



MEDIA CONTACT
Toney Crawford
Marketing Director
tcrawford@phoenixtheatre.org
317-731-8971

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Generous \$1.3 million gift from Christel DeHaan Family Foundation unveiled by Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre

Gift from late Indianapolis philanthropist will support next generation of entertainment

Gift announced just ahead of Phoenix Theatre's 40th anniversary

INDIANAPOLIS – The Christel DeHaan Family Foundation has awarded The Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre a Legacy Grant of \$1,373,000 that will drive a variety of longer-term opportunities and programs for actors and patrons at the downtown Indianapolis theater company for years to come, interim CEO William Powell announced today.

Ms. DeHaan, who founded Christel House International – a charity that helps children around the world to break the cycle of poverty – was a business leader and philanthropist who was a long-time generous supporter of The Phoenix Theatre and the arts community in Central Indiana.

“The legacy of Christel DeHaan’s generosity and philanthropy is well known. In fact, without Christel DeHaan, the Indianapolis landscape would look very different,” Powell said. “Her Foundation’s gift to the Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre underscores her commitment and belief in the arts in Central Indiana.

“Everyone at our Cultural Centre is incredibly grateful that Christel thought of us when she identified her legacy gifts,” Powell said. “Her gift becomes an important part of our history.”

The gift was announced on October 20, just two weeks before The Phoenix Theatre celebrates its 40th anniversary in downtown Indianapolis. The gift establishes The Christel DeHaan Fund Endowment and fulfills the Endowment goal of our current Ignite Campaign of which an update will be unveiled on November 4, which is 40 years to the day since the first production at The Phoenix.

The Phoenix Theatre is one of six resident theatre companies at the Cultural Centre. Others include the Naptown African American Theatre Collective, Eclipse, American Lives Theatre, Indianapolis Shakespeare Company, and Summit Performance Indianapolis. Relevations Dance Company, Actors Ink and Storytelling Arts of Indiana are among others that stage performances at the Cultural Centre which also showcases visual artists and hosts a variety of community events.

“The gift from the Christel DeHaan Family Foundation will allow us build upon our heritage of delivering thought-provoking theater for the Indianapolis community,” Powell said. “We’ll now have a solid Endowment to strengthen our programs that enable us to educate and train actors and others who want to make a career of the arts, and we’ll be able to elevate our focus around diversity and inclusion. This is an important moment for The Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre and the Indianapolis community.”

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About the Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre

The Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre is home to a performance collective that includes six professional theatre companies, each their own non-profit entity. Among them is the Phoenix Theatre, dedicated to nurturing new plays and emerging playwrights. Performances are year-round at the Cultural Centre from its stages including the Livia and Steve Russell (proscenium) Theatre and the black box-style Frank and Katrina Basile Stage. The Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre's mission includes growing the community's reputation as an arts destination and serving as a hub to showcase local artists, host events, and help its neighborhood thrive.

Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre
705 N. Illinois Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317-635-PLAY
phoenixtheatre.org