

Under one roof

The Barn in Albany, which provides artists with working, living and performing spaces, is hosting a benefit to showcase the organization’s mission



The Albany Barn opened its doors this spring following an extensive renovation.

By [Michael Hallisey](#)

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#ALBANY — The Albany Barn and Albany Chef’s Food & Wine Festival are set to throw their third annual “Fusion” event, which is billed as an evening of urban art, architecture, music and fashion.

IF YOU GO

- What: Fusion
- When: Friday, Oct. 17, from 6-8 p.m.

- Where: The Albany Barn, 56 Second St., Albany
- How much: \$75
- Info: albanybarn.org/fusion

Kristen Holler, executive director of the Albany Barn, said she hopes to impress upon those attending the Friday, Oct. 17, event, that the catchphrase of “Live. Work. Inspire” has been the mantra behind using the arts to instill local pride.

“I suppose the thing we want to drive home is that this is a product of partnerships, and a product of really taking a look at what the needs of the artist community and the struggling downtown neighborhoods are, and targeting the areas we can actually help address,” said Holler.

Located in the Arbor Hill neighborhood in Albany, The Barn consists of 22 subsidized apartments for artists to live and work in. The building, which was once St. Joseph’s Academy, now holds more than 13,000 square feet of low-cost work and rehearsal suites, a recording studio, an exhibition hall and performance space.

St. Joseph’s Academy had long been a symbol of the state of the surrounding neighborhood since it was built in 1906. Initially founded as a school for young woman, it cultivated children’s potential. Pulitzer Prize-winning author William Kennedy had lived his early years just blocks away. His parents both attended the school, which served both boys and girls after the Boy’s Academy succumbed to fire.

But, decades later, as the community declined, so too did the academy. Ultimately, it was abandoned and left to decay.

Holler’s vision for the Albany Barn has much to with the revitalization of the surrounding community since it brings promising creative talent to the area.