

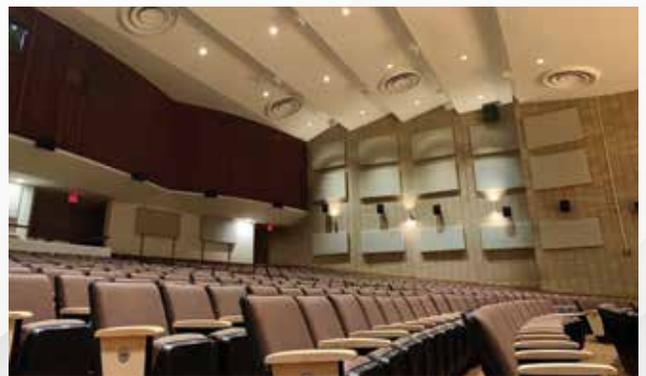


WHITEHEAD AUDITORIUM

TRANSCEND® ACTIVE ACOUSTIC SYSTEM

*“Everyone’s been quite pleased with the change that’s occurred in the hall with Transcend®, in terms of balance and quality. Musicians can hear themselves onstage. We now have the ability to essentially tune the hall to the nature of the ensemble.”*

- Blake Pearce, Dean, College of the Arts



CHALLENGE

Improve the room acoustics in a 1970s-era auditorium to support a broad music program, for the benefit of both musicians on stage and audience. Eliminate dead spots and distracting echoes throughout facility.

WENGER SOLUTION

Installation and tuning of Transcend® system and acoustical treatments to enhance room acoustics and provide flexibility for various programming needs.

## BENEFITS

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- Enhances onstage communication for musicians
- Provides even balance and blend across audience seating
- Increases programming options with flexible acoustics
- Offers simple, user-friendly operation
- Delivers significant savings vs. new construction



TRANSCEND® ACTIVE ACOUSTIC SYSTEM

***“While Transcend® is sophisticated technology, it’s easy to use. I don’t have to think about it - it just works. Transcend® improved our auditorium significantly - it’s like building a new auditorium for 10 percent of the cost.”***

*- Dr. Ben Harper, Acting Director of Bands/Director of Athletic Bands*

## HIGHLIGHTS

"Before Transcend®, the poor acoustics in Whitehead Auditorium made it a real challenge for performers," recalls Blake Pearce, Dean of the College of the Arts at Valdosta State University (VSU) in Valdosta, Georgia. This multipurpose facility was built in the early 1970s and features a proscenium stage, curtains and rigging.

Onstage sound became trapped in the rigging, making it very difficult for musicians to hear each other. This was true for orchestra, wind ensemble, concert band or any group; musicians also did not know how their sound projected into the hall.

Searching for answers, VSU commissioned an acoustical study that found audience members in the center of the first ten rows – considered the "best seats in the house" – were not hearing much of the sound produced onstage. Instead, it was passing over their heads and not reflecting back consistently.

Dr. Howard Hsu, Director of Orchestra Studies and Music Director of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, says the auditorium stripped away both the sound's richness and volume. "It was odd – in the audience, I could hear every note attack, but it was also dead and muddy. Playing there was a big struggle."

As VSU weighed different solutions, building a new hall was not in the budget. An overhead cloud system was considered, but would have been very expensive and inconvenient to install: the hall would have been closed for six months with no alternative campus venue available.

### Immediate Impact

After learning about Transcend, VSU personnel discussed details, costs and logistics. A delegation that included the potential donor visited Wartburg College's Transcend system and Wenger's Minnesota facility. The Transcend system premiered in September 2018; its impact was felt immediately.

"Performing conditions have really improved because now our players can hear across the whole orchestra," explains Hsu, whose symphony includes both professional and student musicians. He adds, "The sound is much richer, which really benefits the strings. We've received many compliments."

Dr. Doug Farwell, Head of the Music Department, concurs. "There's not a bad seat in the house anymore – you can hear anywhere." He also praises Transcend's authentic sound. "It's warmer and fuller; the sound doesn't feel artificial or gimmicky," he adds. "The audience's attention is focused on the stage where it belongs."

As part of the project, Wenger also installed acoustical panels on the auditorium's side and back walls to improve the natural room acoustics and help eliminate distracting flutter echoes.

### Tremendous Flexibility

Today Transcend offers VSU tremendous flexibility, enabling the auditorium's acoustics to be easily tuned to suit any event or ensemble, including band, orchestra, choir, soloist or spoken word.

"Every faculty member or group uses a different Transcend setting and level," remarks Farwell. "The orchestra, for example, uses the concert hall setting at 75 percent. For our recital tomorrow, we'll use the large recital hall at 85 percent."

He says that the choir prefers the cathedral setting, which is the wettest acoustically. Until Transcend, VSU's choirs had not performed in the auditorium for more than 15 years due to its poor acoustics.

Overall, VSU faculty and students are still discovering the parameters and capabilities of the Transcend system, according to Pearce. He appreciates the ability of Wenger technicians to communicate with the system remotely for fine-tuning and diagnostics if necessary.

### Easy & Cost-Effective

Dr. Ben Harper, Acting Director of Bands and Director of Athletic Bands, values how such sophisticated technology is easy to use; he's currently conducting both the wind ensemble and concert band. "I don't have to think about Transcend – it just works," he says, adding that installing Transcend was a cost-effective solution for fixing Whitehead Auditorium. "It's like building a new auditorium for 10 percent of the cost."

# PRODUCT LIST

Transcend® Active Acoustic System and Acoustical Panels



## About Wenger | J.R. Clancy

Wenger and J.R. Clancy provide the widest array of innovative, high-quality products and services for the performing arts industry. Their advanced products provide the highest levels of safety, reliability and aesthetics, helping transform performance venues and engineer unforgettable experiences.

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