

Dear Greater Grand Forks Community,

Mid-September through early October was a historic period for Alerus Center. On September 17th, Luke Combs set new venue records for attendance as well as food and beverage sales (beating George Strait in 2013 for tickets and Metallica in 2018 for food and beverage sales). This was immediately followed by what was, at the time, the largest overnight conversion in the building's history in preparation for UND Football's home opener against Drake University which ended with the Fighting Hawks extending their streak to 12-straight home wins. On October 1st, Alerus Center hosted another major concert with Eric Church playing his classic hits, signing autographs, and taking photos with fans for over three hours – a show that lasted well past midnight. At the same time, the building hosted the prestigious 46th Annual Athletics Hall of Fame Banquet (proudly sponsored by the UND Letterwinners Association) for 250 guests. As soon as the lights went up over the Eric Church crowd at the end of the show, staff and volunteers set to work on what is currently the record holder for largest overnight conversion in venue history. On October 2nd, Alerus Center opened its parking lot and its doors to a sold out UND Football game, the first time NDSU has played at the venue in 18 years. Most of our full-time team and many others worked some 24, 36, 40 plus hours straight on both historic weekends to bring this level of live entertainment to Grand Forks.

According to reports generated by Visit Grand Forks, the four historic events alone brought in over \$4.5 million dollars of economic impact (nearly \$3 million dollars in direct spend) to the city and supported upwards of 3,000 jobs. All in a time when the Canadian border was still closed, our region was still feeling the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the nation grappled with immense labor shortages. This great achievement would not have been possible without the support of numerous local, regional, and national partners. Alerus Center and the Spectra staff cannot express our gratitude enough for everyone who donated their time and energy to making these weekends a success. This was a community effort, in the truest sense. We often talk about how Grand Forks collaborates and comes together like nowhere else, and I truly feel grateful for the opportunity to be part of such an incredible show of the old saying 'it takes a village'. As an Alerus Center team member, what we get to do every day is host events that drive economic impact and improve the quality of life for our citizens, but more than that, we are the place where Grand Forks comes together, the place newlyweds have their first dance, the place your child competes in a sporting event, where you come for the annual fundraiser of your favorite local non-profit, where you take in the magic of a live concert. We are in the business of making memories for our community and that is an honor we do not take lightly. There are not even words to express the pride, gratitude, and total appreciation I have for every person that was part of this incredible time in our history. Thank you to our full and part time staff, who planned and executed every detail they could in advance to pull off these events and the tight turnarounds, who put their hearts, minds, sweat, tears, and countless hours into accomplishing the task to the very best of their ability, who left everything they had 'on the field' to make it happen. Thank you to our former team members who came back to Grand Forks from their 'new lives' in new cities across the country, who took vacation days from their careers, just to work side by side with our team for over 24 hours straight, who have no obligation to Alerus Center or the Grand Forks community but wanted to be with us to make this happen. Thank you to the Spectra staff from Salina, KS and Casper, WY that came in both weekends and

joined our team for these long, challenging shifts to pull it off, and joined in just like they had been at Alerus Center for years. Thank you, to the City of Grand Forks who worked with us to provide employment opportunities, to their hard-working and talented staff to help us fill the call, volunteered, and ensured that by any means necessary, we would make Grand Forks proud. Thank you will never be enough. Thank you to the vendors and partners (Johnson Controls, Bergstrom Electric, Gowan Construction, and so many more) who were here with us in their official capacity, but then joined the crew and worked all night with us doing anything we needed to do to make the events happen. Everyone in Grand Forks and involved in this unbelievable feat wore the same color jersey on these weekends no matter who they were employed by, and that was the jersey of the Grand Forks community. Thank you to the guests and fans that attended these events, and any of the 400 plus events Alerus Center hosts every year; you are why we do what we do and we are thankful for your support 365 days a year.

The time lapses are incredible to watch knowing it took hundreds of people from so many organizations to execute in mere hours. The feeling of a live crowd screaming and cheering at a sold-out concert or football game, the energy in the arena on those days is something that is unbelievable and indescribable. It gives us goosebumps and makes our eyes fill up with tears from the overwhelming feeling to be part of something so much bigger than ourselves. Life is best lived 'live' and Grand Forks, thank you for this opportunity.

We'd especially like to thank:

- Our Full & Part Time Staff (we can't open doors for events without you!)
- AEG Presents (Luke Combs Promoter)
- The Messina Group (Eric Church Promoter)
- UND Athletics
- UND Alumni Association
- City of Grand Forks & Employees
 - Special thanks to Todd Feland, Dan Gaustad, Maureen Storstad, Candi Sterjn, Tangee Bouvette, and the HR team)
- Ralph Engelstad Arena Staff (Heather Reardon & David Blair)
- Grand Forks Fire Department
- Grand Forks Police Department
- Visit Greater Grand Forks
- McKinnon Co.
- Dakota Sales
- Grand Forks Public Health
- Altru Health Systems
- Gowan Construction
- RJ Zavoral & Sons, Inc.
- Johnson Controls (Chad and Connor Clemetson)
- Bergstrom Electric (Brian Karas)
- HB Sound & Light

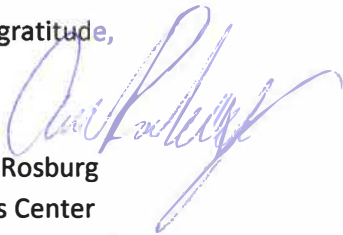
- Country Wide Sanitation
- Belfor USA Group Inc.
- Nocturnal Resources
- Smiley Thakker, Hotel Proprietor
- REV Entertainment
- Show Pro Staff
- Tents & Events RentAll
- American Horse Labor Company
- Interstate Towing
- Crary Realty
- Deek's Pizza (Tyler Kuenzel)
- Kidwell's Signature Cleaning
- Spectra Venue Management (Cody Lawson, Jeff Lloyd, Charles Wester, Ian Groopman, Geoff Bruder)
- Alerus Financial (Jeff Wangen)
- Coca-Cola
- Former Alerus Center Employees (Derek Piekarczyk, Erica Anderson, Morgan Shaw, Matt Steinmetz, Erika Anderson)
- Ashley Home Store
- Red River BMX
- Mayville State Baseball
- Crookston Baseball
- Crookston Basketball
- UND Black Student Association
- UND Mortar Board
- Screaming Eagles
- Crookston Baseball
- UMC Natural Resources Club
- Society of Petroleum Engineers
- CE Booster Club
- 319 Conf Booster Club

Time-Lapse:

Luke Combs into UND v. Drake University - <https://fb.watch/8FzHbiGjNP/>

Eric Church into UND v. NDSU - <https://fb.watch/8FzCeU12C0/>

With gratitude,



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ALERUS CENTER



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