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Donor Stories

Love of Opera Leads Patron to Make Bequest, Other Planned Gifts to Ensure the Future of Michigan Opera Theatre

In its 36 years filled with exciting performances, world-class stars and notable events, Michigan Opera Theatre has grown to become a thriving, well-respected organization of national acclaim. That acclaim would not be possible without the support of loyal patrons, many of whom have kept the opera theatre thriving with charitable bequests.



Herman Frankel

Herman Frankel, a builder with his own home building company founded in 1954, is one of the theatre's supportive patrons, and he has shown his support with a charitable bequest, among other gifts. Frankel has been a fixture at the theatre in many ways. He's a member of the board of directors, board of trustees, the Finance Committee, and the Avanti Society (Michigan Opera Theatre's legacy society). Specifically, the Avanti Society is a recognition society for friends of Michigan Opera Theatre who have made plans to include the organization in their estate plans, whether by will, trust, insurance or life income arrangements.

Mr. Frankel first became involved with Michigan Opera Theatre as a major benefactor to the campaign to restore the Detroit Opera House and subsequently to the annual campaign. In 2002, with Mr. Frankel's commitment, Michigan Opera Theatre was able to complete the purchase of an adjacent garage, which was transformed into a new parking center by 2005. Because he loves the opera, he insisted that opera patrons not be left out in the cold in the midst of the revitalization of downtown Detroit.

Frankel has also contributed to the theatre through several charitable gift annuities, adding that, "There is no better way to support your charity and at the same time receive an income stream with a high rate of return."

A bequest, one of numerous charitable giving vehicles, is certainly a most simple, easy and effective vehicle for donors to leave a legacy and to make a difference in the lives of others for generations to come, as is illustrated in this case.

"Without special people like Herman Frankel, none of this would be possible. His support is sincerely appreciated by all of us at Michigan Opera Theatre," said David DiChiera, General Director of Michigan Opera Theatre.

LEAVE A LEGACY® wishes to thank the The Michigan Opera Theatre for sharing this story.