

SETTING THE STAGE FOR GIVING

PROJECT PROFILE

Project: Capital Campaign For Benjamin & Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center

Location: Dayton, Ohio

Campaign Goal: 40 million

Campaign Result: 42 million

History:

Since 1912, the corner of Second & Main streets in downtown Dayton has held a prominent spot in the community. That was the year Fredrick Rike opened Rike's department store at the location. For many years, the Rike's store at Second & Main prospered as one of Dayton's premier shopping locales.

The store's fortunes declined in the '70s as customers abandoned downtown in favor of suburban shopping malls. Following several corporate mergers and a name change to Lazarus, the store finally closed in 1992.

In 1995, a team was formed to raise early capital funds to purchase the Lazarus/Rike's building and the adjacent parking garage. Mead Corp., Reynolds & Reynolds and Danis Corp. were among the first businesses to respond. THE HODGE GROUP was retained to perform a development campaign assessment for the project. At the conclusion of the assessment an initial group was comprised of 22 local businesses and community leaders that became Second & Main Ltd., which took its name from the building's location. Their intention was to return this location to prominence with a signature project, and create a focal point for downtown Dayton's renaissance.

With the help from THE HODGE GROUP, the team began private fundraising with Lou and Steve Mason agreeing to lead the fund-raising activities. Immediately following, Steve Mason and Tom Danis made major gifts, as did the Mead Foundation. This set the stage for the remainder of the campaign, with significant contributions from individuals, corporations, banks and hospitals.

The Masons unveiled the Schuster Center's preliminary design to rave reviews through a series of small parties at their home. This got people excited and donations began to funnel into the project. More than \$40 million in local funding came from many community and corporate leaders. The Dayton Foundation then came along side to become the custodian for the donated funds and, more importantly, the guarantor of a series of financing that needed to take place.

Criteria For Success

Success for this project was purely driven by the lead campaign volunteers. This handful of Miami Valley philanthropists were instrumental in serving as ambassadors for this project and spearheading the intimate home / parlor cultivation and solicitation events.

Toward the conclusion of the lead gift process - when the project was well over 90% toward achieving its philanthropic goal of \$40 million - Dr. Benjamin & Marian Schuster, who had attended several of the cultivation soirées, asked if they could name the structure. With a gift in excess of \$6 million the theatre was officially named the **Benjamin & Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center**.



“THE HODGE GROUP played a significant role in the success of our campaign. We are forever grateful for their knowledge and expertise.”

-Steve & Lou Mason,
Campaign
Chairpersons

THE HODGE GROUP



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