

Welcome to Virtual Gala Webinar
March 20, 2020

LC Interpreting Services
Captioned by Joshua B. Edwards, RDR, CRR

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>> ELIZABETH: Hi, guys, can you hear me? Welcome. Hi Roger. Good afternoon. Good afternoon. I want to double-check with my panelists that they can hear my transmission. Hello. One moment. Just checking transmission. This is Elizabeth Racheva. Good afternoon. I'm chief philanthropy officer at Washington Performing Arts. And thank you for the feedback. Our attendees, we have around 150 of you so far. Our panelists are still joining, and panelists as you are joining our webinar, please use the raise your hand function so that I can be aware of your entering the room so I can promote you to a panelist. Thanks so much to all of you for joining in this afternoon. As we talk about a virtual gala, lessons learned from a three-day pivot at Washington Performing Arts. For those of you who are just chiming in, I am going to provide an orientation and actually I see a question from attendees.

Yes, all attendees will be automatically muted, and our panelists will be the only folks who are talking and participating

in the session verbally

I will orient all of our attendees to some general rules of thumb as we move through the webinar. I will give folks a couple more minutes to log on while we are just getting everybody on board here. All right. I think I will go ahead and get started. Again, this is Elizabeth Racheva. That's me. I'm chief philanthropy officer of Washington Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. So happy more than two hundred of you have joined us this afternoon for our very first actually organizational webinar on lessons learned from a three-day pivot to turn a 600-person event into a live streamed virtual gala.

I want to provide some orientation to this webinar. First and foremost, you will notice in the lower bar of your screen a Q and A box. Our panelists encourage you to log your questions in this box, and if they are relevant to a certain section of the presentation or conversation, we will try to address them as we move through the webinar.

Alternatively, we will have space, we reserved space about a half an hour at the end of the webinar for formal Q and A after we move through all the topics. So I encourage you to log your questions there

We also have arranged for closed captions for this webinar. And unfortunately we had some challenges with the Zoom function. And so we are not able to have it display here on the lower screen. I am so sorry about that. However, if you scroll

through the chat function, you will notice some instructions under the name Joshua Edwards that offer you a third-party close captioning function where you can follow along and do side-by-side screens. So the instructions are there for log in and for accessibility. Know that this entire session is being recorded and because of the closed captioning, we also will be providing a transcript after the fact.

So please watch your inboxes in the days to follow for sharing out after the event. Next, wanting to provide a formal welcome from our president and CEO at Washington Performing Arts, Jenny Bilfield, but I believe she may be one the people that are having technical difficulties. Actually she's here. Just one moment. And actually I am going to ask Joshua Edwards from LC Interpreting Services, can you please resend the instructions for closed captioning.

Just bear with me for one moment. I will be promoting Jenny to our panelist. She will be joining us in just a moment. I do notice as I'm reviewing I will keep an eye on the chat bar as we are moving through the webinar, that some folks are using the raise hand function. Because of the way we've structured this and we have a lot of content we are going to try to move through and share with you, I will encourage you and direct you to the Q and A instead if that's possible. Because that's going to be the most effective way for us to get your feedback during the presentation.

And so now I am going to turn over to Jenny who I think has just joined us as a panelist, Jenny, are you there? For all of you out there, I know that probably like me you are learning to do a lot of new things this week. Whether it's figuring out your home office or learning how to use Zoom and all kinds of new things. So thank you for bearing with us, too, as we do our first webinar. And momentarily, I see she's online, Jenny will be here to welcome you. I am going to try to promote her one more time. Jenny, are you there? Hi, Jenny. I am going to -- (pause)

Jenny, I am going to invite you to turn off your screen. Okay. Thanks all for bearing with us here for just a moment. I am going to seek technical support. Okay. Am I back, panelists, can you help me know if I'm back? Great. Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate the support. I'm feeling the virtual support. And Jenny, are you there? I see you on the screen now. So you can unmute yourself and we would love -- just one moment, panelists, one moment.

>> JENNY: Can you unmute me now? Thank you, thank you for bearing with the technical challenges, everybody. You can hear me okay? I see some happy hands. Thank you Elizabeth, and Roger for -- and to our tremendous staff for engineering this. I'm so sorry to be seeing all of you under difficult circumstances, but very happy and relieved that you've joined us today. And I know this is an extraordinary moment with so much on our minds. But we are trying our very best collectively to marshal the

creativity and the knowledge so that we can support each other and get to the other side of this.

You know, this webinar was really the brain power of Elizabeth and Roger to make this knowledge available. But I would just like to look back eight, nine, ten days and give you a little bit of a sense of what we were grappling with on March 11th.

Washington Performing Arts was headed into its annual gala with a very steep fundraising challenge. The gala was set for Saturday, March 14th, a six-hundred person gala with wonderful entertainment, fantastic performances, custom made video, several different vehicles on site to help raise money for our arts education programs and community and main stage performances.

And as that week drew on, we realized that there were patrons who were very uncomfortable coming out. There were a number of advisories that were starting to be articulated by our federal government, by our local government. The cautions around gatherings. And so as we tracked this, these updates, we were thinking about potential responses to them.

We did have patrons who were perfectly fine coming out to public event, but many were not. And so we really tracked many of our decisions alongside the public advisories that we were receiving.

It was on noon Wednesday, March 11th that we had our final decision-making point. We knew that the mayor of Washington, D.C. was going to make an announcement, and offer

additional advisories about public gatherings which were still at a very high number at that point. But we decided in an abundance of caution to see what we could salvage. We had so much that was anticipated and ready to go that we were excited about. The event was incredibly important and we couldn't let it go to just a whisper.

So we immediately thought about this virtual gala format. We had an honoree who had the potential for offering a location if we could pursue it fast enough. We had the right partners, and we had artists who were waiting to hear from us about whether there would be something for them to do on Saturday night.

So with not only the abundance of caution, but also the abundance of good will and some hairpin turns, and strategic decisions, we called it and went into virtual gala mode.

The consultants and the partners that we had, the artists, our gala leadership were extraordinarily committed to retaining what we could from this gala. It's important to know just the time frame required us to make decisions so quickly that we needed that momentum to carry us to the other side.

What folks are going to tell you about today was exactly how that happened and what I would like to acknowledge upfront is that there were some unique elements that were specifically tied to the very short turnaround this gala where we had to react very quickly, that if we were planning a gala a year from now or even four months from now, we might have made different decisions and

also been at a different point in our planning cycle as opposed to literally the threshold of execute would have made different decisions in an entire ramp-up.

So as Elizabeth is suggesting, please do save your questions, but right now I will bounce it over to the people who helped mobilize it. It was a full effort from our development team, our partners, external relations, programming, education, finance, across the board. So Elizabeth, take it away with my thanks, gratitude and admiration.

>> ELIZABETH: Thank you so much, Jenny. Your leadership through all of this has been incredible. And you've steered our ship in the most compassionate and pragmatic way possible. Jenny truly led the way in engaging our board in these decisions as she alluded to. And we were very lucky to have absolutely phenomenal partners, both on our staff of Washington Performing Arts and also consultants and external vendors with whom we partner regularly. So just quickly here at the top of the presentation, I want to invite all of our panelists you are going to hear from throughout to introduce themselves and their roles and what they represent with respect to this process. You may be hearing from all of them over the next few hours. I will start with you, Roger. And as I continue to learn I think they are each going to -- actually I am going to -- great.

>> ROGER: All right, I'm Roger Whyte, RJ Whyte Event Production. We are the event planning partner with Washington

Performing Arts. We handle all of their events year round including their annual gala.

>> ELIZABETH: Ian?

>> IAN: Hello. I'm Ian Campbell from Event EQ. We work with Roger and his team on supporting the audiovisual support, videocameras, and sending a feed to the stream.

>> ELIZABETH: Mandy?

>> MANDY: Hi. I'm Mandy Autry. I'm with the events international (name inaudible) and I work with the team to do the design and the decor. So stage, set, and all the pretty things that make the gala what it is.

>> ELIZABETH: Great. Chris? Chris? I'm learning, still learning.

>> CHRIS: Thank you, Elizabeth. Good afternoon, everyone my name is Chris O'Shea. I'm with C2Auctions. We work with WPA to support their auction fundraising in terms of managing the auction software as well as the registration and checkout components and everything in between. So I'm really looking forward to talking about how that looked a little bit different this year. But thanks so much for having us.

>> ELIZABETH: And the development team, Brooke, Meiyu, and Sara?

>> BROOKE: Hi, everyone I'm Brooke. Development analytics at Washington Performing Arts. I work closely with Elizabeth and our consultants on gala operation when it was in

person event, ticketing sales how the seating looks and everything auction related, too.

>> ELIZABETH: Meiyu?

>> MEIYU: Hi, everyone. My name is Meiyu. I am the director of individual giving. I work with Elizabeth and Sara and Brooke in the development team. I manage our funds program and the sponsorship and as well as the legacy society program. Thank you.

>> ELIZABETH: Sara?

>> SARA: Hi, I'm Sara. I'm the assistant director of (inaudible) Washington Performing Arts. Publications leading up to the event and the day of the event and also served on the found bank (inaudible).

>> ELIZABETH: Great. David, Hannah and Scott?

>> DAVID: Hi, everyone. I'm David. I am on the external relations team at Washington Performing Arts and I manage all of the social media leading up to and on the night of. I don't know why it's not giving you my camera.

>> ELIZABETH: I see you, David.

>> DAVID: Okay.

>> ELIZABETH: Hannah?

>> HANNAH: Hi, I'm Hannah. I'm the associate director of external relations and in the context of the gala, typically I handle all of the execution of the printing and e-mail communications in advance of the evening. In this particular case

that all pivoted to full suite of additional communications that we will talk about later. And on the night of, some realtime deployment of e-mails and that sort of thing. So I also serve on the land auction proxy bidding team.

>> ELIZABETH: Thanks, Hannah. And Scott? I think I might have just promoted Scott, so he just arrived. He has been here a long time, but I have not promoted him from attendee to panelist. We will keep working on getting him connected during some of the later part of the program. Scott is our video creator extraordinaire all manner of interactive video content. So Scott, I will unmuted you.

>> SCOTT: Hello, can you hear me?

>> ELIZABETH: Yes, hi, Scott.

>> SCOTT: Hi, Scott, analytics manager at Washington Performing Arts and my role as it pertains to this discussion, I create all the preproduced video content we use throughout the gala.

>> ELIZABETH: Great, thanks. Those who we are. I want to remind all our panelists, we are all learning Zoom this week to mute yourselves and we will unmute you gradually as we move through the presentation. So as we continue to talk about the gala, I want to acknowledge some of the partners who are present today and who you will get to see a little bit of online. Our incredible artists that participated and we are willing to pivot on a dime, Janay Bridges and Kevin Miller, children. Gospel

choir, Joe say Andre, Kris, composer, Michelle Miller and auctioneer, Steve Little. Our partners Ridgewells exclusive gala caterer with whom we have a multiyear relationship and who unfortunately were not able to serve the beautiful menu we had created that night, but partnered with us to think about ways so that nothing would go to waste. We will talk more about those later and served our staff that night. As well as salamander hotel and resorts that provided an extraordinary venue.

So begin our conversation, this gala is a big deal for Washington Performing Arts. Annually we look to raise around a million dollars in revenue from this event and we are around an \$8 million organization. If you consider that in any given year our fundraising goal is between 4.5 and \$5 million, this gala represents a huge lift as she alluded to earlier and an important event for us.

Not only does it drive our mission in powerful ways, and that's for arts education programs, particularly, but also our main stage programs and community programs, but it serves as a really powerful way to bring together community in Washington, D.C. We are frequently told our gala offers one of the most diverse groups in the city from artists, arts supporters, ticket buyers, diplomats, elected officials, all manners of advocates for the arts.

So we cherish this moment to bring people together in share of a supportive cause Washington Performing Arts. Normally

we would be working with all of the partners you are here from today, but as Jenny alluded to, last week we all had to consume completely new roles and that included our staff. Our process for the gala normally begins in the summertime. We begin talking to our honorees and a co-chair board that partnered with us all year long as volunteers to make the night happen. It was over the course of three days we needed to completely change course.

I hope that you might have had a chance if you have been led to us through our website or our Facebook event to check out some of the online resources. If you visit washingtonperformsarts.org, you will notice some thumbnails on the bottom of the screen that lead you to both our gala website landing page on our Washington Performing Arts website as well as our gala satellite website sight through one cast software. This is the wonderful software that our partners at C2 introduced us to which offers us the remote bidding option and all the way to watch the various bidding options connected to our gala.

It's important for you to understand going on that we raise money through our gala through four key areas and there's a fifth component related. Advanced ticket and table sales and advance contributions, silent auction, our live auction, and our fund in need.

If you visit the gala website, the one cause website that you can navigate through from washingtonperformingarts.org, you will be able to be directed to some of that content that's still

up and exists. So you can have a look at our live auction packages and how we market those, post gala sale and also make arts education happen how we branded our fund in need element of the evening.

As Jenny discussed, there was a really specific public health context going on at this moment. The mayor made an announcement at noon. We had been prepared literally within minutes, perhaps five minutes before the announcement went. We had put the finishing touches on an e-blast to all of our attendees to roll out information about our live auction packages, to begin to provide final event reminders for the event that was to happen on Saturday night.

We gathered as a senior team with Roger to press pause and say okay, what do we do now? There was a press conference coming up at 4:00. At that time at noon, audiences or rather large groups in Washington, D.C. were advised not to gather at five of a thousand or more. Our event was planned to be for six hundred people. The conversation was really about group size at that precise moment in time.

There was also no mandate at that moment in time, do not gather at all. That said, we already recognized that we wanted to exercise an abundance of caution. Our phones started ringing off the hook, what's happening with the gala? This happened all week. We wanted to help people know this is on our minds and we will be getting back to them later in the day.

This became a theme that ran through the course of the

next several hours and several days which was to communicate actively and thoroughly with our patrons and supporters in connection with the event. At the end of the day, we didn't know anything knew from the district; rather than that our cultural institutions were asked to consider their event that might be bringing folks together. We decided to make the decision as an organization to cancel our programming actually that Friday, our public concerts, but with the support of our co-chairs and chair of our board to truly pivot this gala experience.

We felt even though we fell within the guidelines and we weren't over a thousand people, we felt like we would rather err on the side of caution and be safe. So we switched to this virtual format.

Why? Why not just postpone or cancel? This is one of the questions you might have in mind. Well, as I already mentioned, this is a huge revenue driver for us, but of course public safety was more important than that. But what we realized were a unique set of circumstances, too, were our arts. One of our headlines artists, Janay Bridges was specifically in town to perform at Washington National Opera in Samson and Delilah. She is an internationally esteemed artist with a busy schedule. This was the moment she was in Washington and she was willing to switch her approach to be in a live in-person sort of studio audience setting.

We also had an extraordinary honoree who is a very busy

person and around the world, and we knew that this was the moment we had pulled together all of these luminary people who were engaged in creating all manner of experiences actually to elevate women along with our theme, celebrate women, fearless creative and resilient. And we felt like this was truly the moment.

So as Roger and I walked in the hall, he had been receiving a number of inquiries from other clients being a special events producer and had already begun to explore what it could look like to pivot to live stream event. We made the decision and communicated again with our patrons at the end of the day.

The reason it was a success, I would say the primary reason was because of extraordinary partnership and trust and everyone involved understanding their role, both in advance and the night of. Roger who you hear a lot more in from just a moment was truly driving the connections with external vendors, logistics, run of show.

I together with our internal Washington Performing Arts staff was helping think about communication across channels and constituencies and connection with all of our various volunteer constituencies as well as individual supporters.

Everyone single member of the staff pitched in. I just want to give you a visual. It became a war room. See if I can do this. I don't know if you can see this on the screen, all of you. But here is a look at the morning after. The morning after making the decision where I came in very early and just started

dumping out everything that was in my head. What are all the things we are going to be thinking of.

As each new member of the team reached the office, you will notice all these colors start to add in. Who do we need to involve? What are we missing? Themes that ran through all of this is price and diversity and thought of your team. Doing this kind of an experience requires many perspectives, checking one another about what you are forgetting, primarily when you have to do it quickly.

I recognize there are a number of people on the call is some of whom may have events a month out, and others that still have the luxury of actually planning them from the outset. All of these experiences would demand something completely different and we will talk a little bit as we go through each section about what you might want to consider depending on where you are in your stage.

But I just thought I would take you a little bit inside the craziness of that moment of figuring out who is doing what and who is driving what. We really recognize that no one person could do it alone.

So especially you are probably thinking, so what again, what is it exactly that you are talking about? We are really lucky with Roger Whyte to have one of the most creative, resourceful, just brilliant special events people on the planet. And he's based here in DC but does work all over. I want to give you a little

taste. We will look throughout what the gala looked like. I will share some short little clips for you. I hope it comes through on your end. Apologies in the end if the tech is a little strange.

I do know that as we've tested this, the audio might not be very high, so apologies in advance for that. But we are going to give you some little looks throughout of what the gala looked like.

So we are beginning with Michelle Miller.

>> MICHELLE: Performing arts virtual gala. Please welcome our --

>> ELIZABETH: I'm going to start that again. Here we go.
(Video played)

Thank you for joining us and welcome to the Washington --

>> ELIZABETH: Here we go.

-- Miller, I'm thrilled to be here with you at the beautiful salamander --

>> ELIZABETH: I'm getting some feedback that I'm not sure our panelists, can you give me feedback? Are you seeing the image on screen? No? Okay. I am going to nix sharing and see if we can share the highlights after the event. Sorry I'm seeing it on my end, but for some reason you are not. I am going to try it once more and see if we can see it. One second.

>> NARRATOR: Virginia for the Washington --

>> ELIZABETH: No. Sorry. So you know what? We are

just going to flip and I am going to, Roger is going to get to show you what it looked like through some other mechanisms. So I am going to pass off to the wonderful Roger Whyte with RJ Whyte event productions. I'm trying.

>> ROGER: I'm here. Hey, everyone. How are you? This is Roger Whyte again with RJ Whyte Event Production. I am actually going to try to do a little screen share. I have it teed up so let me see if this works. Give me one moment. And here we go. And here we go.

(Video played).

>> ROGER: Are people seeing that? Great.

>> NARRATOR: Thank you for joining us. Welcome to the Washington Performing Arts virtual gala. Please welcome our EC for our program tonight, Edward Morrow, award recipient and cohost on CBS This Morning, Michelle Miller.

Good evening, everyone, I'm Michelle Miller. And I'm thrilled to be here with you at the beautiful Salamander Hotel and Resort here in Middleburg, Virginia, for the Washington Performing Arts annual gala! It's happening tonight! Actually it's not. In case you've noticed, there's a lot going on this week with the coronavirus and COVID-19. But the folks at the WPA decided the show must go on. So we are holding a virtual gala tonight. Without further ado, the Washington Performing Arts gospel choir led by maestra (name on screen).

(Gospel singing)

Unbelievable! Thank you so much. Washington Performing Arts, amazing. Truly amazing. I am going to invite two of my new friends over here for a minute come on over here. We are going to learn a little something about what (inaudible) -- WPA. (Applause).

Thank you, Michelle. On behalf of Washington Performing Arts our wonderful chair Tom, our team board -- (inaudible).

Hey, Sheila. How's it going? I wish I could be there with you. Hope all is well. Congratulations. So deserved it. People who don't know, my name is Kris.

>> ROGER: All righty. Let's see. All right. Can you guys see me? Perfect. Well, thank you so much. This is Roger Whyte again with RJ Whyte Event Production. We were so happy to partner on this and pivot as Elizabeth mentioned. We kind of gave you some of the context first on where we stood on Wednesday, teeing things up for where we stood on Saturday.

So from the moment that we did the final confirmation on the movement of the event from a live event to a virtual event, that was 72 hours prior to the start of the event. So we had 72 hours straight to do the whole flip to change everything, change all of our vendors and whatnot.

I want to start with just acknowledging some of the our amazing vendor partners. Event EQ. Syzygy was doing all of our

decor. And the team from Ridgewells was doing all of our catering. You may have a lot of questions. Because we were in 72 hours a lot of that stuff was already teed up. Thanks to our amazing partners, we worked with Syzygy and Event EQ to say how can we edit what we have already worked up for the gala that is already for example with Syzygy we already had pieces that were produced and on trucks. For Event EQ we already had them loading the trucks. For Ridgewells food was ordered. For Syzygy and their partner, with florals, were already ordered.

So what could we do? Just to highlight a couple of things. One. Partner not here today was Ridgewells. They were our catering partner. Food was ordered, staff was contracted, et cetera. Ridgewells worked with Miriam's Kitchen and donated food from our menu to the kitchen. They also reached out to their staff that was already contracted on the event and asked them to do volunteer service in the name of Washington Performing Arts to instead of coming, because they wouldn't be coming to work on that Saturday.

The team from Syzygy worked with their flower partners and all the florals were donated to Bright Beginnings which is an organization that was able to send flowers home with some of their young ones as well as give flowers for their teachers that were working very, very hard. So it really was every partner kind of stepped up and came together. We brought in someone to partner with Event EQ show call on the streaming aspect. They were the

vendor that worked on the actual streaming and did something I will talk about in a few minutes in terms of the tech side of things.

I want to give context as I said before. I have a little bit of a screen share going back to this. And we are going to start with the National Building Museum. I want to give context on what our event would have been if it was live. The National Building Museum for those of who you don't know is a venue here in DC, a museum venue. And it is beautiful huge 80-foot ceilings. I am going to show you some pictures from our gala last year so you can see the space.

This would have been our third year, but that can show you, seating for six hundred. This is a large, large, large gala that has a lot of participants. You can see some of the drapery and stage set and elements that Syzygy would have brought in to make the space amazing. We used the center court for the main dinner and on the side, one for the cocktail hour and one for the after party.

So obviously a huge production that would have been in this space. And we had to pivot and change up what we would have done. This on your screen is the diagram that would have been for this year. So this will kind of show you kind of our layout. Again going back to the photos we just had, will tell what you we had in the space, obviously tons of seating, the scale is just enormous. Those round tables in the middle are six-foot round. So that will give you the scale of what we are working with.

When we pivoted, we had to figure out how to take all of this and move it into a much smaller space. As Elizabeth mentioned, our honoree Sheila Johnson, she's the CEO and founder of salamander resorts. There's one in Virginia. And knowing we wouldn't be in the building museum because of the pivot and because of the health concerns, we thought to reach out to her and to say do you have space at your resort that could really be a scaled down version of this?

We ended up working in some of their rooms and I will show you the map of their rooms in a minute. The main space was the ball room, 60 feet wide by 22 feet deep our main studio space. This is where we did all the taping of the live stream.

You can see right here this is our next diagram. This shows how are we going to take the elements that we need and work it in? So everything from the backdrop so our step and repeat that Syzygy did. Our main stage back drop A and B. Kind of saw some of the clips.

I am going to show you some of the photos as well. You can see here this shows you a little bit of the behind the zeniths as well. You can see our cameras. This is our performs by Janay Bridges, one of our amazing performers. Syzygy will talk about it, but they had to cut down because the scale of the room was so much smaller. You can see our staff over there that worked night of to accept phone calls from some of our donors for fundraising and you can see our pianist there Kevin Miller as well.

Again, a little bit of a behind the scenes, this shows you our people that are accepting phone calls as well as our production team there working with Steve and Elizabeth on funding. You can see Jenny here as well. And again going back over here, very, very, very small group of people in the room and it basically was programmed participants as well as the board chair.

Going over, you see Elizabeth working with Steve on our slept auction tour. We did tour some of our silent auctions and highlighted them. You can see at the top of the video you saw Michelle Miller taking from outside, so we actually worked with Event EQ to say how can we show where we are to folks in a different way?

This shows you our production room. This was next door to the main studio, Event EQ audiovisual elements in here. You can see right in front of you the closest person is our streaming central. They use a technology called Live View. They had a hard line Internet as well as they use a broad spectrum cellular service.

So we basically had multiple ways and multiple layers to make sure all of our guests were successful in viewing our live view. You can see again another picture of our studio there. We streamed to YouTube which we embedded into the Washington Performing Arts as well as Facebook Live. I know David is going to talk about the metrics on that.

The blue Mont, the production booth you saw with all

the equipment in it and we used two other rooms the Marshal and the Water Ford room for storage and for our staff hold and for our artists hold. So everything was really condensed into a much smaller space than what you saw at the beginning.

I am going to do a still stop share here real quick.

>> ELIZABETH: Roger, can I punch in for just one second and just share with the crowd the small room you saw to the right, I think it was the Marshal room we chose to recreate a VIP space. Wine, we wanted to provide an opportunity for people to both sanitize when they arrived with the hand sanitizers we had prepared for everyone as well as just have a chance to get people visit and fed and we taught about all of those elements that were appropriate in a way from a public health standpoint as well.

>> ROGER: All of our participants, at that time the guidance was no more than one hundred and use hand sanitizer. As you enter the rooms there were tables that had hand sanitizer. They put it on the way in and on the way out. All of our staff that was sitting at those tables that you saw each had their own little hand sanitizers. We wanted to make sure that we covered all the bases when it came to making sure people had access to all those facilities.

One quick thing to know is because of our time frame, if this was something we had weeks to plan out, things would be different in terms of our production most likely. Because of our time frame, things were already on trucks already going. All of

our vendors were incredibly understanding in trying to work with us and roll with the punches. We can't thank them enough. Syzygy worked out to cut down to core elements. Event EQ cut it down to make it happen and successful.

We also worked with smaller crew. The building museum we would have had a much larger layout of production crew and whatnot, it was much more scaled down for this element. We had some things for example in the room. We had audio, for our small group that was in there. We also had as you saw in the background, we had a screen that was our show screen. This allowed us when we were doing fundraising elements to actually show dollar figures as well as donors' names and to acknowledge them live during the web stream.

So I would say depending on the scale of going virtual with your event, that is something that I think is a valuable element that I know Chris will talk as well what's available in terms of scoreboard functions, with the technology.

The last thing I will say there is that we were under a tight time line. So we were trying to figure out things that as we went as well. For example the phone banking element you saw there, that was something we figured out. We realize.

There were speed bumps. If we had more time, we would have worked out something that worked more smoothly. I will say we had our team connect with donors. We had donors call in and connect with our team. But we also really pushed interactive

experiences through people donating and making donations and doing the silent auction via their devices, via the one call software.

I think that's pretty much all of I had right now. And I know I will be back later for plenty of Q and A and being pulled on different things. I would now like to take the chance to bring in Ian Campbell with our Event EQ partner who did all of our production and he can kind of run through a little bit more on the production AV side of things. And Elizabeth we may need to unmute him.

>> IAN: Hello, everyone, how are you? I am Ian Campbell from event EQ. So there were some items that as we transitioned from the National Building Museum and transitioned to going into salamander that we had to look through and also looking at the event differently.

So one of the big things is when everyone -- the building museum is set on the main stage. We had a lot of factors there from the stage set, making it look nice, everyone being in front of us. When we went to going live stream, we had to think about the camera angles, how things looked at different angles, more of the fact of people watching from a different angle. And then we -- (children's voices in the background)
(Muted).

>> IAN: Sorry about that, guys, little ones at home. Sorry about that. So where we had fixed cameras, we now also talked to Roger, we had to make it a little more interesting to,

we took a shot from outside showing that we were at the Salamander Resort. We were taking different shots regarding the entertainment and looking at that side of it, plus having the shot for the phone call area, and then also having the small audience while we were there.

We had three cameras overall that were taking those different shots working together. Throughout, each camera was able to go to a handheld to take a shot if they needed to go outside or if they needed to catch an up-close shot as you saw one of our cameras in that photo was a guy kneeling down right in front of the piano.

We also then had as Roger said the studio area that was set up outside. So we had one audio console that was running everything from the web stream to send to the web stream and also sending to the room with some small speakers. We also had a separate monitor console that we were using to modify for all of the audio for the entertainment.

We had a separate lighting system that was for our stage presentation, and also to light up the scenery and the set from Syzygy. So it got a little complex as well with that setup being that we had a 12-foot room trying to make it so that everyone looked nice and looked great, whereas the building museum, you have 60 feet and a different shooting angle. We had to modify all of our angles and be very specific on what we were trying to do white light also provide back light to separate ourselves from the background

of the stage set, and also lighting up areas with colored light to separate our speakers from the camera to give us that definition and dimension throughout the show.

And then, of course, we took all of that. We had one factor where Skype was involved where we brought Skype in as you saw in that video. And we tied it in and sent that out to the live stream as well.

We took all of the graphics and items and combined them put it down. One single line could be sent to the live stream for the audience to see through the live stream on YouTube. Roger, is there anything else you would like for me to touch on there? Great. So I think we are going to pass off to Mandy at this point. Great. Let's shoot it obvious to Mandy and Mandy will take it from there on the design and backdrop and what challenges they faced.

>> MANDY: Hi again. Mandate Audrey with Syzygy Events International. Creative director. And I think Roger touched on this in his discussion, but I think the biggest pivot that we had to kind of discover what to do was in terms of scale. So we went from a space that had Jai normal usually grand ceiling height, 70 feet high to a max of eight. The first thing we had to do was decide what was our max height and decide how we were going to accommodate set.

Luckily for us, scenic design is built incrementally now which is great for building things on a small scale up to a very large scale. So we decided what was the top or the max height

we wanted to do and rebuild. I say that like it was extremely difficult because everything is basically made from a metal frame and pulled together, we are able to take them apart very easily and rebuild them back into a different size.

So we decided ten feet was our max height and we took every scenic element that would have been on this whooping 20-foot stage and cut it down to ten, cutting the panels off at the bottom which is kind of shrinking the artwork down.

We didn't want to lose any of the texture or charm that that set had and it became quite poignant for us because we kind of termed the set our sunrise set.

In the beginning of the production, it was kind of a shining light, the colors. So I think transforming that into a smaller space and draping the room white kind of created a focal point and kind of brought your attention in. And that was definitely the goal here, was to let the message shine and provide a beautiful backdrop.

And then I also encourage you to think creatively like Roger and his team were geniuses in coming up with what he coined set B which was our set. So here we had a piece that was already built. We had branding, still incorporated all of the event collateral, color palette. And rather than being used as a photo op, it's now going to be used as a backdrop for the second set.

So I think, you know, I would encourage everyone to kind of get creative on those things that may already be built. And

I think the last thing I would say is that we also wanted to be very cognizant of when designing something to make sure that seams are very important, especially on those up-close shots.

Minimizing the shots minimizes the seams and the corners usually you won't see 60 feet away, but when you have a camera right in front of it, you are going to have to pay more attention to those details. I think that's it for me

(Laughter).

>> ROGER: I just want to come back once more. Thank you very much Mandy and Ian for your input on that. Obviously we were in a situation whereas I mentioned before we were 72 hours prior to our event, we already had elements built. Some of you may be in this situation and some of you may be in a situation where you are still weeks away and you have the flexibility to adjust.

We are only speaking from our experience, but I do know that with these partners and with your great partners that you have as well for your events, that if you have already things built, it's all about doing what these partners did and pivoting. How can we adjust what we already have to save money, to save resources, because the last thing we want to do is waste, and to make something that still exceeds expectations.

And then if you have a little bit more time and a little bit more lead-up, you have the flexibility to work with your vendors to say how can we really scale down because we aren't going to be in a live event and what makes sense to make the space look

the way we want it to look? For us, this made sense. And that's just what I kind of wanted to wrap it up before we send it back to Elizabeth.

>> ELIZABETH: Thanks, Roger. Okay, here I am. There are lots of great questions coming in. Also, thanks, Ian and Mandy. You guys it was amazing what you were able to do in that kind of time frame. I want to, we are going to on the fly here develop a way to answer some of the question that is have been coming in to provide you more of a frame and context for our event. So I am going to be calling on my colleagues to read those questions aloud because I am having trouble seeing them from my host view. But leading into that, I know we are getting some question about social distancing. So I want to address that.

At the moment in time, I think actually as of Saturday, the advisory we were following was gatherings of 250. It may have shifted to one hundred. By Sunday, it was gatherings of fifty people. So the CDC warning or rather -- I'm struggling to remember the exact words, but the sort of mandate at that point I think was fifty as of Sunday.

Or our event, there were never more than we think 40 people in the room at any point in time. Social distances had not yet begun to be talked about in the way that it evolved over the course of this week.

We even so, we made attempts and were mindful of how we were putting our phone bank together. That said, there were

things we would have absolutely done differently. And even looking back at the pictures now we realized we would have invited a soloist from our choir instead of our choir, who of course everyone involved there that night was concerned and doing their personal best to follow the instructions and the information we knew at that moment in time and to be safe.

With our VIP, our audience comprised our honoree, family of the honoree, our co-chairs of the event just representing each of the three constituencies, so only one from each of those constituencies, our board chair and then the staff who were working the event.

Even the way we seated the room, if we were doing it today, we might have only had five chairs in the room at any time and cycled people in and out. We were cycling people in and out throughout the experience so people could maintain distance.

But we would encourage you to think about that, of course, and know that when you get to certain portion of the evening, having people in the room safely so is important to have a convivial atmosphere.

A sound studio and a live auction is a challenge. I want to provide context because I know questions have been coming in about how many people participated and also what was the sort of immediate response like in terms of refunds and reactions. We will definitely get to lots of those questions a little bit later. But I am going to provide a big overview now to continue to

contextualize the rest of what we will share. And encourage you to keep putting your questions on the Q and A platform.

We anticipated six hundred participants at the National Building Museum. Those folks represented all different ages, backgrounds. We had a robust patrons -- a question came in about those. We can our gala -- we will put it back up there and you can see how we structure our gala.

The people that we had begun to hear from on Monday of last week were our vulnerable populations that were being advised in the national news to begin to refrain from public content. So those folks did reach out and almost, I can't recall a single constituent that reached out from that population that requested a refund. Many of the people that were reaching out along those lines felt even chagrin that they were saying that they couldn't come. And I should stress back to a point I raised at the beginning, tone throughout all of this, something our board members were really supportive of, there was no shame in not being able to participate.

We wanted everyone to feel supported in how they wanted to engage, and that also extends to now in terms of refunds. We know people may need their resource and this might not be the moment for them to convert their ticket purchase to a donation to Washington Performing Arts, even though we are encouraging that.

We have seen incredible response from our community proactively in terms of willingness to think about continuing to

sustain support for the event. I want to invite my colleague Brooke Lamell who I am going to unmute here to give an overview of the four big buckets I talked about earlier, the advanced ticket and table sales, silent auction, live auction, and the fund in need what you might call your paddle raise portion of the evening.

What we are going to share are percentages and I will dig later in the program I will dig more into what we think sort of drove that kind of result. So this is percentage raised through the event as we know it at this moment in time relative to what our goals had been. So Brooke, I'm unmuting you.

>> BROOKE: Hello, everyone. Thanks so much for joining us here today. Just some broad scopes on how the numbers fell out. I will go through those night of or day of buckets first, the auctions and our fund in need what we call our paddle raise. In the live auction -- I'm sorry, that was wrong. 93 percent of our goals, we got very, very close to what we had originally budgeted.

In the silent auction, we actually overperformed on our goal and we made 118 percent. Goal. And in the fund in need on the night of, that was where we saw the biggest difference from our goal. So that one came in 56 percent to date. However, we have determined to leave our fund in need open on our website for at least a month going forward and maybe longer knowing that as people feel the need, feel the urge to step forward, they are welcome to do that and there's no need to stop that short at any point.

So people can continue to give to our gala's paddle raise our fund in need at any point. In terms of ticket and table sales and what response we've seen in terms of refunds and donations, sorry, refunds requested or people who want to convert what they had already contributed over to donations to Washington Performing Arts straight out, I should first of all know that I have posted our ticketed table sales on our website. You can look in the Q and A to find the link there. So you can get a sense of our levels. We have table sponsors from the \$50,000 level down to the \$10,000 level or a half table sponsor at 5,000, and then individual tickets we had a VIP at 15 hundred, a patron ticket at 750, and then young patron and after party tickets which were at a lower dollar level. Of the people who made contributions to any of those levels, we have seen 16 percent of the people ask for refunds of any sort, partial or full; however, it has represented 2.29 percent of the total revenue that we had earned from those people because we have seen mostly it was the people who had purchased individual tickets especially at lower dollar levels who have asked for that to be refunded to them and a lot of our table sponsors at higher levels have converted those over to donations.

I think that's it for me. Back to you, Elizabeth.

>> ELIZABETH: Thanks, Brooke. Great. I am going to invite my panelists to ping me if you feel like there are questions we should also raise at this point. You can send me a private chat and we can bring them forward. I am going to pivot now to talk

a little bit about the program. And if we have space at the end, once we are getting through Q and A we can actually share more of that video content from you as I think I understand from the chat function that some folks may have had difficulty seeing it. There may have been a screen sharing thing. So not everyone may have seen the YouTube clip at that moment.

Also so from a metrics standpoint, I want to share that we brought our expenses down by 65 percent in pivoting from the live event to the in-person [POST-WEBINAR CORRECTION: We brought our expenses down by 35%, to 65% of our original budget.]. Again, keep in mind, this event had been built and designed for eight months leading up to the night of. There were things like foods and meal prep, some of the decor where this was three days out. So it had already been built, so of course we needed to move forward with some of those fees.

But it was really incredible to be able to adjust and actually bring expenses down so significantly, and truly this goes back to partnership, extraordinary partnership and a lot of trust and, you know, extending our relationships over the long-term with some of our exclusive gala caterers into the future to allow for that negotiation. And really concentrating on how we wouldn't waste a single thing again as Roger said.

Going into this, we realize actually I will quote Jenny our president and CEO that we were uniquely well positioned to do this pivot given that we are a performing arts presenter and

producer. So what we do is live performance and connecting artists with audiences, admittedly not normally in a virtual way.

But over the course of the week and certainly that night, I was brought back to my youth and remembering a lot of Jerry Louis telethons, if you were not of that generation, I encourage you to watch YouTube videos to see what those look like. I felt like we were living that a little bit in the moment. And what makes it so powerful are not only incredible performances, who might you engage in of course as Washington Performing Arts? I know a lot of are you social service organizations and higher education organizations as well as from the arts.

But I encourage you to think about how you could connect the performing arts to your experience and there's all manner of content and repertoire that could be compelling and connect to the mission that you are trying to drive forward.

But additionally, there are also people in your community that tell powerful stories. So what was the testimonial you can bring forward whether through live streamed connection on the air, so in the clip that Roger shared, you saw or heard a bit of Chris Bowers, the composer of the Green Book communicating live with our honoree, Sheila Johnson in California. And we had planned to fly him out for the event and, in fact, Monday we had determined that we were going to live stream him in. And when we changed to a live stream all together, well, we had already planned for that so we were able to engage him. How are you going to break

up your program? There are certainly speeches and remarks from your president, board chair or event chairs, but then spice that up and intermix it with compelling testimonial and content.

We will talk about that in just a minute that complement what may be being said on the screen. You need a really great script. I want to again offer applause to Roger because the way he conceived of reengineering our gala program, usually we have a big meal in the middle of it, so we had to reconstruct all the elements so that we were providing at-home viewers enough variety in the night that they would want to stay engaged. And actually that's a great point to mention.

We had around 275 viewers across YouTube and Facebook Live and two hundred of those, David can confirm for me later or Roger can, remained engaged throughout the whole performance. Those weren't just viewers. Those were households. We presume households families watching.

So we were thrilled to see folks stay with us through the night, and perhaps because they were engaged. That said, they are going to log on early and stay for the end of the show. I will be really transparent and acknowledge that at midnight 30, the night before the event, I suddenly realized that we had no pre- and post-show reels and that we hadn't found a way to thank all of our wonderful supporters for the event. This is something you are going to need to think about from the outset.

Like many of you, you have physical programs for your

events as well as perhaps as we do, we have jumbo Tron monitors on the side of the stage that offer scrolling credits for corporate and individual sponsors. We also call out those individuals in the script. What we created in this instance instead was a scrolling credit just the way you would see at the end of a movie that acknowledged all of our supporters.

And of course we found a lot of ways to do that throughout the script that night. I'm seeing some really good questions come in. I hope some of my colleagues are answering them in realtime. Thank you, guys.

Additionally, as you are thinking about a program, important considerations. Licensing. The content your artists are sharing need to be appropriately licensed. This might mean being in the public domain. If you are not with a performing arts organization, reach out to your performing arts colleagues to learn more about this, because YouTube or other platforms for viewing will flag your content and will prevent stream and sharing if it is copyrighted and is not appropriate to be shared.

So along with that, licensing and rights essentially for the content that you are sharing. You also want to think about permissions with your artists and the people that you are engaging, just as if you were going to capture photography of young people at an event, you are getting permissions from their families at the outset. You want to be thinking about the same thing with your artists and your presenters. Are they comfortable sharing your

performance after the event or your lecturing after the event?

In our case, we had initially booked these artists to do a one-night event with no intention of sharing their performances in that moment and time. So we are going back to talk because we've received several inquiries of people who weren't able to tune in for whatever reason and would really like to see how it all happened. So we have to get those permissions in order to be able to share it out afterwards.

We are going to switch at this moment into the auctions and revenue. So Roger, I wonder if your clip shows a little bit of what the live auction part of the night looked like. I know of a clip around 10:24.

>> ROGER: Yeah, let me tee it up. Just give me one minute.

>> ELIZABETH: Thanks.

>> ROGER: Do you want the live auctions or the fund in need?

>> ELIZABETH: You could do one or both.

>> ROGER: Okay, let me start with the live auction. Give me one second here and I am going to do a little speech here. Give me a moment.

(Video played).

>> NARRATOR: If you haven't already done so, or you can call in and we will help you do it. But it's very easy to do online. Call in with your credit card. We won't charge your credit card

tonight, folks. Don't worry about that. Staff on standby to help you. We have telephone bidders here. We will be taking bids from all around the world. Right now I would like to call your attention to the first item.

Artistry of star Mezzo -- featured in the *The New York Times* (inaudible) (singing "Carmen").

The Beyonce of opera.

By Miss Bridges, during the 2021 season, for ten thousand. \$10,000. Ten thousand. All right. Who is going to pass ten thousand over here? Thank you. Now looking for 11 thousand. Ten looking for 11 thousand. Make it 11 thousand? 11 thousand on the phone. Hannah has 11. Now 12 thousand? 65.

>> ROGER: Is that good, Elizabeth?

>> ELIZABETH: That's great. Thanks, Roger. So this is a great segue to introduce Chris O'Shea from C. 2 auctions would say an incredible consultant and helped us think actually months in advance of the event how we were going to maximize our performance across our silent auction, our live auction and our fund in need, but then especially the night of as we were working in a completely new way.

So Chris, why don't I kick it to you and I will talk more specifics from the staff side about how we made that work.

>> CHRIS: Perfect, thank you very much, Elizabeth for hosting this and thanks to everyone for joining us today. You know, as I was thinking about our conversation here today, I really

want to give a shout-out to you, Elizabeth, and the entire WPA team because I think what really came to the fore as I was thinking about this that everything that allowed the fundraising for this virtual event to be successful was exactly the same type of preparation that you already did to make the in-person event successful.

So I think the good news for everyone out there who is in a position of thinking of moving to a virtual event or has already made that decision is that I think WPA has really basically demonstrated the fundamentals of a successful auction are still quite the same even if the delivery method is a little bit different.

So among our clients who have already transitioned to virtual events, we are seeing that results are generally in line with expectations given the circumstances. And while in some cases the revenue has been a little bit more on the conservative end of projections, I think we have at least some anecdotal evidence at this point that there's a real opportunity for substantial fundraising during this period.

So I wanted to share with you some of the things that I think WPA did really exceptionally well and some of us in the position to have more than three days to think about this, we event planning as you are thinking about how to pull off something virtual.

So when we are thinking about the silent auction in particular, WPA's silent auction had actually opened the previous

Sunday. So Sunday afternoon the silent auction had already opened. It was opened for bidding in anticipation of keeping that open for the full week or six or seven days ahead of the in-person event. So we were fortunate to have a head start there, have a lot of anticipation already in those first few days before the pivot to virtual happened.

Looking back on it I think that was really a fortunate circumstance because it gave everybody an opportunity to start participating and continue participating even when the event was not going to be held in person anymore.

When you are thinking about your silent auction, the advice that we always give to all of our clients is that a really conservative estimate of your revenue is going to be much more related to the total value of your silent auction more than anything else. And to typically a conservative estimate of your yield from your silent auction is going to be 67 percent of your total silent auction value.

We found again anecdotally just in the clients we had to transition over to virtual events so far that 67 percent has held. The difference I think is that 67 percent is a really conservative estimate for a live event because our expectation is that in most cases you will exceed that. I think 67 percent is a much more comfortable and safe number to think about as where we may actually end up. I think WPA exceeded that a little bit in the 71, 72 percent yield range which I think is really

exceptional under the circumstances.

Just a couple of things to think about as far as your silent auction goes, and things that WPA did really well. Consider the importance of really clear and concise auction item descriptions. Use links and photographs wherever possible. This was something that WPA was able to use to really great effect evening during the live stream version of the program.

I think you saw in one of the pictures of the video clips there was actually a setup of the silent auction along the side of the studio there. And so Elizabeth and Steve, the auctioneer, were able to go through and actually read through some of those descriptions, show the actual items.

But when you consider that under normal circumstances a very small or relatively small percentage of your participants in the silent auction are going to be remote, here everybody is going to be remote. So we want to be really clear in how those items are listed.

The other thing for folks who are already been soliciting items and have items already donated is we want to be thoughtful about any time sensitivity on any of those items. So of course we don't know for certain how long we are all going to be doing these Zoom meetings. So because of that, anything that's coming up in the next month or two, we have got an opportunity to reach out to those donors and see and maybe reschedule. There's an opportunity to look at it for next year and so forth.

And if necessary, to think about sourcing some additional silent auction items that don't have that time sensitivity associated with them.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the silent auction timing because I think that's been one of the most common questions that we've gotten so far. This is one of those places where I think the fundamentals really have not changed. There are diminishing returns on a silent auction after about a week. We always say that a silent auction is like pushing water against a wall and if you keep moving the wall, the water level never rises. So even under these circumstances, a week is plenty of time for everybody to log on, have an opportunity to do so, for you guys to promote various items and so forth. So I think that's something that remains the case.

And then the last thing I would encourage everyone to think about for their silent auction is the item redemption process. Of course under normal circumstances, most folks would actually just pick up their items at the end of the night. I think any of us who have been associated with an auction know that sadly not everyone is picking up their item. But in this case everyone is not picking it up. Have a plan. Think about what can be redeemed by e-mail, what can be mailed. In particular I would think about large items and how you are going to handle those. Is that something your organization will ship to folks? Is that a cost that's going to be absorbed by you all or is that a cost that

is going to be absorbed by the bidder or are there certain things that can't be shipped and the redemption will have to wait until after the fact?

Thinking about the live auction and the fund in need, again looking to WPA's example, as you all out there are preparing for your potential virtual event, again the fundamentals are true here. And it's really, really important to pick up the phone when it's related to the live auction and the fund in need.

So in the live auction in particular, as we know there's going to be a very small subset of bidders who are going to be participating in the live auction. So with I think Elizabeth we had, what I a six-item live of hundred people in the room under normal circumstances. You might have two to three to four to five if we are lucky bidders on each of those items. So we are talking to less than five percent of our constituency who is participating in the live auction.

Because of course they are not going to be in the room there with us, it's really, really important for organizations to get bids on those live auction items ahead of time. WPA did an absolutely phenomenal job making sure there were bids on nearly all of the live auction items and in a lot of cases more than one bid on those items. And we can talk a little bit more maybe in the Q and A about how that process worked.

But in many cases, those bidders were on the phone as you saw with the WPA team. So in realtime they were able to

participate in the bidding. Some of those bids were precommitted proxy bids, and so actually a staff member of our team in the room would proxy bid for those folks.

And you also had a couple of impulse bidders who called into the phone line and wanted to participate in the live auction. So we were able to sort of recreate that, you know, experience in the same way that we might in the room. But without those precommitted bids, there simply wouldn't have been enough participation. Roger?

>> ROGER: Real quick I just want to jump in and let people know one of the important things is to note that there will be a lag between your virtual event and what people are watching at home on their computers and when they call in. We were facing about a 29 to 30-second lag. So people were on the phone with some of our staff and saying well this is not what I'm seeing on the screen.

That's a thing that we learned. One thing I think is important if you are doing this method of changing things up, to communicate things up at the onset. To say when people are on the phone, make sure your staff communicates that, there's a lag and the phone is the best method to do that back and forth. And for those moments, they should turn down their live stream and just focus on the phone for that part. Back to you, Chris.

>> CHRIS: Thanks. That's a great point. I think that probably fall under the category if we had more than 72 hours, we would have worked that out. I think the consideration for anyone

considering this option for the live auction and what I think was most successful when we were able to do it on Saturday was actually if somebody wants to participate in the live auction, that we have enough phone bidders to accommodate all of the live auction bidders that we know about and to call them actually at the top of the live auction so that they are going to be on the phone for the whole time. We don't have to worry about a delay or them calling in at the wrong or right time. For the whole piece of that program.

Did I want to mention a couple of our clients who transitioned actually since Saturday have opted for a live auction that functions a little bit more like a silent auction so that when the silent auction closes, what would have been the live auction items will actually open up online. And while those have been successful, my sense is so far at least in an anecdotal way that trying to recreate the excitement of a live auction is -- the revenue we want from those items just because the nature of a silent auction is you are going to have fewer people who are willing to make an impulse bid at a higher level than you would during a live auction.

So last but not least, the fund in need and this is I hope I'm not running up on time here so just flag me, Elizabeth, if it's time to put on the red light. But I do really want to stress the importance of precommitted bids and at your highest level just as you would for a live event. Please, please make the phone calls to your top bidders to make sure they can participate. Think about

how we are creating a sense of urgency in the room using the scoreboard and the multiple channels to communicate that information. So if people are calling in with donations, doing it online or if they precommitted that we have a way to funnel all of those to the scoreboard. So I look forward to everyone's questions. Thank you.

>> ELIZABETH: Thank you. Chris. Chris O'Shea is amazing. C2 Auctions is amazing. If you never considered getting outside help to do your auctions, I really encourage you to rethink what you are doing. They just were phenomenal partners. We also loved the One Cause software. Not only were we doing a live virtual auction for the first time in gala this year, but we also learned a new software. Chris ushered us through that company. The company we previously used had a merger and acquisition. I am going to highlight, I am going to try to race through the rest of our content. Panelists give me a red flag if I'm going too fast. For the silent auction, we saw wider spread engagement than we normally see. We had folks participating from all over the country, and yes, this presents an issue with shipping. To Chris's point, think about that in your advance communications and your night of. Consider putting in the bottom of your descriptions along with restrictions and conditions, but shipping. This particular item may not be able to go.

I will tell you the people who bought wine and liquor may be doing drive-by. But in general as you look forward, those

of you who have the luxury of time to plan, this might be the year you need to discourage. This is going to be hard for folks and expensive to ship much this is something we are really famous for, big gorgeous baskets but that are going to be tough to get to people.

>> Online descriptions. There is a great way to engage your volunteers. Chris taught us how to add these links software doesn't allow photo cells but all the links you could want. Because folks are doing it on the live stream, provide them as much interactive content as possible.

Likewise as I know people are asking about, packages, we were able to reach out to some vendors who had short time frames to see, we had for instance a week in Saint Croix. We reached out to see if she would be willing to do next May as well. Not only the time frame of experiences you are offering but also the appropriateness. Realizing that we are in a completely different position today even than we were last week, so what our packages that people are going to feel motivated to participate in? You might think about your whole silent auction just with a very different tone and in general consider tone in all of your communications and everything connected to your event.

Our fund in need I think in particular speaks to this. Any time you can bring your packages back to what you are and who you are as an organization and a mission, I think that's the best way to go.

Live auction. I encourage you to visit as I said the live auction packages. Clips and stills that we show the night of. We publicize them in advance. This is the first year we publicized them so far in advance. To viewers at home. That's a great tool. As Chris said the live auction was truly a big unknown. That energy in the room is very weird and what I would say is as you are thinking about your roles, know who on your team is going to feel comfortable in the moment making split-second decisions as stuff happens.

I am my advanced communications with our board, for instance, I had flagged several of my colleagues who will be able to answer the questions in realtime also provided myself as a last resort. And I have my phone right there in my hand, some people did wind up texting me because they wanted to get in on it and they weren't able to get in on the phone line. This happened. This is what we learn seems in the moment. Give people a way cross channel to engage and participate.

Know your people and be more aggressive than you might in other years. You are not going to have the advantage the evening of to walk up and whisper in their ear and see if they might be from in getting in. You are going to have to have a different conversation in advance and follow up again and again.

And I will say that every layer of our organization was involved in doing that, including help from our board. The fund in need, go to our website and look at our video, the continuing

the legacy, the heart of the performing arts, connected to the theme 6 celebrating women. Every year we do a video and this is what leads to that big paddle raise moment. Again, Scott, great work.

Every year we struggle with the link of that video as well. We always want it to be shorter for in-person. This year we thought yes, we have something that's a little longer than normal and people at home. That's not Scott's issue, that's our side on development. We just keep adding to it.

But that video really gives People a chance to see what you are all about and might provide a break from the spoken remarks or your performances. Your fund a need as well. Chris asked us to remind people they could send an e-mail to us the morning of. That's when it wound up happening, the morning of to make the commitment and he was able to release them in realtime into what was happening in the fund a need. And in just a moment, actually this is a great moment Roger if you are ready, flip to the clip. You can see what it looked like.

I was literally stepping into the fray here on the fly because there were certain things we wanted to happen and Steve and I -- Steve Little again our auctioneer who was amazing didn't have the luxury of walking away to figure out how we were doing it. We just had to go in realtime and a bit of a ham and performer. (Video played).

>> NARRATOR: Tonight we are going to (inaudible).

Staff standing on the shoulders of some pretty remarkable --

>> ROGER: Just to highlight this is a small clip. It's part of a much longer clip that's available on our website.

>> NARRATOR: All right. 20,250. Thank you, Theresa Brown. Supporting arts education. There are thousands of students in more than one hundred DC public schools. Good heavens! Our chief operating officer, director of finance. What we want you to know -- (chatting).

Thank you so much! (Inaudible) shall we turn it back to Michelle? Thank you, Roger. Oh, my gosh!

>> ELIZABETH: Thank you so much. So that's what our fund in need actually looked like. One way we were connecting people to what was on Steve's handout are the offerings, the level. When we do our paddle raise at our in-person gala, we start with a high dollar level. The peer pressure and conviviality in the room energizes folks at all different levels and we work our way down. At the end we are at 250 or \$100 level and everybody is raising their paddle and getting in on it.

That's not going to work in this setting. You are going to need to open it up to everyone at all levels all the time. What our education team did inspired by In Street Village, they had thought about gifts to In Street that involved making a gift of welcome, for instance, for the women that they served. This is a social service agency. We thought well, how might we think

about our arts education programs that way? What's the intangible that's connected to our mission that doesn't, it's not just giving one hundred or five hundred or \$5,000? Instead, what might that fund with our program?

So you can look at that on our gala website. It's called make education happen. Our great team came up with those ideas.

The fund a need is a two-person job. As names are coming across the screen, if there are particular supporters you want to call out, there's not going to be any way for one person to catch that and be promoting bidding and be connected with the cameras. So kind of a two-person job. You have the benefit of that function of one cause called score card which is showing the names on the screen. That monitor also gives a chance to acknowledge your corporate sponsors. You will have logos. Chris set that up so we could have -- after the meeting when we share our materials, we will let you know what we used. I think it was some sort of --

>> ROGER: Google voice line.

>> ELIZABETH: Yes. And we practiced that in advance. That said in the moment, realtime realities, some folks couldn't get through on the phone. So in advance, we had provided ways for them via e-mail via phone to know how to get in touch with our staff if they needed help.

We had forms we created for our staff to be able to take

the pledges. Roger talked a little bit about the lag time. Training of our audience. The folks who we knew were in the room representing and wanted to participate needed to understand how to be involved in that as well. I would advise that's an area from staffing resource to think about having more people involved in your live auction depending on how many people you are able to space out in your space safely.

Because they are going to need -- there's no way for one person to run around. I tried to connect to everyone who is engaging.

Different needs by different constituencies. So with all of these, live auction fund a need and silent auction, know your people. Our people many of whom engage with our gala, again we are multigenerational. But many needed more support. So we tried to anticipate the questions they had and even some of the questions that were coming to us and we made a really rich or dense how-to page.

You can check that out on our gala website, too. We wanted people to know how to be a proxy bidder or rather how to connect with a proxy bidder the night of for the live auction. We wanted folks to understand for the silent auction we took these steps to participate or for how the fund a need would work. Help your people know and rather than an e-mail with all of that information, maybe create the web page tools that can help them understand it.

Do that across channels and platforms. Speaking of channels and platforms and communication, just very beautiful, I am going to give this two more minutes. I want, you notice some of the visuals and communication as we've shared the clips with you. Our external relations colleagues are incredible. Designers. We had an initial designer who conceived of the original brand for this event, Caroline O'Neil. That was carried forward by our team Inked Design who did great work. We had to turn around all of our print collateral into PDFs that we could use that night. And those lived on our website that we were driving people to in realtime.

We had the videos that Scott created. We talked about them. The live auction public Lyft videos, the fund a need video, and also some tributes.

So where are there moments when we had an in memoriam segment? Or if you are talking to someone in your community talking about your --

Content you can use over the long haul for your organization. Miscellaneous visuals you need to consider. Hopefully not within 12 hours of your event. Pre- and post-show reels. Lower thirds. You notice that's the thing across the bottom of the screen that shows who is performing or who is speaking. Scott created all of those as well. And they also drive to the auction. They take care of your constituents.

So throughout the night, we need people to log into the

auction and be connected because not only are they receiving e-mails from Washington Performing Arts as constituents like it's time to tune in, it's time to do the live auction. If they logged into our software, one Cause with C2 Auctions, they also are receiving text pushes throughout the night to encourage them to do various activities. When we had an interview with a student, following that interview, we are pushing them to mobile arts education programs.

You are also having photo slideshow comments. A brief snippet of Jenny's remarks. The artists, the partners, the philanthropists. We had slide shows for viewers at home could see some of these images. That's under content you can pepper throughout just to mix it up.

Pro-tip, create a special inbox especially for those of you having to do this soon, create a dedicated e-mail inbox that each of your staff can man and help you manage all the questions you are going to get from your community. Particularly those of you who are having to manage refunds or donation conversions in realtime, this is really helping us out a lot right now, so we created an out of office message acknowledged receipt of their e-mail and beg their patience at this time and helping them think about the kinds of communications they are having with us.

You cannot overthink your advance communications with your people. That is both through your e-blasts and also with your board. A big reason we think our silent auction was so successful

and also the fund a need was because our board publicized that in our communities and encouraged their table guests to be supportive. We saw some of their notes to people and it was really impressive.

Also your volunteer board. If you have a junior board constituency, if you have a women constituency, which constituency needs more support, needs less support, needs to be driven to one channel or platform than another?

In terms of not overthinking your communications, also consider your audiences. Not all of your audiences need all of your communications. For instance Saturday morning our entire database world received a reminder at 10:00 a.m. the live stream was happening at 6:00. They also received one more communication ten minutes before it happened. But then only the people that had registered in advance for the event or registered throughout the course of the day received those additional reminders as the program ran. Time for the live auction, time for the fund a need.

So consider who is getting what. You don't want all your people to get everything or you are going to get a lot of unsubscribes. I am going to kick it to my wonderful colleague David who is the special media expert who amplified this across social media channels. I am going to ask David to make his wonderful presentation. And then we will turn into, and I know it will be just on the brief side. Then we will switch into Q and A. And we will do our best to answer as many of your questions

as possible. Over to you.

>> DAVID: Thank you. Yeah, so I just wanted to acknowledge a couple of things about transitioning to the live event and how that changed social media in particular. So whereas, you know, the role for social media for this event had it been live would have been amplification, I would have been around taking pictures, tweeting them out and making it look like we throw one of the best parties you have ever seen, now my role had shifted entirely to being about program delivery.

So this is no matter what we do visually, all of the videos, everything we put together, all of the programming, people are watching it either through YouTube, or through Facebook and that's because those are the two channels that we decided to implement it on.

And YouTube gave us utility, whereas Facebook gave us opportunity. And I say that meaning that YouTube actually gave us the ability to embed the video on a page on our website, and then underneath that embedded video we had all of our links to the silent auction or here is the number you call for the live auction. We had all of their resources right below us. And that was the page we were directing all of the traffic that we could to.

Facebook gave us opportunity because as with all of these things, you just never know the right person sharing it at the right time, the snowball effect of social media, you know, it's a really great place to be reaching a much wider audience. And

so it was important for us to be kind of managing both of those at the same time.

And just really quickly, one thing that we found helpful in the external relations department was to develop our own run of show separate or modeled after the run of show of the program. So this was our what communications needed to go out at what times during the program. So when we were about to transition to the silent auction, I was sitting there on Facebook and YouTube commenting, saying, like, here is the link for the silent auction and it popped up and it was on Facebook clickable. I learned in the moment that on YouTube it was not clickable. So, you know, we all learned something new here.

But we found that really helpful for making sure that everyone who was viewing this program had the tools in front of them to participate because this whole event was based on their participation. I discovered that that meant that was what I was doing the entire time, and I was no longer able to really be up and around taking pictures, making an Insta story. So if I were to do it all over again, I would definitely deputize somebody else to do that for me because that's always helpful. And then one last thing that I will add is that over the course of the night, looking back at the analytics, all of the shares, all of the comments, all of the reactions, not all, most of them happened during the performances by the artists in particular because that's where people are very motivated to share this with their friends.

So they, that's where we saw the audience spike in each live performance. So just a word of advice to program your live art, your performances if it's a performance gala, program that very strategically.

Where do you want the most eyes and all of those shares to be coming in? That's all I have.

>> ELIZABETH: Thank you, David. That's great. David was on the ground and in every which way. I will just add we saw some incredible social activity primarily motivated by our members of our junior board were actually the strongest voices in this, of sharing out content across platform as it was happening. And we saw experiences of people having their virtual gala in their homes. Some got dressed up. Some had their lovely meals, but sharing that out made for a really special experience.

I am going to answer some questions quickly that have come in on my phone from my colleagues, and then I am going to kick it to Roger and also invite some questions from Sara. So we will start trying to go through your questions. For our million raise, that's our gross raise. Would we do this again even if we didn't have to and how would we do it if we had to do it from scratch? Let me get back to you in a week or a month. We are still analyzing. There are questions about analysis and I will share no, we don't have the analysis yet. We have the analysis that we shared out with you today. But we are still in triage mode like so many of you thinking through what does the next "now" look like for us?

As we are looking at our performance side of the house and other conversations in addition to closing out the gala.

>> ROGER: Can I jump in on that? We are having that conversation with a number of clients where things are now. And what does it look like now compared to what it looked like a week ago. One of the things and how we would do this event differently I think the best way to describe it is we would actually use our different rooms and split our camera functionality out. Where we would normally have guests coming in, we would look at those, some of those guests being streamed in. The same way we did with Chris Bowers during the live performance. And possibly set up a camera in one to two different rooms so we would have the flexibility of bringing in, having a single camera operator that would be six feet away from our, whether it's our EC or our speaker or something like that and allow the ability to bring that speaker in, allow them to do their part and then have them depart while still maintaining that social distances and still having the functionality of being able to send to different spaces within. This could also be done in someone's office, in someone's theater or space utilizing different spaces that you have access to and spreading it out that way.

>> ELIZABETH: Thanks, Roger. Someone asked a question about how many auction items are too many when in a virtual event. And this might be something that Chris can speak to or we could follow up on. I will say that, you know, we overperformed in the

silent auction. But this was also the year that we had far more packages than we usually do, and the value of the packages was higher.

So I don't think that we achieved the full-yield we would have for all of those packages in person. I actually think we would have slammed our silent auction in person this year. It was beneficial to have had more packages at a higher value going in. And I wonder, I think we had maybe 20 packages in the room on the table. That's all that would be appropriate and would fit, whereas we had 105 packages online. Chris, do you want to add to that? I am going to unmute you.

>> CHRIS: Thank you. Yeah. Thanks for this question. This is a great one. And I think there are two things that you want to keep in mind when you are thinking about your auction packages. One of which is that particularly in this current situation where most of the bidding is remote, think about your total silent auction value more than you're thinking about the number of items.

So if we can assume that at 67 percent yield this is a pretty safe one, if we want to raise or net out a thousand dollars from our silent auction, we want to make sure that we have \$15,000 in value. And the way that we get there is sort of less important in this context than the total value of the items. And just as a quick step for anybody listening, the typical configuration that you want to think about for the number of auction items is that

you don't want to have more than .6 items per bidding unit in the room.

So at six hundred people, you assume three hundred or so bidding units. You have an absolute high maximum of 180, two hundred items. But in your case, Elizabeth as you said, the value was a much more critical factor than the number.

>> ELIZABETH: Great. Somebody just chimed in what was our net. William -- I'm sorry, Williana, we don't know. We are still in the process of following up with our supporters because not everyone we did a thank you e-mail on Monday as we always do within 48 hours. And we provided a mechanism for people to tell us their intention in terms of conversion. I think around 15 percent of our folks were proactive in following our instructions and telling us I would like a refund or I would like to convert.

So we are in the process of following up with everyone else proactively. How many people tuned in? Average was two hundred. We were around 275, 250, average let's say throughout the whole night. How could we get more people to view the virtual gala? This is where I think the opportunity is limitless especially with your social and XR teams.

Hannah, Scott, and David helped us to create beautiful visuals, compelling communications through our e-blasts. You have your website to work with. You have the gala website. And really you could create storytelling content in advance to help

get people excited about that virtual experience. You could have an interview with your CEO that gets people thinking about it and maybe a board member about how they are going to enjoy the virtual experience.

I would just encourage you to think as creatively as possible about that. And then it's going to be really key to have those influencers in your community who are sharing that out.

So they need to be leading the way and encouraging their communities of people to experience it. And that's also your staff. You know, how can they be your mega phones within their communities? All of those numbers online, this many people are viewing, this many people are tuning in, there's every radius of connection that helps with spreading the word.

I don't have any more questions on my phone right now. So Roger, would you like me to kick it to you for more questions?

>> ROGER: That would be great. I'm tracking some of the Q and A coming in from our viewers. Dana wanted to know, did you do rehearsals and blocking with talent beforehand? How did the performers feel? We absolutely did. Normally if we did the full scale gala, we would have done that on stage. Everyone was flexible in the new format. If you move to a virtual and you are having different sets or elements or different backdrops, that's something you need to do a separate rehearsal and blocking rehearsal with your crew. How they are going to go from one person to the next and that person normally when it's in the room they

are all at the podium and going from one person to the next that way.

In the new virtual setting that is different spaces and we need to do new blocking and new rehearsal with those folks. Patrick McCoy asked even though this gala happened because of unforeseen circumstances, do you envision in the future offering virtual --

Elizabeth, do you want to kind of look to that one?

>> ELIZABETH: Yeah, I will dive in and say, stay tuned. We are absolutely talking about that, so many of our peer organizations, we want to support our artists and create community through the arts. We are absolutely looking at ways for our main stage performances, and also arts education how we can maximize live stream capabilities.

Additionally we really did learn that there were some things that were replicable about this gala experience. Even if we return to God willing will return to an in-person event next year, we could still make elements of it live and actually it's a different conversation we might want to have with our artists next year to anticipate a live way of engaging.

Yeah, Roger?

>> ROGER: If I could just do a couple more. There was one from Barbara. You had two fifty but expected six hundred. That's a significant drop. How do you interpret that? I will tee it up and throw it back to Elizabeth to finish it off. If you think

about our room that night. We have 60 tables. Those tables are hosted by board members, engaged viewers. The rest of the tables are guests. We view this as really successful that we had almost fifty of what we would have had in the room because of the fact that so many of the folks in the room are guests of our engaged audience.

>> ELIZABETH: First I am going to invite Brooke to share on that point.

>> BROOKE: I will say a little bit more there. Crucial clarification. We know it was 275 households or 275 screens that were viewing at any time. E don't actually know how many people were sitting behind the screen watching it. In many cases it may have been two to four people in the same room together, probably families, spouses, partners, as Elizabeth mentioned earlier.

On the flip side, Roger was just saying that in the gala, we have 60 tables, many of them hosted by board members with ten guests each, something like that. I can say our actual number this past year was 175 buyers of some sort, buying a whole table or buying two tickets at a time, three tickets at a time, something like that.

So we actually think our numbers of total participants may have been comparable.

>> ELIZABETH: Thank you so much. Brooke. That's a great distinction. They tend to not heavily publicized advance registration of their guests. We keep working on this to

encourage them to do that in advance so it streamlines registration when they arrive. The vast majority of our crowd, everybody else is checked in when they arrive. And that's the moment we get their phone number and e-mail and are able to communicate with them throughout the night.

Jenny, you had a great point. Would you like to share about tickets and tables in advance and that work that was done in advance and how that wasn't able to be transposed for the night of?

>> JENNY: Yeah, I actually think it's been covered pretty well. But when people expect to come to a live event, they are expecting a dinner and dancing and a whole other set of experiences. And frankly, a number of people who purchased tables or larger suites of tables are expecting to do professional networking in the room.

As you think this about transposing a live event to the virtual event, it's not just the good will of the patrons, but the source of their dollars which might be focused on a very in-person experience.

That said I think we will be dealing with a very different world from now. And we have seen as Brooke outlined, people who made table purchases have responded in the spirit of generosity that defined their giving in the first place to convert over, but recognizing that there are some unique funding sources and intentions by some of the table purchasers that might have a

different outcome with the reflection for planning.

>> ELIZABETH: Thanks, Jenny. I want, we have about five minutes left. And so if there are other questions, I am going to invite actually as I'm looking at all of my panelists, if any of you want to raise your hands if you feel like there are things that we didn't cover, information that you would like to share with our community, I invite you to raise your hand. I am going to call on Sara now.

>> SARA: Hi. I just actually wanted to read off some of the questions that we have on the Q and A that I thought were interested for a large group. One, if galas or VIP events meant to offer people a very special and exclusive night, how do you make them feel special when it becomes a viral online event?

>> ELIZABETH: Woo! Great question. And truly one that I think should be pondered deeply with more lead time than we had. I will say that through our communications, this is again back to that tone thing and I would tip my hat to my colleague Hannah who offered really fresh eyes outside the development department as well as Matt from our team what's the tone? Are we thanking people? Are we helping people feel like they are a part of something special? This was something unprecedented for Washington Performing Arts. We are in the habit of doing things live, yes, but it's live performance and not live like this.

So we tried to create a sense of event around it and a sense of momentousness around it. I think there could be ways

that you could create content and experiences in advance that might be just for VIPs like what if there were, I don't know if any of watched the Met live from the Met broadcast. Rene Fleming goes back stage and has an interview. What if there were advance interviews being conducted with our artists that provided a different kind of access that the rest of your supporters weren't participating in?

There are so many more ways you could weave donor acknowledgement. We talked a little bit about that. But there could be ways, so that's coming more from a stewardship, but there could be ways to connect donors with various portions of the program. I really do think though it comes back to the content and how you are connecting with the artists and perhaps leadership in sort of a private -- something that feels private experience but something. In this virtual environment, I think that's one of the places to start. I hope we will share in our communities more ideas people are having about how to create exclusive experiences.

>> ROGER: I have a quick one. How many on YouTube versus Facebook? Because we were pushing everyone to our website which is where YouTube was embedded, we had two hundred on average, two hundred, a little bit more on that. And then even more on Facebook. I am going to shoot it over to David who can give us some of that data analytics even a little snippet.

>> ELIZABETH: Before you do that, Roger, I am just going

to say, stand by. It's 2:58. This being our first ever webinar, I don't know what will happen because we schedule it until 3:00. I don't know if it will cut off. If it does, I want to thank you all to be tuning in. We will share the transcript and the live recording of this experience and we will see what else we are able to share out on the flip side. And I want to thank all of our panelists. You were great. And I also want to thank Joshua at LC interpretive captioning. We really wish you luck for all of your experiences and the questioning you are considering. In our follow-up communication, I will see if I can figure out how to share our consultants names of contact information. In case you have specific questions follow one them and with our staff. David and Jenny.

Oh, David, I have to unmute you. I'm sorry I'm sorry.

>> DAVID: Yeah, just to pick up on what Roger was saying, about two hundred on YouTube versus 50, 60, 70 on Facebook at any given point in time. If I had to give percentages, I would say two thirds on YouTube versus one third on Facebook. Yes, we were pushing people to YouTube, so you could say we expected somewhere around that breakdown.

One other little stat that I would add to that if you are asking about viewership that from the analytics that I looked at, nearly 40 percent of the minutes viewed that were clocked came from viewers outside of the DC metro area. So that speaks a little bit to geographic reach and perhaps might inform a little bit about

tone in some of your programming because you are reaching -- people who aren't necessarily attached to your community but may be attached to the art.

>> ROGER: One quick follow-up to that is that viewership stayed engaged. We saw that same number ten minutes at the beginning of the program as we did at the end which is unique. I think because that view stayed consistent throughout.

>> ELIZABETH: Quick notes and questions. And Jenny I want to throw it to you. The response from our board on the flip side of this event was absolutely phenomenal. I have to tell you that the pride and affiliation, I think your community will feel and see the organization in a different way. The big upside of a live stream is you have a dedicated audience for two solid hours who really get to hear about your mission and concentrate in different ways. They are not in the business of entertaining their guest. They are very, very focused. We experienced a lot of good will. It was very heartening, the response and there's a great deal of pride, humility as well and just pride in the moment that we were able as a community to pull together and do this.

Also there was a question, a very practical question about adjusting benefit amounts. Yes, yes, so yes, we have to regenerate all of the contributions that were sent in advance. Hundreds of those to develop. We are working on those actively. Of course taking on goods and services and just changing, becomes a pure donation. There are some implications of that kind of shift

that apply more broadly as well, like, for our young patrons who have annual dues, now this participation can count as a part of their dues when before it wasn't. Jenny, I am going to unmute you. There you are. Hold be.

>> JENNY: I am glad that you mentioned the board response because it was tremendous. People were so supportive and very proud to have been part of supporting that evening. And there was a question about how people who attend events can feel special and recognized for their (inaudible).

I think at the end of the day, this was an event that spoke to and showcased the creativity and the assets of our organization. And I would really encourage everyone who is considering switching to this format to dig deep into the sort of internal wells of resource that you have through the individuals who participate, whether they are staff or artists or kids involved in the programs with all of the caveats, and also to do really, really tight scripting.

One of the things we wanted to be sure of was to acknowledge people at just the right moments. And in the moment, it's very hard to improvise that. So as natural as much of it might have seemed in the moment and certainly quite a bit of what Elizabeth did required her skills and training as a performer on the spot, there was also a tremendous amount that really was scripted to make sure that we included people and we had many sets of eyes.

But use the resources you have. We would have done that. Told the story of Washington Performing Arts and it didn't need to be dazzling. And frankly I think many of the people who really do support us, generally and who supported us that evening understood what we stand for. And it wasn't as much about the unique experience and exclusivity, but frankly what our organization believes in and stands for and has for 53 years which is welcoming and inclusivity. To the extent we could live our mission virtually online, that was perhaps the best way to honor the gifts that people were making in our support.

>> ELIZABETH: Thank you, Jenny. Perfectly put. Also helping to refine that script at midnight 30 the night before. Thank you all so much for your questions and participation. I'm looking the my panelists to see if any other questions came in from online or rather from the Q and A that we haven't yet addressed before we sign off. Yeah, I am going to kick it to Brooke. First I am going to kick it to Sara and then Brooke.

>> SARA: One question was how did you streamline decision-making and work to get so many perspectives in such a short window in a stress-induced environment?

>> ELIZABETH: Whoa.

>> SARA: I know I'm giving you all the big questions.

>> ELIZABETH: This is a theme from the very start which comes back to roles and trust. And this week more than ever I felt so proud to be a part of this team where we all know one another's

strengths and can play to them, and weaknesses, too and where each of us shine and everybody leaned deep into their superpower that night.

As I mentioned briefly kind of skimmed over, okay, actually from the start, we knew it was paramount that our board leadership and that's our board chair as well as members of our executive committee and officers of the board together with our gala co-chairs representing the board of directors felt like they were working with us in partnership to make the decision of how we were going to move forward.

Ideally all of you will have a lot more time to make that decision. But because this had such a big financial revenue goal revenue target, so critical to the life of the organization, we needed to make the decisions about how to move forward together. Those were immediate conference calls on Wednesday all day long Wednesday afternoon together in part sometimes we were trying to find somebody in another room to make sure that buy-in was absolutely essential.

Then we were able to communicate out to the wider board this is our decision point. Beyond that when it came to our staff, there are moments when you have to again lean into your superpower and decide who is leaning and going and know who to come with questions. And really, Roger was driving the external vendor connection points. So with all the wonderful partners you heard from here, from Event EQ, Syzygy, also Ridgewells and Chris, Chris

was also working with me, too. But C2 Auctions. He was driving all of that activist and Salamander, our location, I didn't even know about it. I trusted Chris. He knows when to come back to me to gut check a decision. I was running sort of the thinking about our patron communications, our supporter communications, being in touch with our board and where I should elevate outreach to Jenny or our board chair and engage those partners in all of our development team. Every member of our development team and our external relations team self-identified where they could be helpful. It was a moment where everybody rose to the occasion. But essentially I became the arbiter of the decision points and the keeper of the most information in the head of how we were going to move forward. We had some all staff conversations around it.

With this kind of notice, also and so many moving parts, there's just you have to kind of trust a couple of people to hold all this stuff in your head and know to keep coming back to them and trust everybody knows their role and they are going to run and just do it really well. Anybody have anything to add after that from the floor? Okay, Brooke, did you have one more question?

>> BROOKE: No.

>> ELIZABETH: So at 3:08. We started a little late, 1:08 and now it's 3:08. Thank you for tuning in on our first-ever webinar and your patience with our technology and your great questions. Ian, Event EQ, with our tough situations. I'm starting to hear my kids. I said I would be done at 3:00. It's

3:08. My time is limited. Yours is, too. This is such a moment. We want to support you as colleagues both in the arts and in nonprofit and in general wherever you are coming from. Higher ed, social services, we were so pleased to see so many different sectors represented. We wish you luck and good health and safety and to take good care. Thanks for joining us today. Bye, bye.