

Gift supports **arts center**

Two well-known northwest Ohio patrons of the arts will provide the lead private gift for the University's new arts center.

Perrysburg residents Frederic D. and Mary T. Wolfe and the Wolfe Family Charitable Foundation have announced a \$1.5 million gift to support what will be known as the Wolfe Center for the Arts. Their gift will help provide for an emerging architect to create a landmark facility on the Bowling Green campus for students, faculty and the community.

"We're very happy that we are able to do this for Bowling Green State University and for the arts community," says Mary Wolfe. "We believe in the arts and see this facility as a hub for the arts at BGSU."

"We have been very impressed with how well Bowling Green State University has been doing in the past 10 years. We especially like the leadership of President Ribeau and are honored to make this gift to the University," says Frederic "Fritz" Wolfe.

The new facility will contain classrooms as well as production and studio spaces to link students and faculty in the School of Art, the Department of Theatre and Film and the College of Musical Arts.

The arts center project was initiated when the State of Ohio awarded BGSU an \$8.7 million capital grant to build a state-of-the-art arts complex. The University is



Mary and Fritz Wolfe voice their support for BGSU and the arts at the announcement of their \$1.5 million donation to fund the Wolfe Center for the Arts on campus.

raising the additional funds through private sources to complete the facility, which will cost an estimated \$11.7 million.

Preliminary plans for the building include three performance spaces: a proscenium theater that will provide space for large-scale productions of musical theater, opera and classical drama; a flexible theater for the presentation of more diverse artistic styles, including theater for young audiences and productions of new plays, and a black box theater to provide space for experimental productions, integrating the spoken word and body movement with digital and sound technology.

"Fritz and Mary's enthusiasm for this project mirrors our shared vision for

the importance of the arts in the lives of all citizens in northwest Ohio," says Dr. Ron Shields, chair of the BGSU Department of Theatre and Film, which will be housed in the center. "The facility will support our ongoing efforts to provide a meaningful arts experience for all BGSU students and to enrich the cultural life of our community."

The Wolfes have a history of supporting the arts and education in northwest Ohio. Longtime supporters of arts organizations such as the Toledo Museum of Art and the Toledo Symphony, they also have supported arts-related projects at private and public institutions of learning.

Mary Wolfe has been involved with the BGSU art program for more than

30 years. She earned her master's degree in fine arts from BGSU in 1968 and was an art history instructor for many years. She was director of the University's McFall Center Gallery and a founding member of the Medici Circle, the patrons' society in support of the School of Art. She also served as a member of the BGSU Foundation Board from 1992-95. A frequent art lecturer on campus and in national and international venues, she currently serves on the board of the Ohio Arts Council.

Fritz Wolfe is known in business circles for his involvement in the health care industry as the current president of Kingston Residence of Sylvania, and former chair of Health Care and Retirement Corp. ■

“This is an example of how engaged friends of the University can help to create a facility where students and faculty in the arts can connect with one another and with the community. We are excited to have Fritz and Mary's leadership in helping us realize our dream of having this kind of space for our arts community.”

BGSU President Sidney A. Ribeau