



Diablo Regional Arts Association

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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****



Leshler Center
for the Arts

Leshler Center for the Arts
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Passing Joy from Generation to Generation

WALNUT CREEK, CA, December 16, 2020 – The Diablo Regional Arts Association (DRAA), the nonprofit partner of the City of Walnut Creek’s Leshler Center for the Arts, is stepping-up and leading the way toward a newly defined future with DRAA’s Pave the Way campaign. This fundraising effort, which features naming opportunities and custom concrete pavers outside the Leshler Center, will support innovative artistic programming and provide access to the arts. With a vision of ensuring the Leshler Center recovers from the negative impacts of COVID-19 restrictions and remains the premier arts destination in the region, the Dean and Margaret Leshler Foundation committed an initial investment of \$150,000 as a matching gift for the campaign.

“The Leshler Center for the Arts has become the cultural hub of the region and we’re committed to seeing it continue to enrich the community and contribute to economic recovery. The Leshler Foundation is proud to support DRAA’s Pave the Way campaign with a challenge grant of \$150,000.”
– Steve Leshler, Vice President of Dean and Margaret Leshler Foundation

Longtime community philanthropists and arts enthusiasts, Eric Rudney and Sharon Simpson made significant gifts early in this initiative. In partnership with the City of Walnut Creek, Rudney provided funding for the design and construction of the new plaza. The renovated plaza provides 65% more usable space, enhancements to built-in technology, and increased accessibility, creating a versatile “fourth stage” outside of the Leshler Center. Simpson has been a supporter of DRAA’s Arts Access School Time Program since its inception, which continues to serve thousands of students annually, including through virtual programming in 2020.

“It has been fulfilling to help lead in the evolution of our Leshler Center for the Arts. I’m honored and humbled that my family’s name will be on the new Rudney Plaza.”
– Eric Rudney, Board Member and DRAA Past President

Peggy White, DRAA’s Executive Director, notes that although 2020 has been filled with challenges, arts patrons have come together to support the Pave the Way campaign. Over 30 years ago, many donors combined their resources to build the Leshler Center for the Arts; it is both meaningful and important that today’s community comes together to help it thrive through the next 30 years.

“It has been heartwarming to see the generosity from all generations, especially from the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers who have expressed a sincere desire to assure the quality of arts for future generations.”
– Peggy White, Executive Director of Diablo Regional Arts Association

The Leshler Center has had a transformative impact on East Bay residents of all ages, from live musical performances and visual arts exhibits to thought-provoking education. Community members are leaving a legacy by ensuring that the Leshler Center remains vibrant and its influence on our community continues to heal and unite, bringing joy and inspiration to all.

To receive information about purchasing a paver or other donation opportunities, please visit www.draa.org/pave, call (925) 457-2000, or contact info@draa.org.

Diablo Regional Arts Association (DRAA) is the nonprofit partner of the Leshher Center for the Arts (LCA). DRAA enriches the lives of thousands of East Bay residents every year by raising funds to support the full spectrum of arts and entertainment at the Leshher Center. In addition, through its Arts Access School Time Program, DRAA is dedicated to providing families, children, seniors, educators and at-risk individuals the opportunity to experience the arts. Learn more at www.draa.org or follow DRAA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#): [@DRAAattheLCA](#).

