

Edgewood College: Ruth Foundation for the Arts gifts \$75,000

Posted on Thursday, Dec 8, 2022

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

Madison, Wis. (December 8, 2022) – Ruth Foundation for the Arts (Ruth Arts) has announced a grant of \$75,000 to Edgewood College for Ernest Hüpeden’s Painted Forest Art Environment in Valton, Wisconsin. This grant, as part of their total \$11.5 million in gifts to 138 arts organizations this fall, came from the new Ruth DeYoung Kohler (RDK) Legacy Fund which mirrors the support Ruth DeYoung Kohler II made to the Ernest Hüpeden’s Painted Forest and multiple arts institutions throughout her lifetime.

“These programs are at once forward-facing and anchored in Ruth DeYoung Kohler II’s inimitable legacy,” Karen Patterson, Ruth Arts Executive Director, said. “We’re proud to honor Ruth’s lifelong commitment to the arts by continuing to fund the organizations she personally supported, and to develop new programs in her spirit of experimentation and community-building.” The RDK Legacy Fund is dedicated to honoring and continuing Ruth DeYoung Kohler’s steadfast support of regional and craft-based organizations and artist-built environments. The Fund will provide \$2.5 million annually across 40 organizations historically supported by Ruth DeYoung Kohler II.

Ernest Hüpeden’s Painted Forest was gifted to Edgewood College in 2004 by the Kohler Foundation. In the late nineteenth century, self-taught German painter Ernst Hüpeden adorned the walls of the simple white frame building with remarkable visions of life, death, rituals, and aspirations of the Valton Modern Woodmen of America (MWA) camp members. The MWA was one of many fraternal societies that flourished throughout the United States at the turn of the 20th century.

A Study Center on site provides space for interdisciplinary workshops, lectures, seminars, retreats, performances, and artist residencies.

“Edgewood College continues to be honored to have been the pioneer college partner for the RDK Art Environments,” David Wells, Director of the Edgewood College Gallery & Ernest Hüpeden’s Painted Forest, said. “We are committed to maintaining this important folk-art treasure, as well as developing new programs to educate students, artists, researchers, and visitors from across the country.”

About Ruth DeYoung Kohler II

A lifetime supporter of the arts, Ruth DeYoung Kohler II (1941-2020) was deeply committed to artists and consequently, broke down hierarchies and categories within the art world to center artists, support communities, and engage with overlooked art forms.

She made significant contributions to the arts across the U.S., including serving as Chairman and member of the Wisconsin Arts Board, acting as a National Endowment for the Arts Visual Artists Organization panel member and past site evaluator, as founder of the Preservation Committee of Kohler Foundation, Inc., and Director of the John Michael Kohler Arts Center for more than forty years.

Among the many awards and honors Ruth received are the Governor’s Award for the Arts, Wisconsin; Visionary Award, American Craft Museum; Visionary Leadership Award, Center for Intuitive and Outside Art; Visionary Lifetime Achievement Award, Museum of Art and Design; and honorary doctorates from various institutions of higher learning.

She believed passionately that the arts reveal who we are as a people: past, present, and future. She promoted equitable and inclusive access to the arts in her local community, her home state of Wisconsin, and on national and international levels.

About The Ruth Foundation for the Arts

The Ruth Foundation for the Arts (Ruth Arts) is a new grantmaker based in the Midwest and dedicated to meeting the evolving needs and lived experiences of artists, communities, and arts organizations whose work is anchored by visual arts, performing arts, and arts education. Based in Milwaukee and national in scope, the Foundation reflects the culture and spirit of the Midwest, which long inspired its namesake and benefactor Ruth DeYoung Kohler II. Led by Executive Director Karen Patterson, as well as Program Directors Kim Nguyen and Rachel Reichert, the

Foundation is a responsive and adventurous new force in the realm of arts philanthropy.

About Edgewood College

Located in Madison, Wis., Edgewood College is a liberal arts Catholic college in the Dominican tradition. We serve approximately 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The College offers more than 40 academic and professional programs, including master's degrees in business, education, and nursing, and doctoral degrees in educational leadership and nursing practice. For more information about Edgewood College, please visit www.edgewood.edu, or call Ed Taylor at 608-663-2333.v