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# A YEAR IN REVIEW

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ANNUAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018

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## THE ORGANIZATION

The Von Braun Center (VBC) is governed by a seven-member Board of Control appointed by the Mayor of Huntsville and the City Council.

The VBC is an anchor within its community. Located in downtown Huntsville, the VBC offers a beautiful facility for local, regional, and national events. The VBC provides multiple venues for the presentation of cultural, educational, entertainment, sporting and social events. The VBC has a staff of proven professionals ready to contribute to the success of your event.

## THE HISTORY

The Von Braun Center was built thanks to the foresight of local leaders and a very real civic demand. The facility built in 1975 was welcomed by the community and the demand for use continued, leading to three additions within a ten year period driven largely by local and civic demand.

## THE MISSION STATEMENT

The Von Braun Center is a multi-purpose facility with the primary objective of facilitating and promoting events and activities in addition to generating economic benefit and improving the quality of life for the Huntsville community and surrounding areas.



## BOARD OF CONTROL



Wayne Bonner,  
Chairman



Betty Schonrock,  
Vice Chairman



Evans Quinlivan,  
Secretary



Dr. John Johnson



Randy Schrimsher



Dr. Bill Sullins



Eddie Turner



## Letter From The Executive Director

***It is hard to believe that 2019 is almost here and the Von Braun Center is celebrating the completion of another year!***

*I am very proud to share in 2018 I celebrated my 40th year with the Von Braun Center. As the saying goes...time flies when you are having fun!*

Our team at the Von Braun Center continues to perform at an exceedingly high level. This past year we hosted over 500 events with over 775,000 patrons walking through the doors. We are very thankful for our annual events, such as, AUSA Global Force Symposium, Space & Missile Defense Symposium, International Symposium on Child Abuse, Huntsville Hospital Foundation, Huntsville Havoc, NEACA Craft Show, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Guild Debutante Ball and many, many more. *It is for you, "our customer", that we continue to strive to provide an exceptional experience and a successful event. Thank you!*

One particular event stands out as being the one that set the pace for this year – **hosting the President of the United States.** I received a call from Madison County Commission Chairman Dale Strong, which was immediately followed by a representative of the White House. I was told President Donald Trump was planning a trip to Huntsville and they wanted to use Propst Arena to hold a political rally. *I must admit it was very surreal receiving a call from the White House.* We had four days to strategically plan for the President to attend and speak at a political rally for Senator Luther Strange. Although the White House Advance Team was great to work with – extremely detailed and organized – this was the biggest challenge of the year for our staff. **How often do you have the opportunity to host a sitting President?** That evening at approximately 6:30 P.M. *I was given the opportunity to greet the President and share with him the news of a record-breaking crowd.*

This year the Von Braun Center was host to the **"Iron Bowl of Gymnastics"** when both nationally ranked *University of Alabama* and *Auburn University* gymnastics teams competed in the "Elevate the Stage" podium-style competition. We also welcomed back the **Rocket City Classic** with the *University of Alabama* competing against Mercer University along with the

*University of Alabama in Huntsville* competing against Shorter University in a sold-out Propst Arena.

The Von Braun Center produces its own "Signature" events and I'm proud to say that each event continues to grow and evolve each year. In its 8th year the **Heads-n-Tails Crawfish Boil** is still going strong and bringing a crowd to enjoy good food and music. Nominated as "Downtown Event of the Year" the 2nd Annual **Von Brewski Beer Festival** brought in over 170 beers brewed by 60+ breweries from the around the world and the 5th annual **Family Fun Festival & Expo** partnered with Free2Teach with the inaugural "Pennies2Teach" competition.

**The future is an exciting time for the VBC!** Construction has begun on the new 1,200 seat music hall and restaurant with a roof top bar. **It's business as usual!** All events will go on as planned during construction, therefore we expect this project will keep us extremely busy and challenged. We anticipate this to be a 14-month project and plan to open the new music hall and restaurant in the last quarter of 2019. *We have so much work to do in preparation of the grand opening!*

The next big expansion project is the addition of the new multi-purpose ballroom, meeting rooms, a new kitchen and renovation of the North Hall. This project is still in the design phase with plans to break ground in 2020-21 with a projected timeline of approximately two years for completion.

*It is a wonderful time to be part of Huntsville and the Von Braun Center.* I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our board of control, mayor, city council, city leaders, partners, sponsors, clients and patrons. **We could not do what we do without you!**

**Thank you!** *We look forward to our future and working with all of you!*

Sincerely,



Steven G. Maples, CFE,  
Executive Director



## MANAGEMENT TEAM

*The VBC Management Team is committed to facilitating and promoting the vision of Huntsville.*

Steve Maples, CFE, has served as the Von Braun Center's Executive Director for the past twelve years. As Executive Director, Maples oversees the entire operation of the Von Braun Center.

Michael Vojticek, CPA, has been a member of the senior management team of the Von Braun Center for 27 years.

Left to right: MICHAEL VOJTICEK, CPA, Assistant Director  
STEVE MAPLES, CFE, Executive Director;

# THE WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT

## *A Concert Line-up to rival Any...*

"1964" The Beatles Tribute  
Black Jacket Symphony -  
AC/DC's "Back in Black"  
Black Jacket Symphony -  
Guns N' Roses "Appetite for Destruction"  
Black Jacket Symphony -  
Led Zeppelin IV  
Blackberry Smoke & Aaron Lewis  
Brian Setzer Orchestra Christmas  
Brit Floyd  
Casting Crowns  
Celtic Woman  
CHICAGO  
Christmas in Dixie: Elvis Tribute  
Cody Jinks  
Dancing with the Stars  
David Blaine  
Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson  
Gallagher & Artie Fletcher  
"Joke's on You Comedy Tour"  
Girls & Guitars  
Gov't Mule  
Home Free - A Country Christmas  
Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit -  
HSV Hospital Classic  
Jason Mraz  
Jeanne Robertson  
Jennifer Nettles Christmas  
Jerry Seinfeld  
Jim Gaffigan  
Joe Zimmerman and Party of the Year  
John Prine  
Johnnyswim + Drew Holcomb and the Neighbors +  
Penny & Sparrow  
Jon Pardi  
Kansas  
Kirk Franklin  
Listen Local  
Loverboy  
Mannheim Steamroller  
MercyMe  
Pat Benatar & Neil Giraldo  
REO Speedwagon  
Riley Green  
Rodney Carrington

Scotty McCreery  
Shen Yun  
Shinedown & Godsmack  
Skillet and for King & Country  
St. Paul & the Broken Bones  
Sugarland  
Three Dog Night  
Trace Adkins  
Willie Nelson and Family  
Wynonna Judd

## *The Symphony...*

Huntsville Symphony Orchestra presents

Beethoven Seven  
Carmina Burana  
Ravel and Debussy  
Schumann and Strauss  
Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev  
E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial in Concert  
Preservation Hall Jazz Band  
TV & Movie Hits

## *A Variety of Family Shows...*

Jurassic Quest  
Disney Live!  
Disney on Ice  
Harlem Globetrotters  
Monster Jam  
PJ Masks  
Sesame Street Live!  
Shopkins  
WWE Live

## *Theatrical Shows Galore...*

Broadway Theatre League presents

13-Story Tree House  
A Gentleman's Guide to Love  
and Murder  
Bear Country  
Cabaret  
Les Miserables  
Million Dollar Quartet  
Motown  
Sound of Music  
The Book of Mormon



Sugarland



Willie Nelson and Family



Home Free - A Country Christmas



St. Paul & the Broken Bones



Jason Isbell



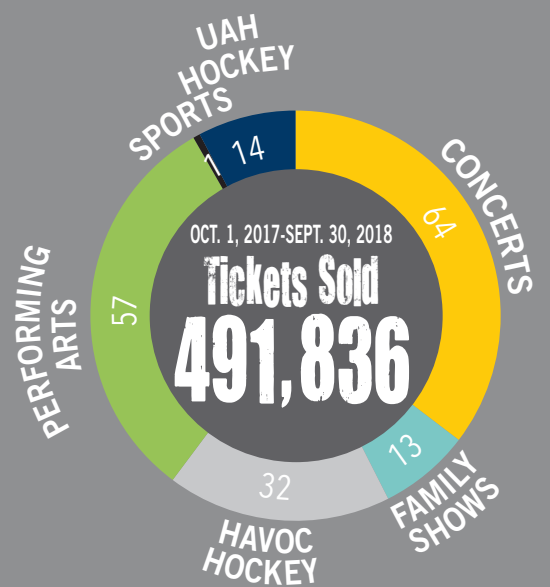
Aaron Lewis



Trace Adkins



Riley Green





# CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES, TRADE SHOWS & SPORTS

## *Conventions and Conferences*

34th International Symposium on Child Abuse  
 44th Annual Southeastern Regional Lectureship  
 AAMA Supplier Diversity Conference  
 Aircraft Survivability Professional Forum  
 Alabama Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention  
 Alabama National Guard Yellow Ribbon Program  
 Alpha Kappa Alpha November Workshop  
 AUSA Global Force Symposium  
 Black Farmers & Agriculturalists Association, Inc  
 Church of Highlands Marriage Retreat  
 Church of the Highlands Freedom Conference  
 Circuit #AL 1,4 of Jehovah's Witnesses  
 DevSpace Technical Conference  
 Dixie District Barbershop Harmony Society Spring Event  
 Exposure Youth Camp  
 FACE TIM  
 First Robotics Regional Competition  
 HAMA - MiniCon  
 HAMACON  
 Hexagon Technology Day  
 Joseph P. Cribbins Aviation Product Symposium  
 Living Proof Live with Beth Moore  
 NDIA-TVC Missile Defense Agency  
     Small Business Programs Conference  
 National Cyber Summit  
 NCMS  
 Non Profit University  
 North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church  
 Northeast Alabama Fellowship of Christian Athletes  
     Power Leadership Training  
 Prophetic Fire  
 Saved in the City  
 Southeast Chapter of the American Association of  
     Airport Executives Annual Conference  
 SMD Symposium  
 Southside Church of Christ Homecoming  
 SPEAK Town Hall Meeting  
 Student Leadership University - Lift Tour  
 The Boeing Company  
 Tennessee Valley Authority  
 Warriors to the Workforce  
 Women in Nuclear 2018



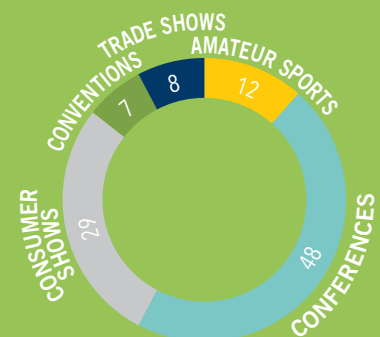
## *Consumer/Trade Shows*

2018 Eye Center Retirement Lifestyle Expo  
 Alabama Black Expo  
 Alabama RV Super Show  
 All Star Pool and Spa  
 Babypalooza Baby & Maternity Expo  
 Building, Home and Remodeling Show  
 Celebrations Bridal Event  
 Collectors and Shooters Gun Show  
 Fall Home and Garden Show  
 Greater Alabama Survival Expo  
 Halsey Food Show  
 Heritage Quilters of Huntsville  
     Fanfare Quilt Show  
 Huntsville Comic and Pop Expo  
 Huntsville Hamfest  
 Kickz & Stikz Expo  
 Kutz & Kickz Expo II  
 LuLaRoe Pop Up Boutique  
 Mitchell Grocery Food Show  
 NEACA Craft Show  
 Randolph Under The Christmas Tree  
 Rocket City Author Event  
 Rocket City Broadcasting Bridal Fair  
 Rocket Fair  
 Taste of Huntsville  
 The Boat Show

Tennessee Valley Hunting and Fishing Expo  
 UAB Night in Huntsville

## *Sports*

Alabama State High School Wrestling Tournament  
 AL.com Classic - High School Basketball  
 Alabama State Games Opening Ceremony  
 Big Spring Volleyball Bash  
 Cotton Row Run  
 Dogg Pound Skate Crew  
 Elevate Gymnastics  
 Huntsville Gymnastics Center  
 Innovative Martial Arts Tournament  
 Regional High School Volleyball  
 Rocket City Classic  
 Rocket City Marathon  
 Rocket City Wrestling Championship



Huntsville Gymnastics Center

# BANQUETS, SOCIAL FUNCTIONS & MEETINGS

## *Banquets*

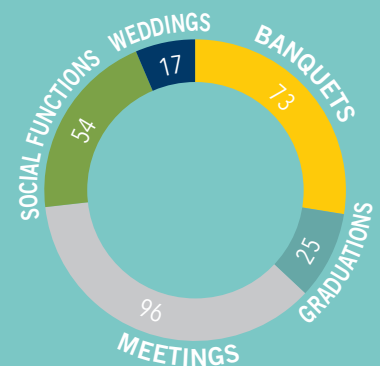
Alabama A&M University Athletic Banquet  
 Alabama A&M University Black Tie Gala  
 Alpha Kappa Alpha Debutante Ball  
 American Cancer Society Belles & Beaus  
 Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet  
 AUSA Army Birthday Celebration  
 AUSA Veterans Dinner  
 Boys & Girls Club Leaders and Legends  
 Chamber of Commerce Alabama Update  
 with Governor Kay Ivey  
 Chamber of Commerce  
 Annual Membership Meeting  
 Chamber of Commerce Armed Forces Celebration  
 Chamber of Commerce Best Places to Work  
 Chamber of Commerce Redstone Update  
 Chamber of Commerce Small Business Awards  
 Chamber of Commerce State of the City  
 with Mayor Tommy Battle  
 Chamber of Commerce State of the County  
 with Commission Chairman Dale Strong  
 Chamber of Commerce Washington Update with  
 Congressman Mo Brooks  
 Chamber of Commerce Washington Update with  
 Senator Doug Jones  
 Chamber of Commerce Washington Update with  
 Senator Richard Shelby  
 Christian Women's Job Corps Circles Luncheon  
 Church of the Highlands Dream Team Banquet  
 Funset Social and Charity Club  
 His Way Banquet  
 Holy Spirit Regional School Bash  
 Huntsville Bible College "Vision" Banquet  
 Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Guild Debutante Ball  
 Invest in a Girl  
 Kim Fails Jones Foundation Gala  
 Martin Luther King Unity Breakfast  
 Medical Gala  
 Northeast Alabama FCA Hometeam Celebration  
 & Fundraising Dinner  
 Oakwood Student Banquet  
 Oakwood UNCF Gala  
 Societies of 1895 & 2012 Recognition Dinner  
 Sparkman JROTC Military Ball  
 St. John's Benefit Gala  
 Tie the Ribbons Luncheon - HudsonAlpha  
 UAW 50th Anniversary  
 Victorian Cotillion Dinner Dance  
 WEDC Women Honoring Women

## *Social Functions*

Stars Dancing for HEALS  
 100 Black Men Holiday Gala  
 Alpha Phi Alpha Gala  
 Auburn University  
 AUSA Holiday Celebration  
 Avion Holiday Party  
 CB&S Bank Holiday Party  
 COLSA Corporation Holiday Party  
 Crescen-Dough Auction  
 Dog Ball  
 ERC Holiday Party  
 Hazel Green High School Prom  
 Hexagon PPM Holiday Party  
 Jerry Damson Auto Group Holiday Party  
 Keel Point Reception  
 Margarita Ball  
 Nutcracker Ball  
 Torch Technology Holiday Party  
 Xi Omicron an Unincorporated Chapter  
 of Omega Psi Phi

## *Meetings*

A&A Seminar  
 A+ College Ready Training  
 AUSA Board Meeting  
 Barbizon  
 Buick/GMC Meeting  
 DHI Downtown Awards and Annual Meeting  
 Driving Dynamics Driver Training  
 Fortune Builders  
 Huntsville City Schools Institute  
 Huntsville Rotary Luncheon  
 Inspire Youth Conference  
 iRegister Fair  
 Life Church Dream Team  
 Madison County Schools Institute  
 Mid South Sign Association Meeting  
 Oakwood University Alumni Association  
 Redstone Federal Credit Union Annual Meeting  
 SGMP National Board Meeting  
 Tourism Summit





# WE'RE EXPANDING!



## Ground Breaking of Phase I

On August 15th the VBC held a press conference where VBC Executive Director, Steve Maples and Huntsville City Mayor, Tommy Battle officially broke ground on Phase 1 of the VBC Expansion. Phase 1 includes the Music Hall, Restaurant and rooftop bar! People gathered for the ceremony outside the VBC to enjoy music by Lamont Landers Band, free hotdogs and beverages provided by the VBC and other tasty treats by o Taste & See BBQ and MaggieMoo's Ice Cream Truck. One attendee won a certificate for 2 tickets to the first performance in the Music Hall! Phase 1 is predicted to be completed Fall 2019!

## SPORTS



The 2017-18 season of the Huntsville Havoc continues the tradition of fast-paced, hard-hitting, family entertainment. The 15th season will not disappoint as head coach Glenn Detulleo and the team take on SPHL rivals Birmingham Bulls, Fayetteville Marksmen, Knoxville Ice Bears, Pensacola Ice Flyers, Peoria Rivermen, Quad City Storm, Macon Mayhem, Roanoke Railyard Dawgs and the Evansville Thunderbolts. The Havoc have two crowns to defend next season, as they not only took home the SPHL President's Cup, but also set the SPHL attendance record with a total attendance of 133,672 for the season.



The **University of Alabama in Huntsville hockey team** is looking forward to the 6th season in the prestigious Western Collegiate Hockey Conference. The Chargers will welcome nine schools to the Von Braun Center for the upcoming season with featured promotions and giveaways at each home game. Go Chargers!





### *Von Brewski Beer Festival*

The 2nd Annual Von Brewski Beer Festival took place on January 20th in the South Hall of the VBC. This year we had over 60 breweries and over 180 different beers for attendees to sample. There was also the addition of a Ciders & Meads section. During the event attendees had the opportunity to build their own pretzel necklace or stop by the vendor booths. Attendees were able to stroll around the event with ease and judge each beer they sampled in a labeled brochure. After sampling attendees had the opportunity to vote for their favorites. Huntsville local, Rocket Republic Brewing, won this year's trophy! Until next year's event...Cheers!



### *Heads-N-Tails Crawfish Boil*

Heads-N-Tails Crawfish Boil presented by Mercedes-Benz of Huntsville & Landers McLarty Nissan was a big catch this year! This year's event was held on April 14th in the South Hall. Nathan & The Zydeco Cha Chas set the mood and had everyone dancing to some jiving zydeco music. This family-friendly event also had people getting their face painted, jumping on inflatables, playing in an all new arcade, and enjoying tons of crawfish and other Cajun inspired food of course! This was the event's 8th year. We can't wait to see everyone come out for the 9th Annual Heads-N-Tails Crawfish Boil!

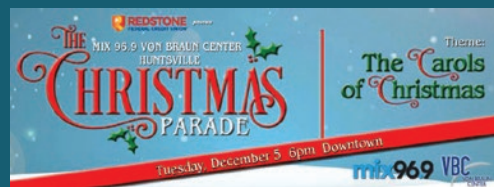


## *Food and Fun*



### *Family Fun Festival and Expo*

This year Family Fun Festival & Expo presented by Mercedes-Benz of Huntsville & Landers McLarty Nissan celebrated its 5th year! While the event was still free we encouraged attendees to bring school supplies or make monetary donations benefiting Free 2 Teach. The community's outpour of donations was remarkable! We received \$3,015.94 in cash and enough school supplies to fill a truck with a monetary value of \$3,615.00. That's a combined total of \$6,630.94 donated to Free 2 Teach! During the event kids enjoyed all the fun activities from the previous years with the addition of bumper cars, an arcade and an LED photo booth...all while escaping that pesky summer Alabama heat! Family Fun Festival & Expo is a great community event we look forward to hosting each and every year! We are eager to see what next year brings!



### *Christmas Parade*

Each year the Mix 96.9 – Von Braun Center Christmas Parade grows and this year was no different! The night of December 5th people started lining the streets to see the beautiful floats created for this year's parade! There were over 80 floats decorated to theme of The Carols of Christmas winding their way through the streets of downtown. A new route was introduced this year as well as a live Facebook stream of the entire parade. It truly is a magical night that has become a tradition for so many.

## IN THE WORDS OF OUR CLIENTS

*I just want to thank you for such a wonderful job. We received so many compliments on the room and it looked superb this year. It looked like we were walking into a fairy land. The drapery was on point and the entire room was so beautiful!*

Edna Fails  
Kim Fails Jones Foundation

*A big thanks to you and your team for doing a great job with our event. Everything went smoothly and our contestants and audience both gave us high praise for the quality of the production. The extra effort shown by your entire staff was really appreciated and we look forward to next year!*

Tim Brooks  
Dixie District Spring

*Overall, it has been a pleasure working with personnel on many different projects, from current Rotary and BTL events to previous activities under Community Ballet and AUSA. Our Rotary experience has been excellent from food, services, facilities, marketing and operations. Staff members are so personable and willing to accommodate any special requests. This also applies to the BTL Look Out reception... great food and professional set-up. Beverage service is always done with a courteous attitude. Plus, the security staff does a wonderful job of making any event safe and secure. All of your VBC staff have served as great representatives for your organization.*

Emily H. Vandiver  
Member, BTL Advisory Board  
Member, Downtown Rotary Club  
Past President, Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of AUSA  
Past Board Member, Community Ballet Association

*Thank you so much for allowing us to participate in the Christmas Parade! It was amazing to see everyone out organizing the event. The children got to experience being a part of their first parade and they loved every minute of it. This blessing was truly appreciated! We look forward to next year. Thank you for all you do!*

Courtney Goodrich  
RCE Skills Academy

*I would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the Von Braun Center for allowing us to participate in the Heads N Tails Crawfish Boil. This was my first time participating in this event and I was pleasantly surprised to see what an impact it has within the community and those who travel to attend. I am happily looking forward to many new adventures with the VBC in the future. Thank you!*

Joy Berry  
Rocket City Chiropractic

*Where do I begin to thank you? I'm so fortunate to have been able to work with the staff in planning this year's games. Everyone worked so well to accommodate my last minute needs. I look forward to next year!*

Jason Perkins  
Alabama State Games

*I want to thank you for making our Kappa Rho event so special. The event staff was absolutely wonderful! I feel like everyone really cared that our high school event was special for our kids. Every single person that we came into contact with was so genuine and helpful. Thank you!*

Stacy Mason  
Kappa Rho Sorority Dance

*I want to thank you for all of your help with our Elevate the Stage event. From the pre-planning all the way through load-out, your team was nothing but helpful. It was great working with you and we feel the event was a great success. I look forward to working with the VBC again on future events.*

Robert Drumm  
Elevate the Stage

*Many thanks for all the staffing assistance with the Phi Beta Sigma Lead-Out! The staff was wonderful and we appreciate everything that was done to accommodate our requests, from Production to Operations and so much more. It was a perfect night for the girls.*

Jennifer Bunnell  
Phi Beta Sigma Sorority







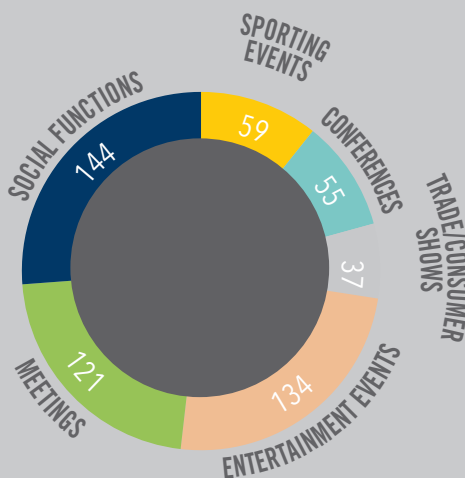
The Von Braun Center diverted 212.15 tons or 424,301 lbs. of trash from the local landfill. The average diversion rate for the year was 63.29%. This included:

- Paper, Plastic, Aluminum Cans, and Cardboard – 61,060 lbs. or 30.53 tons
- Electronic Waste - 1,323 lbs.
- Spent Fluorescent Lamps - 832

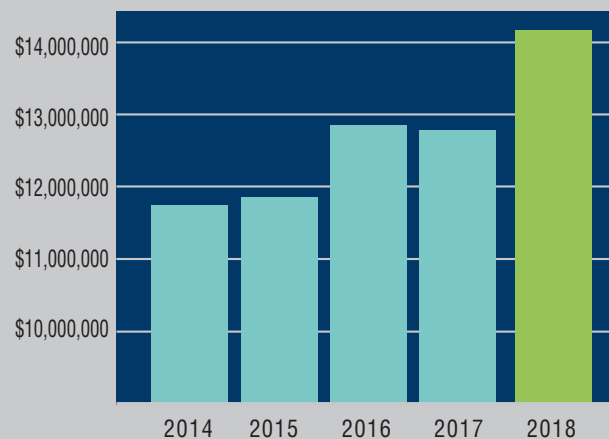
In regards to energy consumption, we continue to make improvements to the facility to improve those results. Last year we reduced our Energy Utilization Index by approximately 10.82%. We have more energy conservation projects slated for the upcoming year.

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

*VBC Event Composition*



*VBC Gross Revenue*





# VBC

VON BRAUN  
CENTER

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