



Item: CG: A-1c

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Date: TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020

SUBJECT: APPROVE NAMING OF UNIVERSITY ELEMENTS

PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION

Recommend that the BoT approves naming of the Studio One Theatre within the Performing Arts Building at the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters in honor of Marleen Forkas. The proposed name of the Studio One Theatre will be the "Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Donation:

Marleen Forkas is making a blended gift of One Million One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$1,125,000) to the Department of Theatre and Dance for a recognition opportunity to name the "Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre." One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) will be given as a cash donation to be deposited into a current use fund to be used for initial renovations, enhancements and activities within the Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre. The remaining balance of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) will be received as an Estate Gift.

Gift Purpose:

The cash gift will be used to launch renovations, enhancements and activities within the Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre from the lobby to the stage and begin upgrades to the control booth, dimming systems, network infrastructure, sound systems, and signage. Equipment purchases include state-of-the-art lighting, audio production, video systems, microphones, speakers, and more.

The remaining estate gift will establish the “Marleen Forkas Legacy of Excellence in Theatre Endowed Fund” as a permanent endowment to maintain the quality of the “Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre” and to provide funding in perpetuity to the Department of Theatre and Dance, including Theatre Lab.

Donor’s Prior Relationship with FAU:

Marleen Forkas was the first woman to graduate from the Fashion Institute of Technology's Management Engineering Division. She is well recognized for her 40-year career as a fashion designer and embroidery manufacturer.

Marleen has been or is currently involved with the Boca Raton Regional Hospital Foundation, The Symphonia, B'nai Torah Congregation, Boca Ballet Theatre, the American Heart Association, Boca Raton Museum of Art, and the Marleen Forkas Camps at the Jewish Community Center, including the Marleen Forkas Camp Kavod, which is the largest special needs camp in Palm Beach County for children and young people from age 3 to 22.

Marleen was married to Harold Forkas for almost 25 years when he passed away in 2009 at the age of 90. A true entrepreneur, Harold began working in New York City in 1935 in the office supply business and then in management and sales with the Coca-Cola Bottling Company. Success with Coca-Cola did not deter him from pursuing other professional challenges. When an opportunity to become a Midas Muffler franchisee arose, Harold followed his instincts and by the time he retired in 1988, he owned eight Midas Muffler franchises.

Marleen and Harold began their association with Florida Atlantic University in 1997 when they became involved with programs at FAU’s University Center. True sports enthusiasts, the couple joined the University’s Inner Circle of Football Founders and were part of the excitement as FAU fielded its inaugural football team in 2001. Regular attendees at FAU home and away games, they discovered what they referred to as a “whole new family of friends.”

About the Alumni Center

The Marleen and Harold Forkas Alumni Center is the permanent “home away from home” for Florida Atlantic University’s ever-growing alumni constituency. It is the place where alumni gather to take part in university-wide traditions and celebrations. The Marleen and Harold Forkas Alumni Center is a focal point on the Boca Raton campus. It is located adjacent to the FAU football stadium and Innovation Village residential area.

Marleen's FAU Activity

- Recipient, President's Medallion, 2008
- Member, FAU Foundation Board of Directors, 2010 to 2013
 - Member, FAU Development Committee, 2013
- Member, Parliament of Owls, 2010
- Member, College of Medicine Advisory Board, 2011 to 2014
- Member, Gala Host Committee, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015

Facility and Program:

Theatre has been an integral part of the FAU experience since its founding in 1964 and that tradition continues today. We continually strive for excellence and expect excellence of our students as they train, study and practice to become skilled and inspired artists, and prepare for fulfilling careers beyond FAU.

We aspire to recruit and retain the highest student talent, competing more fully nationally in elevating the profile and prominence of FAU's Department of Theatre and Dance. This involves a commitment to enhancing our facilities to state-of-the-art training and academic venues complete with the latest technology to compete at the highest levels for students who seek premier facilities for practice and performance, and to prepare students for diverse career opportunities.

The Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre will serve as a learning laboratory as students refine their skills through production and performance training, and offers a vibrant cultural venue for FAU theatre performances enjoyed by university and community audiences.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Cost of signage and initial renovations to the Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre that will be funded through her initial gift.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE

The gift was announced in January 2020 to kick off the spring performances for the Department of Theatre and Dance season. Naming announcement and renovation planning and schedule to follow.

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