

"The test of a civilization is in the way that it cares for its helpless members."

– Pearl S. Buck

Portraits in Philanthropy

(PART II)

Giving back is second nature for these members of our community, who through their generous spirit and thoughtful actions are impacting countless lives right here, across the country and around the globe.



Margery Pabst

When Margery Pabst and her husband, Mark, were ready to retire after years of moving around the state (and even to London) for his banking career, they chose their favorite spot — Winter Park. They had lived here in the 80s and their return in 2002 marked the beginning of a new journey that led to the formation of the Pabst Charitable Foundation. And although Mark has since passed on, Margery carries on their passion for the arts and giving.

"My personal philosophy, and it links to the mission of the foundation, is community impact," Margery says. "But if you go deeper into that, when I give money or grant money I like to see it have ripple effects. So the way I evaluate for myself — as well as the foundation — is how many people will be empowered?"

The Pabst Charitable Foundation for the Arts, founded in 2004, has given more than \$1 million to individuals, groups and organizations. Its mission is: nurturing artists and art forms to support innovation, encourage diversity, promote interdisciplinary collaboration and demonstrate impact on community.

"We select our recipients based on what they will do, their high standards of excellence, and their willingness and ability to share their knowledge. We choose people who will mentor other people and consider how many people will be touched ultimately," she adds. "It's kind of like fishes and loaves if you want to get spiritual about it. How can we maximize the impact is always at the core of what we do."

Some of the local organizations that have benefited from grants and gifts from Margery and the Foundation are the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the Orlando Philharmonic, Easter Seals, Lou Frey Institute, Mead Gardens, University of Central Florida Flying Horse Press Editions and Cornell Fine Arts Museum at Rollins College. She sits on several non-profit boards, and is continually educating herself about arts-related programs and projects.

"The key pieces of the mission are interdisciplinary so we fund any art form — innovative, cutting edge — with a community impact. I tend to fund people who may be singers, dancers, or researchers and teachers, and they want to take what they know and share it with others," Margery says.

Whenever the arts can impact wellness, the environment or education, it's also an example of the Foundation's interdisciplinary approach. Margery became aware of a gentleman in New York who runs the Alzheimer's Poetry Project, which involves utilizing his poetry to impact patients' lives and caregivers' lives through personal appearances. The Pabst Charitable Foundation, along with the Edyth Bush Foundation, funded a local outreach with the poetry project — enabling founder Gary Glazner to come to the local Easter Seals' adult-day-health care program — because it was such a great intersection of arts and wellness.

And the ripple effect? Staff members from the Alzheimer's Resource Center, Brain Fitness Club and St. Mary Magdalene Adult Center, as well as Easter Seals, were trained on how to implement the program in their adult day care, memory clinics and in-home care.

On an international level Margery tells the story of meeting a Ugandan man, Damascus Kafumbe, whose vision is to preserve the indigenous music of his country. "He's a scholar, educator and even creates his own indigenous instruments. We are proud to fund him," she says. His program will have an impact on generations to come.

In addition to innovative project funding, Margery thinks the Foundation can also be innovative in the way it grows money. "We want to draw money to the Foundation because those on the board have the backgrounds to manage money well and make the most of it, which is not true of a lot of organizations. We think we can inspire people to give by offering the best use of their money," she explains.

The Foundation will also be looking at what percentage of international, national and local projects best meet their mission. But not everything can be planned out.

Margery says she went to a CitiGroup philanthropy program and the facilitator said, "Don't put 100 percent into your cause. It's really smarter to reserve 10 to 15 percent of what you give for people who pop up along the way. They may not be about your mission, but they inspire you in some way."

An author herself, with a book titled *Enrich Your Caregiving Journey*, Margery and the Foundation have also supported an endowment for master writers since 2007 at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, an artists-in-residence community in New Smyrna Beach. The three named for 2010 included Rosellen Brown (*Tender Mercies*), Richard McCann and graphic novelist Craig Thompson.

"Arts are such a big part of our lives. And if we don't have them, well, I'd go crazy," Margery says. Clearly Margery Pabst is a dynamic force who will continue to find and fund inventive people and programs within the arts world.



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Margery Pabst with Damascus Kafumbe, Ph.D. candidate in musicology, after his performance at the Atlantic Center for the Arts.