

My First Broadway Bound: What Happens When You Take 60 Theatre Lovers to New York City

By Brenda Foley

This past week was the culmination of months of planning and preparation for The Phoenix Theatre Company's annual New York City donor trip, Broadway Bound.

A sea of red lanyards and palpable excitement set the tone at the departure gate at Sky Harbor, launching a trip full of adventure, artistry, tears, and laughter.

I lived in NYC for over a decade and consider it home, but I had so many questions. How would it feel to return with nearly 60 people traveling together? Would it be possible to meet expectations and facilitate a unique and memorable experience?

The answer was an unqualified yes.



2026 Broadway Bound Group

We dined, we toured, we saw ***Beaches***, ***Death of a Salesman***, ***Two Strangers (Carry a Cake Across New York)***, and ***Ragtime***, a lineup carefully curated by Michael Barnard to spark conversation and cover the full range of what Broadway is doing right now. His relationships brought inspirational artistic conversations with industry pros like lighting designer Keith Truax, director and choreographer Sara Edwards, and director and choreographer Jeff Whiting.

We were treated to an astonishing master class with Tony Award winner Victoria Clark and singers at various stages of their careers, from new grads to seasoned Broadway veterans.



Photo 1: Master Class with Victoria Clark | Photo 2: The Phoenix Theatre Company Development Team, Producing Artistic Director, and Executive Director with Victoria Clark

"I loved Victoria Clark's Master Class," said patron Jeanie Smith. "How lucky we were to have her spend her time and knowledge with us. Definitely one of the highlights of our trip."

Patron Jill Garcia, who has been joining us since 2014, echoed the feeling: "Watching Victoria Clark in action, literally changing the lives of the lucky participants, was truly inspiring. We didn't want it to end!"

Our heads hit the pillow each night full of moments to savor.

Broadway can't exist without a pipeline of new shows, and we heard over and over again what a vital role The Phoenix Theatre Company is playing in that pipeline. Our reputation is growing rapidly as a vital and valued contributor to the national theatrical ecosystem, and we are attracting producers and top talent to our campus.



Photo 1: Michael Barnard interviews Director/Choreographer Sara Edwards (*Let the Good Times Roll*) for the Artistic Director Series during 2026 Broadway Bound | Photo 2: Broadway Up Close tour of the Hudson Theatre

And on a personal note, experiencing our patrons' kindness, generosity, wit, curiosity, and passion was a true revelation and joy I did not anticipate.

I encourage anyone who's interested to consider joining us for a future trip.

It's an exciting time to be part of The Phoenix Theatre Company!