

# Setting the Stage

Tammy Meyer takes the lead to help first-generation theatre students

Growing up in a blue-collar family in Oak Lawn, Ill., **Tammy Meyer (MST '90)** paved her own path, becoming the first person in her family to go to college. She worked multiple jobs to fund her way through college, graduate school at DePaul University and law school without much guidance on how to handle the hurdles she encountered along the way.

While Meyer appreciates the lessons she learned through her hard work, she's committed to making the path smoother for incoming first-generation students.

Meyer's support of DePaul came to the fore when her daughter enrolled in The Theatre School (TTS), double majoring in the BFA acting program and in political science. When Meyer attended a Theatre School gala during her daughter's first year, she heard that 100% of TTS students are awarded scholarships and financial aid.

"I thought, this is a school that cares about making sure students aren't spending hundreds of thousands of dollars and walking out saying that they can't afford to be an artist because they need to pay back student loans," says Meyer, who lives with her husband, Jim, in St. Petersburg, Fla. "That's a game-changer, just to be able to follow your heart."

Meyer, who in 2020 launched her own legal team consulting company, Lakewood Legal Innovation, after more than 30 years as a legal and business leader, litigator and accountant, has a wealth of experience guiding companies through complex challenges.

Now she is putting that strategic experience to use as a member of the TTS advisory board, where she is helping to strengthen connections between TTS and its parent community, extend more aid to students and grow the school, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2025.



Tammy Meyer

"It's a national gem, a highly rated school," she says. "I would love us to get to a point where 100% of students' tuition is covered."

Meyer also established an endowed scholarship for first-generation students enrolled in TTS. Financial and academic support can open doors to life-changing opportunities for students, she says.

Meyer's experience with DePaul has come full circle, as an alumna, parent and donor.

"If you had talked to me when I was 25, I would have said, 'Boy, was that a hard road,'" Meyer says of working her way through college as a first-generation student. "Now when I look back, I realize it was an important road to travel. It teaches you a lot when you go through a difficult experience, such as being the new person at a company with no job experience except cashiering in a store. You feel very self-made. But it was tough because I didn't have people who could guide me. So if we can make that easier for future students, that's something I want to be a part of." — Eve Becker