



FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION

Creating Opportunities
Through Philanthropy

November 2021

"I regard the theater as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being." - Oscar Wilde

Dear Friend of Fellowship Senior Living,

Is there anything more exciting than going to the theater? Plans are made well in advance and with each approaching day anticipation grows. When the big day arrives, you dress up, grab a meal with friends for the special occasion and head over to the theater. Perhaps you visit the concessionaire and pick up a glass of wine before chatting with other attendees about what you will see performed on stage. As the theater doors open you leave the outside world behind while you enter a space reserved for imagination and wonder. Finding your seat, you settle in and wait for the show to begin. After a few words from the theater manager, the lights dim, the curtains open, and the rest is in the hands of the performers.

After a long wait, it was a pleasure to welcome actors back to our stage with the production of *Driving Miss Daisy* in September! Much has changed in the world during the 19 months since the last time we were able to invite individuals to the Mitchell and Ann Sieminski Theater for a ticketed performance. While mask wearing and elbow bumping have become a common sight in our society, one thing that won't change is our collective love for the theater experience. However, with dark stages and empty seats in theaters across the world, this industry faces significant challenges to recovering even as crowds trickle back. As a not-for-profit organization we are in a similarly difficult situation. **Your generosity today can ensure we are able to continue providing world class programming and a diverse selection of productions for our residents and the Somerset Hills community.**

We are often amazed at what we witness in the theater. From dramatic performances to stunning scenery and inspiring lighting we can transport ourselves into the creative vision of the artists. Yet, there is much more that goes on with the theater than what you see on stage. Operations involve many individuals and require months of negotiations and preparations. Commitments are made sometimes a year or more in advance. Depending on the production, Fellowship may incur costs from purchasing set pieces, marketing shows, acquiring licensing fees, maintaining staffing levels, and more. Additionally, ad sales and concession sales provide inconsistent and extremely limited revenue. When we started construction on the Cultural Arts Center, we remained steadfastly focused on those who will be in the audience, including you. This collaboration between many partners resulted in the creation of our intimate 257 seat venue that provides the optimal live experience in performing arts. We heard from many individuals who, after attending their first performance, were excited to learn how close they were to the actors and stage.

As a smaller venue, income from ticket sales does not alone cover our costs. A gift today is crucial as we work to not only bring audiences back to pre-Covid levels but also enhance on our capabilities. This is the first step in helping to create a sustainable funding source through a renewed and streamlined focus on management of the theater. What was previously accomplished through a piecemeal approach will be consolidated under one role bringing credibility and experience to the forefront.

Your gift is an investment in the long-term success of the Mitchell and Ann Sieminski Theater.

We believe you deserve the very best in performing arts. Your support as a community has allowed us to bring notable performances from the New Jersey Festival Orchestra, New Jersey Ballet, Light Opera of New Jersey, American Theater Group, Centenary Stage Company, and Trilogy Repertory to the stage. And despite the ongoing challenges faced by the industry, we are committed to providing a full calendar for the upcoming year.

Attendance in theaters nationwide is struggling to rebound for both large and small venues. We believe that we can overcome this challenge in our own community through strategic investment in the Mitchell and Ann Sieminski Theater and want you to be part of that effort! A gift today in any amount can plant the seeds for long term growth for the Cultural Arts Center and everything it brings to Fellowship Village. ***Can we count on your financial support?***

Please make all checks payable to **Fellowship Foundation** and mail them to 8000 Fellowship Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920. Alternatively, gifts can be made online! Visit www.fellowshipseniorliving.org and click on the “Donate Now” button located under the “Foundation” tab at the top of the page and complete the form.

On behalf of the Fellowship Foundation and Fellowship Senior Living, we wish you the best this season and always.

Warm regards,



Dr. Judith Pasnik
Foundation Board Chair



Brian G. Lawrence
FSL President & CEO



Julie Schuldner
Foundation Executive Director

P.S. - Make your tax deductible donation today to support the Fellowship Village Cultural Arts Center!

Gifts to the Fellowship Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax-exempt organization (#84 -2975643), are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. An acknowledgment of your gift will be sent to you at the specified address.