

HSPVA

Kinder High School for the
Performing and Visual Arts

An architectural rendering of the Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts at night. The building features a modern design with a dark blue facade and large glass windows. A prominent glass section on the right side of the main facade reveals an interior space. The building is situated in an urban environment, with other skyscrapers visible in the background. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is illuminated by the building's lights and city lights.

THE DOWNTOWN DEBUT

Welcome to 790 Austin Street!

The dream of a public performing and visual arts high school for Houston began long before my tenure as principal of Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. In 1971, visionary educators built creative spaces in a former synagogue and opened the doors to young artists from all parts of the city of Houston. In 1981, a custom campus was built for HSPVA in Montrose, but the school had outgrown it before the doors even opened! It is not surprising that dreams of another new campus began taking shape soon afterward.

Twenty-five years ago, administrators, teachers, students, parents, alumni, our non-profit partner HSPVA Friends, and community leaders in the business, education, and arts sectors began working together to find the ideal location for a right-sized, state-of-the-art building. Finally, around 2012, our unwavering team of optimists located the perfect site: a downtown block near the Theater District. Seven years later, on January 7, 2019, students arrived at 790 Austin Street for the first day in their new campus!

On behalf of our school community, I have many people to thank for making this beautiful building a reality. Thank you to the HISD administration and Board of Trustees for including Kinder HSPVA in the 2012 Houston Schools Bond and thank you to the voters who made it possible for HISD to modernize dozens of schools across our city. We also owe tremendous thanks to the Kinder Foundation and HSPVA Friends, whose gifts bridged the gap between the Bond funding and the needs of a comprehensive performing and visual arts curriculum. Thank you to our alumni families, led by Chandra Wilson (Theatre '87), for paying it forward for the benefit of current and future students. Finally, thank you to our downtown neighbors for welcoming us with open arms.

Over the years, our faculty and staff have put in countless hours designing and redesigning the perfect arts school. Under their guidance, the talented architects at Gensler and the detail-oriented team at McCarthy Building Companies, Inc. turned our hopes and dreams into a finished campus that is even more beautiful and functional than we hoped it would be. Thank you!

This will be a home-away-from-home for generations of young artists. I look forward to seeing you at a performance or gallery opening soon!

Artfully yours,



R. Scott Allen, Ed.D.
Principal
Kinder HSPVA



Dr. Allen takes a turn laying bricks in the principal's office.



Students and faculty collaborate with architects at a design charrette.



Alumni join current and retired faculty on the future Denney stage.

ACADEMY SQUARE: THE HALLOWED GROUND AT 790 AUSTIN STREET



FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

Kinder HSPVA occupies a plot of land that is educationally sacred to the city of Houston. The educational history of the block encircled by Austin, Caroline, Rusk, and Capitol goes back more than 160 years!

- **1836** – Houston was founded by the Allen Brothers.
- **1856** – Town leaders acknowledged the need for a school and drew up the charter for the Houston Academy. Over \$20,000 was raised by the citizens of Houston to open the co-educational, nondenominational school: a two-story building for 400 students. (FIGURE 1)
- **1860** – Sam Houston delivered an impassioned speech from the school's balcony to dissuade Texans from joining the Confederacy. His pleas went unanswered, and the building was used as a military hospital during the Civil War.
- **1878** – The city began formalizing its public school system, and Houston Academy was remodeled and renamed The Clopper Institute in honor of Professor E. N. Clopper, who had served as principal and superintendent. The building burned down in the 1890s.
- **1894–1919** – Under architect Eugene T. Heiner, an ornate new facility was built in the Richardsonian Romanesque Revival style. (FIGURE 2) First called Houston Normal and High School, and then Houston High School, in 1914 the campus became Central High. Sadly, that unique building burned down in 1919.
- **1921** – A new Central High School campus was built in a more modern, functional style. In 1926, it was re-christened Sam Houston High School to celebrate the Texas hero. (FIGURE 3)
- **1931** – A young Lyndon B. Johnson became Sam Houston High School's public speaking teacher and brought the debate team to second place in the state championship.
- **1955** – Sam Houston High School closed, and Academy Square became the headquarters for the Houston Independent School District. Our beloved Vocal Music teacher Pat Bonner signed her employment paperwork here in 1968!
- **1973** – HISD moved, and the lot at 790 Austin Street became a surface parking lot.
- **2014** – HISD broke ground on the Kinder HSPVA building standing today, which opened to students on January 7, 2019. (FIGURE 4)

Special thanks to Jennifer Lankau Chase, Kinder HSPVA Social Studies Chair, for her research.

FIGURE 1 – The Houston Academy, 1858. Courtesy of University of Houston Special Collections.

FIGURE 2 – Postcard of Houston High School, 1907. Courtesy of University of Houston Special Collections.

FIGURE 3 – Sam Houston High School, 1936 *Houston Post* file. Appeared in J. R. Gonzales' *Bayou City History*, *The Houston Chronicle*.

FIGURE 4 – Kinder HSPVA rendering. Courtesy of Gensler and HISD.



FIGURE 4

THE DENNEY THEATRE: THE LEGACY CONTINUES

The heart of campus is the Denney Theatre, named for our school's founder, Ruth Denney. There have been two previous Denney Theatres: one in the original campus housed in the former Temple Beth Israel synagogue in midtown and another in the Montrose campus.

The 800-seat proscenium theatre boasts a fly system that soars five stories above the stage. Below the stage, a generously sized orchestra pit (with automated lift) descends into the first level of the underground parking garage. Whether your tickets are in the orchestra or balcony section, there is not a bad seat in the house!

The Denney Theatre offers state-of-the-art production value for every form of performing arts—the acoustics required for symphony and choral music concerts, the space required for ballet and modern dance recitals, and the theatrical lighting, audio/visual equipment, and rigging needed to deliver the full spectacle of musical theatre.



The Denney Theatre in the Original Campus at 3517 Austin Street, which students and teachers transitioned from the sanctuary of a synagogue into a theatre, beginning in 1971.



The Denney Theatre in the Montrose Campus at 4001 Stanford Street, completed in 1981.



A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

Kinder HSPVA is known as an environment where students experience “creative collisions.” Anyone who has stepped inside our previous campuses has experienced the exciting sights and sounds of dancers, musicians, visual artists, writers, and actors sharing the hallways. At 790 Austin Street, recreating our famously collaborative culture was a top priority.

Study nooks all over campus feature a variety of seating arrangements and laptop connections, plus chalkboards, dry erase walls, and bulletin boards. Some are open so that the sounds of music practiced in the hallways can carry – even from floor to floor, thanks to strategically placed sound wells.

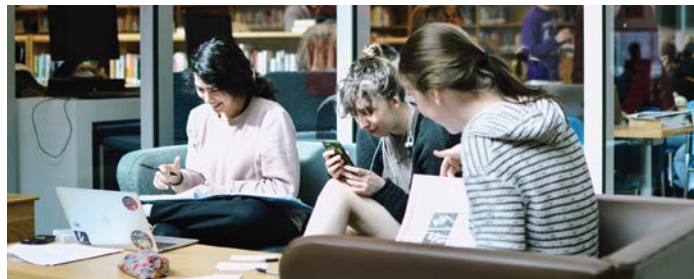


Photo courtesy of HISD



Natural light streams in from every angle. As a result, students feel the bustling energy of downtown, and our neighbors enjoy the youthful vibrancy of Kinder HSPVA. In fact, pedestrians can peek right into the colorful costume and scene shops. As the photo above shows, there are also ample interior windows throughout the school, as well as open floor plans within art areas. Perhaps the most dramatic interior view can be seen from benches in the fourth-floor hallway, which overlook the expansive dance studios below!



The Commons is the place where everything happens, including Kinder HSPVA's famous Happenings. Just inside the front door, the Commons acts as a grand lobby, with an iconic staircase modeled after staircases in the previous campuses. The Commons is home to two sculptures by alumnus Patrick Renner ('00) and his team at Flying Carpet Creative: the formal xylem (above left) welcomes guests into the Denney Theatre, while the whimsical liit (above right) floats overhead to coax guests upstairs.



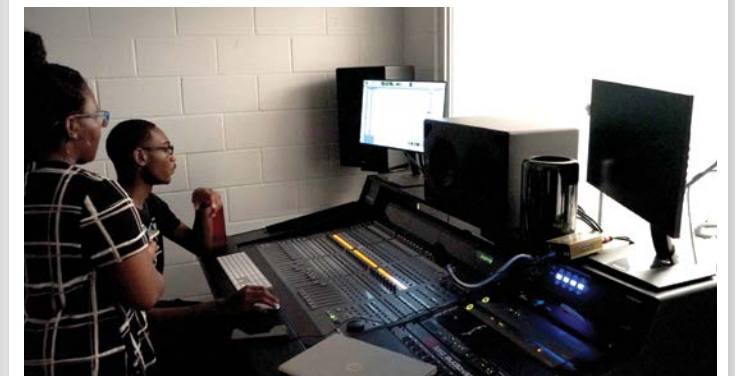
Photo courtesy of Gensler/Peter Molick



Photo courtesy of HISD

Connecting the fourth and fifth floors, a second Commons exists just for students and teachers. It is anchored by the library and a long study counter on one side and the outdoor Student Terrace on the other. The Student Terrace gives students an opportunity to soak up the sun and the magic of the downtown skyline, complete with an “HSPVA” steel sculpture suspended above.

A state-of-the-art recording studio gives all students equitable access to high-quality recordings of their work. Every music space, dance studio, and theatre has its own A/V system that connects to the Recording Studio. As a result, students can perfect their performances by studying rehearsal footage and submit technically superior audition tapes to colleges, scholarship opportunities, and national competitions.

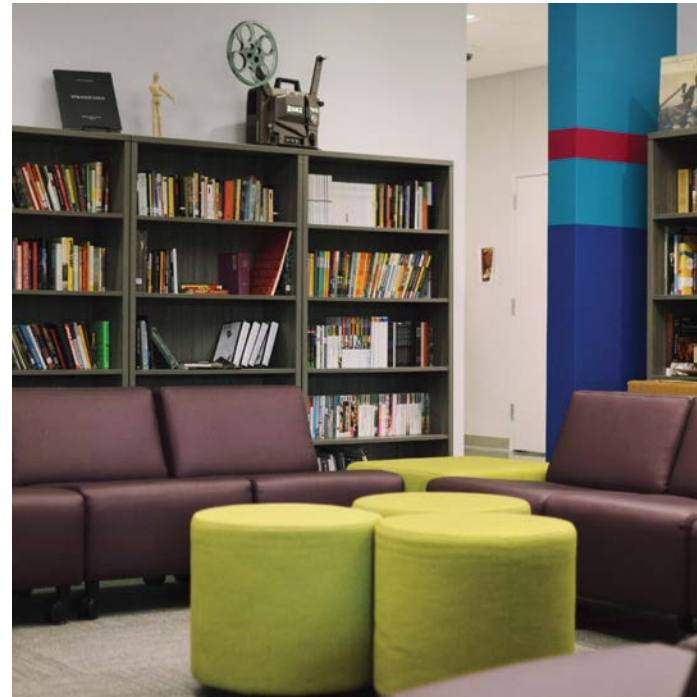


COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

At Kinder HSPVA, students spend most of their time in their studios. In every art area, designated spaces function at the level students need to become masters of their crafts.

VISUAL ARTS:

In the Visual Arts Department, there is a space for every medium. Sculpture studios offer a full suite of equipment and corresponding safety features, including two kilns for ceramics and an art rail crane that allows students to expand the scale of their work to projects weighing up to one ton. There are studios for drawing, painting, collage, textile work, and more, with retractable seating and walls so that the studio always fits the size and scope of an ever-evolving curriculum. But that's not all – there are also specialty studios for printmaking, digital media, and photography, as well as a dedicated outdoor work area for welding or aerosol painting.



CREATIVE WRITING:

Kinder HSPVA's youngest art area finally has a dedicated home of its own! The Creative Writing Department is located next to the library. Students step into an open floorplan designed for constant collaboration, filled with bookshelves and comfortable furniture. The department includes three flexible classroom spaces and an office for small group meetings. It also has a digital media studio for students to experiment with new forms of publishing, illustration, and audio or visual recording.

INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL MUSIC:

Kinder HSPVA musicians have access to specialized studios for mariachi, piano, jazz, band, strings, choral music, and music theory. Situated on the top floor of the campus, soaring ceilings work with custom flooring and wall paneling to create the appropriate acoustics for each ensemble. Students also have access to 16 digitally-tunable soundproof practice rooms! All music spaces are outfitted with state-of-the-art A/V systems connected to the Recording Studio.



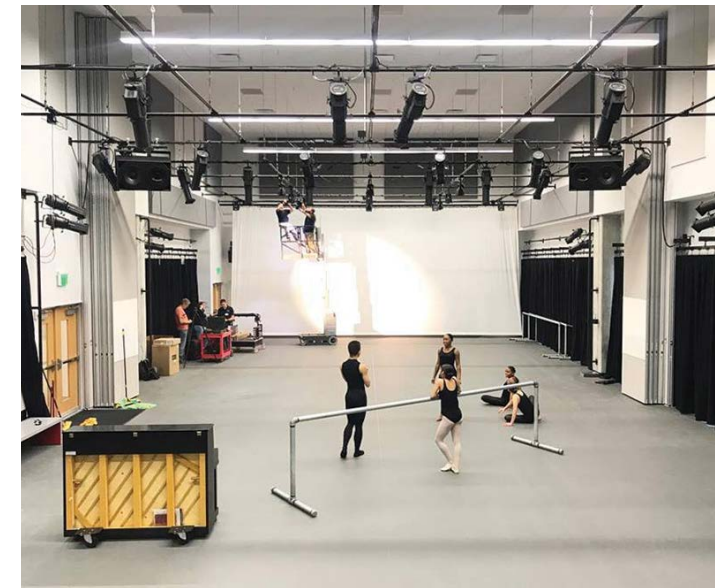
DANCE:

Dancers have four studios, each with its single most important piece of equipment: sprung dance flooring, which provides safe rehearsal space for hours and hours of movement. Two of the studios are double-height and can be joined together into one supersized space. When merged, these studios can function as a fifth performance venue for the school, with a lighting grid, A/V system, and retractable audience seating. On the ceiling, reinforced eyehooks give dancers the opportunity to study aerial dance!



THEATRE:

To provide instant access to the stages they use most, Kinder HSPVA's Theatre Department studios are nestled between the Denney Theatre, Black Box Theatre, Studio Theatre, and freight elevator. Performers can rehearse on those stages, or in their very own movement studio on a sprung dance floor. Design and Theatre Technology students spend their days in the Scene Shop, Costume Shop, or Light and Sound Lab.





TIME TO SHOW OFF

In addition to the 800-seat Denney Theatre, Kinder HSPVA houses three smaller performance venues and two art galleries.



BLACK BOX THEATRE

The Black Box is the ultimate flex space, designed to transform from top to bottom into whichever time and place each Theatre Department production requires. Seating for 200 guests can be rearranged in any configuration around the room. Student designers and technicians can manage elaborate light plots and set pieces high above the stage from the safety of the tension grid, which allows them to move freely without the restraints of a traditional catwalk system.

ART GALLERIES

With high ceilings, reinforced walls, viewing benches, and professional gallery lighting, the large and small art galleries provide sophisticated settings for Visual Arts students to display their work. The galleries are also outfitted with projection equipment and pedestals to accommodate digital media and sculpture, respectively. An en-suite prep area provides a convenient sink and storage space for the gallery crew. Be sure to stop by the galleries often – a new show is installed about twice a month!

RECITAL HALL

The Recital Hall meets professional acoustic standards in every way. It is a tunable room, so the faculty and students are able to adjust the levels of reverberation to accommodate the precise style of music being performed. The Recital Hall is Kinder HSPVA's most intimate venue at 150 seats, providing a formal home for the Vocal and Instrumental Music Departments.

STUDIO THEATRE

The Studio Theatre provides a casual performance venue that every art area can access. The proscenium-style stage faces retractable stadium seating for 200 guests. When the seats are retracted against the wall, the Studio Theatre becomes a large studio for daily classwork. We expect to see readings by creative writers, performance art by visual artists, and lots of showcase work by theatre, music, and dance students in this multiuse space!



We sincerely thank the donors to the HSPVA Friends Capital Campaign, who have contributed \$8.73 million for Kinder HSPVA.

To join the effort to complete, maintain, and use this campus to its full potential, visit hspvafriends.org/downtown.

Anonymous (2)
Isela Aguirre & David Waddell
The Alarcón-Castro Family
Eugene & Elizabeth Albin
Carolyn and Walter Allen
in honor of Dr. R. Scott Allen
Dr. R. Scott Allen
Mercy Alonso-Rodriguez
David and Laura Alvarez
John & Elizabeth Anderson
Evelyn & Frank Angelle
Talya Arbisser & Joel Gluskin
The Auchter Family
in honor of Maddy and Catie Auchter
Clarq B. was here!
Virginia Cole Ballard
in memory of Rachel Speight
Anita Barksdale
Allen & Kathy Barnhill
Julia Barnhill
Paula Beck
Buffalo & Nickel Benham-Klein
Avery Bennett
Jessie Kotarba Beyderman
Marta Bianchi & John Boone
Misty Birtcher (Vocal '14)
Tim & Kim Birtcher
Jaylon Black - Instrumental - 2016
The Bloome Family
Stephanie York Blue
The Boblitt Family
Patricia Bonner
in memory of Harold McManus, Jr.
James Boyce
Jean & Bo Brackendorff
Laurie & Jeff Bricker
Janice & Charles Brittain
The Britton Family
Terri & Barry Brown
Brian Bussemey Vocal 1991
Kathy & Emile Bussemey
Michelle Bussemey Vocal 1986
The Calthals
Patricia (Patty) Suarez Cantu
The Cardenas Family
Adele & Mary Carlson
Doss & Janie Carothers
Patricia Carr
Jonathan, David & Esther Chang
Mike and Betty Chase
Family of Auden R. Chen
Sireesha Chirala
Peter Christman & Sue Bailey
Sarah Cloots & Behrang Amini
Alene and Travis Coggin
Cathy & Charles Cole
Kathryn Colson
Terry & Martin Cominsky
in honor of Sarah & Rachel Cominsky
John & Ann Cooney
Kirby Renee' Crane | 2012

The Crawford-Vargas Family
Curl, Rice, & Hahn Families
Vicki Curry
Alyssa Davidson Theatre '10
Lorelei and Rey de la Reza
Alexander DeGreiner and Family
Allynn Lauren Delaney
The Dennison Family
Grant, Angie & Emma Dorfman
The Eastman Family
Susan Workman Elmore
Jon-Paul Estrada Art 1991
Margaret Fair
Jessica Feist
Kathleen and Joseph Fenninger
The Flamenco Poets Society
Flying Carpet Creative
Mark Folkes & Chris Johnston
Helen Winkler Fosdick
Cathleen Cassin Freedman
Scott Fricke
in honor of Hazel Fricke
The Friedman Family
Jo and Jim Furr
Family of Alexa Garza
Karen and Larry George
Rob & Marris Goldberg
in honor of Matt Goldberg (Class of 2019)
Paolina Gonzales, Dance '18
Stephen Kenneth Gordon '94
Mindy Goto
Beatrice & Gregory Graham
in honor of Florence Lydia Graham
Sammy Green
The Grenader Family
Missy Grimm Orchestra 1991
Allie Guerra Family
In memory of Luis Guerra
Guite Family
The Habal Family
Yasmeen Hage
Julia Hall '77 & Clare T. Hall
in honor of Patricia F. Bonner
Chandler Hall
Jinx Mabry Hayden, Drama '76
The Helzer & Bertuch Family
The Hersch / Wenderfer Family
The Hethcox Family
Kimberly Hickson and David Spaw
David, Kim, & Riley Hines
In honor of Mr. Hoffman, Mariachi Director
Kendra G. Hollingsworth, Theatre
Frank Hood
Dr. Thomas & Susan Horvath
Aileen Hsu
Lurlean Hunt
Aileen, Tom, Joyce, Chuck Ivy
Russell H. & Rosalind C. Jackson
Lynn and Herb Jamison
Matthew Jamison
in honor of Virginia C. Ballard

Janis and Paul Jarosz
Tanya Marie Jefferson
Allen Jefferson
Colin Jenkins
Marshall "Papa J" Jenkins
Marjorie and Raleigh Johnson
Kael Juan & Emily Hurst
The Kalmans Family
Roanne Donahue Kao
Kinder Foundation
Kinder HSPVA PTO
Jonathan Klein & John Benham
The Knight Family
Paige & Matthew Knight
Brooke Kotrla (Dance '15)
Andi Levinson Kristall '98
Marie & Morgan Krueger-Miller
Jessica Roch Kyle, Vocal 2001
Nicholas Lam Theatre '22
George Lancaster
Eastman & Alyson Landry
Gardner Landry
Jaiden R. Lang & Family
The Lankau and Chase Families
in honor of Madeline and Michael Chase
Mary Martha Lappe
Caroline & Perryn Leech
Greg & Kimberly Lesniewicz
The Family of Heidi Li
The Linda Family
Marcia Livingston & Jim Allen
Emma Lozano - Dance 2020
The Lucas Family
The M. Lucas Family
Mike Malloy & Ruth Schlanger
Mary Jane and Taghi Manshour
Jim & Judy Marshall
Miranda Martin 2022
Samantha Barlow Martinez
The Massy Family
Daniel & Takako Mayadas
Georgia McBride & Mark Agerton
James Will McBride
Dan McCommis
Maurielle McGarvey
Marcia McManus
in memory of Harold McManus
Shirley McMillan
Kyra Anna McNally Albers
Kitty McNamee
Meredith & John McWilliams
Susan and Paul Menzel
Olivia Grace Miller
Eileen Montgomery and David Sheard
Barry Moore
in memory of Ruth Denney
Joan and Craig Murrin
Mary Beth Musick
Rachel Nall
in honor of Maja Neal (CW '21)
H. Joe Nelson, III

Drew Nelson '95
Eleisha Nelson-Reed
Terry Newell
Bobbie Newman
Katharine Newman
Noles Family
The Nunn Family
Paul & Sue Ofield
Rosalinda & Dewey Olds
Chris & Carrie O'Sullivan
R. Allen Otto, III
Stephen Overton, Class of 2012
Louie D. Palalon
Tony Palazzo
Gary W. Patterson, DMA
Joshua N. Pazda, Visual Arts
Cindy Alm Pearson
Isóbel Björk Perez
Oscar Pérez & Family
The Perkison Family
The Peters Family
Chadwick Peters
Natalie (Keyes) Pfeifer
Ann & Dennis Phillips
in honor of Brent C. Phillips '05
PHYSICS IS PHUN
Sharyn Pirtle Kaufman
Carolyn Porter
Emilie Haehl Priestly
in honor of Alene '05, Russell '08, & Charlie '11
Rommel & Jennifer Quarterman
Francine Raizes
Bela & Bianca Ramirez
Familia Ramirez
Lesley Radoff Rappaport
in memory of Len and Lisel Radoff
The Reedstrom Family
Blair Thomas Reeves '21
Rob, Donna, Elena, & Amanda Reid
The Ritterbush Family
Candace Roberts & Dan Witschey
Amy Mayerhoff Roch, Vocal 1997
Paul Matthew Roch, Vocal 1997
Annette, Craig and Seth Rock
in honor of Rebecca M. Rock (Theatre '21)
Tobias Rytting
Cathy and Phil Sagebiel
in memory of Rachel Speight
Annabella J. Sahakian
Lamelle Sartain
In memory of Elisabeth Savajol
Adriana Scamardi Theatre '15
The Schuller Family
The Schutzza Family
David & Nina Schwach
Kendrick A. D. Scott
Roger Sekol
Seymour Family
Nicholas Robert Shaefer

Tiernan Shea and Douglas Boyle
in honor of David Waddell & Isela Aguirre
The Shehadeh Family
The Sheldon Family
Catherine & Alyce Shields
The Shoemake Family
Amy & Adam Siegel
Jackie Simmons 2020
Jasper & Corinna Snow
Melinda and Howard Speight
Travis Springfield
Becky Stemper & Robert Alexander
Julie Stephenson & Joel Glover
The Sternenberg Family
The Strug Family
in memory of Marian "Mimi" Strug
The Switek Family
Sarah Tao
The Tate Family
Austin Thomas
Tamara & David Thompson
Dr. Janine A. Tiago
The Touchet Family
Kirby/Kara Townsend '15/'17
Emily Voran
Phoebe & Pearl Aguirre Waddell
Linda A. Wald
Stephanie & Jeff Waller
Liz Ward & Rob Ziebell
The Wattenbarger Family
Jeff Wayt, Drama, 1976
Paige Mackenzie Welborn
Emilia Perfetti White
Dolores Wilkenfeld
in honor of Lewis Wilkenfeld
Sylvia & Jerry Wilkenfeld
Laura J. Williams
Chandra Wilson
Jonathan Wisner
The Wittels Family
Marilyn Wolfe-Kirk and Harry Kirk
Robert Yekovich & Michele Thompson
Lester Yuen

as of February 2, 2019

HSPVA FRIENDS

**Supporting Kinder High School
for the Performing and Visual Arts**

PO Box 52 910
Houston, Texas 77052
713.874.0087