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THEATER ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE ROGERS PARK

Jackalope, Lifeline theater companies awarded Rick Bayless Family Foundation grants

The foundation was started in 2017 by the Chicago celebrity chef and his wife, and to date has awarded more than \$500,000 in support of more than 25 Chicago-area theater companies.

By Miriam Di Nunzio | Dec 12, 2019, 1:26pm CST



Lifeline Theatre makes its home in a converted ComEd substation in Rogers Park. The theater company has been awarded a Rick Bayless Family Foundation Grant. | Elizabeth Davidson/Sun-Times

The Rick Bayless Family Foundation continues to support Chicago's vibrant theater scene with the announcement Thursday of two more Stepping Stone grants.

The recipients of separate cash awards of \$150,000 over three years are the Rogers Park-based Lifeline Theatre Company, 6912 N. Glenwood Ave., and Edgewater's Jackalope Theatre, 5917 N. Broadway. According to the official announcement, both companies applied for grants seeking funding to bolster their administrative staffs.

"Lifeline is overjoyed to be a recipient of the Bayless Family Foundation Stepping Stone grant. It is no hyperbole to say it is a game changer," said the theater company's managing director Allison Cain in a statement.

In addition, the foundation announced the Signal grant, a new award designed to bolster the visibility/work of various theater companies and to inspire funding from other sources for those organizations. The inaugural recipients are Congo Square Theatre at 1016 N. Dearborn (\$75,000) and The Actors Gymnasium circus school/theatre company in Evanston (\$25,000).

The foundation was started in 2017 by Bayless and his wife Deann. To date, it has supported five local theaters with multi-year Stepping Stone grants, and has awarded more than \$500,000 in support of more than 25 Chicago-area theater companies. In February, Albany Park Theater Project, Porchlight Music Theatre and the Steep Theatre Company **were awarded Stepping Stone grants** from the foundation.

"We are humbled by the confidence in our work and are grateful to the Bayless Family for continuing to fight for Chicago storefront theater," said Jackalope managing director Nora Leahy.

For information visit [BaylessFoundation.org](https://rickbaylessfoundation.org)