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Wichita Center for the Arts Achieves Milestone in Campaign for New Educational Arts Center at 13th and Rock Road

\$15.5 Million Pledged by Community to Date

WICHITA, Kan. — The Wichita Center for the Arts Board of Trustees voted unanimously Wednesday to proceed with construction of its proposed new 40,000-square-foot educational arts center in Wichita. The decision was reached with the announcement that the Center successfully raised \$4 million in five months to meet a challenge grant from the Fred and Mary Koch Foundation.

Since September 2015 when the project was announced, the Center has raised \$15.5 million, including a \$1.5 million gift from the K. T. Wiedemann Foundation. The total project cost is \$19 million.

"We are thrilled to have such strong support from arts supporters in our community," said Katy Dorrah, executive director. "The whole region will benefit from the increased opportunities to create and appreciate art at our new Center."

In September 2015, lead gifts for the project were announced from the Charles Koch Foundation and the Fred and Mary Koch Foundation. The Charles Koch Foundation donated land valued at \$4.5 million at the southwest corner of 13th Street and Rock Road, the city's fifth-busiest intersection. The Fred and Mary Koch Foundation donated \$2 million and promised another \$4 million if the community could match it.

The community answered that challenge, with 65 individuals, foundations and businesses pledging \$4 million. Among those donations was more than \$1 million from the Center's trustees.

"It is a dream come true that the community has embraced and supported this project," said Liz Koch, the campaign's honorary chair. "Art was a part of Mary Koch's soul, and she would be honored to know that art education will be available for future generations."

K. T. Wiedemann Foundation Issues New Challenge Grant

The K. T. Wiedemann Foundation pledged \$500,000 toward the Fred and Mary Koch Foundation challenge grant and announced an additional \$1 million challenge grant to encourage other supporters to give to the project.

"Gladys Wiedemann, Mary Koch and Olive Ann Beech were three visionary women who elevated the arts in Wichita through their support for the Wichita Center for the Arts," said Doug Pringle, president of the K. T. Wiedemann Foundation. "The foundation is honored to continue that tradition and challenge local arts supporters to step up with the \$1 million still needed to fulfill the community's role in the campaign."

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General Contractor Named; Groundbreaking Announced

Center trustees also voted to hire Wichita-based Dondlinger Construction as general contractor for the project. Howard + Helmer Architecture was previously announced as architects. Groundbreaking will be this summer with occupancy in early 2018.

"As trustees, we are extremely pleased to engage a local contractor and architect on this project. We have the utmost confidence that Dondlinger has the breadth and depth of experience to execute the beautiful vision created by Howard + Helmer," said Karla Fazio, board president. "We look forward to expanding the Center's role as a place for lifelong learning and will continue offering cutting-edge national exhibitions."

The Center's capital campaign is led by co-chairs Bonnie Bing Honeyman and Mike Michaelis. NAI Martens has been selected to sell the Center's current property at 9112 E. Central Ave. The listing will be available by April 1.

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About Wichita Center for the Arts

The Center's mission is to be a vibrant arts hub in Wichita and the region by providing opportunities to appreciate, participate in and create art in an atmosphere of lifelong learning. It was originally founded in 1920 as the Wichita Art Association and is the area's oldest visual arts organization. The gallery is open 1 to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Admission is free. Visit wcfta.com or call 316.634.2787.