of how to coordinate all aspects of the event.

General Responsibilities

Usher/House Staff Assignments

Event Volunteers will be assigned by the Mary B. Martin staff as follows. Please note that some variation will be needed depending on the event and venue.

Box Office Assistants

Box office assistants give out tickets held in Will Call, answer questions, and sell tickets. This volunteer may be assigned other duties once the performance starts. Familiarity with the ticketing software may be required, and Box Office volunteers need to be comfortable handling money.

Lobby Greeters

These volunteers are required particularly when there is assigned seating. They answer questions,

assist special needs patrons, and direct patrons to the proper entrance doors. Familiarity with the venue is a must.

Ticket Takers

Ticket takers stand outside of each of the hall doors, one on each side of the door, and tear tickets, giving the big side to the patron and keeping the small end for our records. Ticket takers stay in or near their assigned area during the performance, and assist in opening and closing doors at intermission and at the end of the program.

Program Ushers

These volunteers will stand inside the hall doors, normally one on each side, and give patrons their programs. They may also be required to answer questions about seating, or help with special needs patrons. Program ushers will stay inside the hall during the performance, seated in the back near the door. They help by reporting any disruption or problems in the audience to the House Manager. They may also help by assisting in late seating, assuring safety through the use of flashlights if the house is dimly lit.

Upset Patrons

Occasionally some problem or conflict will arise that must be handled diplomatically. Be reassuring to the patron and let them know that you are sure something can be worked out. Then contact the House Manager or a Mary B. Martin staff member to resolve the issue. We do not want you to handle any uncomfortable situations on your own.

Handicapped Assistance

If needed, assist patrons in wheelchairs to the designated areas for wheel chair seating. Please note that we are required to provide seating for up to three companions in the adjacent area.

A patron may want to move from the wheelchair to a regular seat. If so, please be sure the wheelchair is placed out of the way.

Once you assist patrons with to their seats, please advise them that they can remain in place after the performance, and you will assist them out of the hall. Don't forget that you have promised that!

Once you have seated a wheelchair patron, be sure that you get them a program, and take their ticket.

Hearing Assistance

In the Culp Center Auditorium hearing assist devices are available. Please direct all requests to a staff member or the House Manager.

Sound Transfer

Most of our auditoriums are not sound proof from outside noise in the Lobby area. Staff and volunteers are responsible for reminding patrons and guests to keep sound levels down. All ushers and staff must maintain quiet in the lobby areas during performances.

Emergency Procedures

During events, ushers should be aware of any emergencies or problems in the auditorium. In case of anything alarming or even disturbing, the usher should contact the House Manager or a staff member immediately. The usher should then return to his or her post – at an appropriate place in the program - to be available to assist other customers if needed.

Theater Etiquette

- ◆ Please be on time.
- ◆ No food, drink or tobacco products are allowed in the performance hall. Ask patrons to please discard them in the provided trash cans. Please do not eat while on duty.
- ◆ All cell phones, pagers, and electronic devices must be turned off. Ushers must not use cell phones at all while on duty - unless a call needs to be made in response to an emergency at the performance. Cell phone use or texting by audience members is also prohibited. If this becomes a problem, notify the house manager.
- ◆ For most events, latecomers must stay outside the doors of the performance hall until there is an appropriate pause in the performance. For some performances this rule will not be enforced. You will be notified of the policy for each event at the usher meeting before the performance.
- ◆ Infants and toddlers are not allowed at some performances. You will be notified of this at the usher meeting before the performance. If you notice a baby or toddler disrupting patrons during any performance, notify the house manager immediately.
- ◆ Audio recording and still or video photography is strictly prohibited at all events, except when previously arranged with the theatre management. If this rule is suspended for an individual event, you will be notified of this at the usher meeting before the performance.
- ◆ Please be careful not to make socially inappropriate remarks or jokes.
- ◆ We hope you will have fun ushering for the performances, and enjoy working with your peers. However, your first responsibility is to aid in the smooth management of the event, and to respond to the event patrons. Please do not let socializing distract you from this focus. It is a busy time for the Mary B Martin staff as well; please understand that we may not have time to chat.

Pre-Event Usher Meeting

Ushers will be given the following information 10 minutes before the house opens:

- ✓ Explanation of the contents of the program.
- ✓ Start and end time of the performance
- ✓ Length of intermission
- ✓ Types of tickets and how they should be taken
- ✓ Updates from the House Manager
- ✓ Review of Emergency Procedures
- ✓ Latecomer seating policy

Knowledge of the Building

Please make yourself familiar with the venues:

- ✓ Will Call Ticket sales area
- ✓ Rest rooms
- ✓ Handicapped Access – Entrances, restrooms, seating
- ✓ Water Fountains
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Exits
- ✓ Fire Alarm pull stations
- ✓ Fire Extinguisher locations

Summary of Event Coordination

One hour before each event (or as specified for event): Arrive and check in. Ticket sales and Will Call pickup begin.

10 minutes prior to house opening: House Manager and/or staff member meets with Usher staff. After this meeting, ushers should report to their posts.

30 minutes prior to show time: House managers open the House. Ushers take tickets and assist patrons as needed. Any questions should be addressed to the House Manager.

At scheduled start time: Ushers should remain at their posts until the House Manager invites them to be seated. If at all possible, ushers will be invited to see some or all of the performance, but no usher is guaranteed a seat for any performance. Ushers should sit in the closest possible seat to their post. The House manager or staff will close the doors prior to the start of the performance.

Latecomer seating policy for each event may be different. This will be covered in the pre-concert meeting. Be sure you know what the policy is for this particular performance.

At the start of intermission: Ushers should open house doors and return to their original posts to offer assistance and give information at the beginning of intermission. The intermission is usually 15 minutes. The House Manager will determine the end point of intermission, and signal it by flashing the house lights.

At the end of the event: Once the house has emptied, ushers will pick up discarded programs and ticket stubs, and leave any Lost and Found items with the House Manager. Please check in with the House Manager or MBM staff prior to leaving for the evening.

Addendum

Theater Talk

House: The auditorium where the audience sits.

House Open: Patrons may be seated.

House Closed: Patrons are seated and the performance is ready to begin.

Lobby: This is where patrons purchase tickets, and wait for the house to open.

Performance: Refers to each individual evening of a show.

Tech Crew: These are the people who run the technical aspects of the performance. (Sound, lights, etc.)

Stage Manager: This person oversees the coordination between the performers, the technical crew, and the house and ticket office staff.

Booth: Where stage managers and tech crew work during performances.

Curtain: This refers to both the drape that separates the audience from the stage AND also means the start of a performance.

Curtain Call: When actors come out at the end of a performance and take their bows.

Run: This refers to the duration of weeks that a particular show is featured on stage.

Set: The scenery, furniture, etc. that make up what the audience sees on stage.

Prop: Anything an actor picks up with their hands and moves around the stage.

Strike: When you tear down the set, or you remove something from the set (Strike that coat rack!).

Theatre: The formal study of the art of performance.

Theater: The place where theatre is performed.

Venue Facts

The Mary B. Martin School of the Arts uses several different venues for their events. Each has its own special considerations.

Martha Street Culp Auditorium, D.P. Culp University Center – 412 J.L. Seehorn Drive

This Auditorium is located on the ground floor of the University Center. The hall seats a total of 906 - the lower level seats 610, the upper level seats 296. For performances that do not require the hall's full capacity we often choose to close the upper level. The upper level is not handicapped accessible and the stairs are rather steep. There is also an option to divide the hall in half, with a dividing wall that slides closed.

There are four audience entrance doors on each level. Be aware that these doors do not close quietly, try to guide their closure if someone is entering during a performance. There are shallow steps leading down the aisles, and footing can be tricky. Always use your flashlight to light the way of patrons entering after the house lights have been dimmed. Elderly or infirm patrons may need assistance as they go down the stairs. Please ask your house manager to show you where the wheelchair and handicapped seating is located. Wheelchair entrance to the seats in the front of the hall is through a side door.

Restrooms are located outside the theater lobby area, near the entrance to the building. The outer Lobby is often used for ticket sales.

No food or drink, except bottled water, is allowed in the house.

Bud Frank Theatre - 441 Stout Drive

The Bud Frank Theatre is in the basement of Gilbreath Hall, and is accessed from inside the building. You may enter the building through a door to the lower right of the grand staircase that marks the main entrance to the building. Go through the stairwell door and turn left, you will see the sign for Bud Frank on your right. For wheelchair access you must enter the building on the back side, and enter the lower hallway.

The Bud Frank Theatre seats 200 people. There is no balcony. There are two audience entrance doors to the hall from the lobby area, shielded only by curtains. Sound travels easily from the small lobby area to the audience, so keep voices very low during performances. The house is extremely dark during a performance, and patrons entering after house lights have been dimmed must be assisted with flashlights.

Restrooms are located in the main hallway, men's to the right and women's to the left as you exit theatre lobby.

No food or drink, except bottled water, is allowed in the house.

Mathes Auditorium - 216 Sherrod Drive

Mathes Auditorium is located in Mathes Hall which is ETSU's Music Building. It is a small one level 'lecture' hall, seating 130. Additional seats can be added to seat up to 160, if desired. There is no real lobby area, and ticket sales take place in the hallway outside the theater.

There are two main doors to the theater; there are also two entrance doors on either side near the stage area. The access door on the far right side must be used for wheelchair access. The access door on the far left side is often where the performers enter.

Rest rooms are in the hallway outside the hall, to the right and left.

No food or drink, except bottled water, is allowed in the house.

Brown Hall Auditorium – 173 Sherrod Drive

Brown Hall Auditorium is located on the first floor of Brown Hall, with the main entrance for the public facing onto Sherrod Drive. It seats 332, and is equipped with Smart Classroom technology. Brown Hall Auditorium houses a Steinway concert grand piano. There are two main doors into the Auditorium, and the stage is in a lecture hall configuration. Restrooms are in the adjoining hallway. There is no appropriate place for a reception. Wheel access is available through the main entrance.

Ball Hall Auditorium – 232 Sherrod Drive

Ball Hall Auditorium is located in Ball Hall adjacent to the Slocumb Galleries. It seats 206 and is equipped with Smart Classroom technology. There are two main doors into the auditorium, the stage area is in a lecture hall configuration and the restrooms are outside the auditorium's entrance in the adjoining hallway. It is used mostly for lectures and artist presentations.

Receptions often take place in the area between the two art galleries. Wheelchair access is available through two of the entrances to the building.