

Dr. Ronald M. Reed, Rapid City

20
19

Although most of his work has been done backstage and behind the scenes, Ron Reed's impact on the arts in South Dakota stretches from the halls of higher education to the state capital and through innumerable theatrical productions from border to border. Ron Reed has been a vital arts advocate, a memorable teacher and an inspiration to students, colleagues and fellow volunteers for over a half century.



As chair of the University of South Dakota theater department, and director and set designer at the Black Hills Playhouse, Reed expanded the impact of the arts. He increased theater majors, enhanced the reputation of the BHP and worked tirelessly to create a performing arts space on the USD campus. Through a statewide tour of quality theater performances, meetings with

state and educational officials and active participation in the design process, Reed spearheaded the successful effort to build the Warren M. Lee Center for the Performing Arts.

Called to public service by Governor Dick Kneip, Reed served as the SD Secretary of Education and Cultural Affairs, and was a pioneer for special education and care for people with disabilities, especially in the area of arts access and participation.

After relocating to Rapid City, Reed threw himself into arts projects there, becoming a volunteer director and fundraiser for the Black Hills Community Theater and renewing his ties to the Black Hills Playhouse. He brought diverse arts organizations together to plan and fund the Arts Resource Center in Rapid City and worked tirelessly to create the Performing Arts Center through the remodeling of the former Rapid City High School. PAC is now the performance home to a wide variety of Black Hills arts groups, hosting arts events throughout the year.

Reed's willingness to work outside the spotlight, mostly on a volunteer basis, to advance the arts in South Dakota has been a lifelong commitment for him and a cultural benefit to his state.