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**MARCUS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER TO ENHANCE UIHLEIN HALL
SUPPORTED BY GENEROUS DONATIONS FROM BAUMGARTNERS
AND ANONYMOUS DONOR**

The re-envisioned first phase of the Campus Master Plan will transform seating in Uihlein Hall, expand live streaming technology and introduce COVID-19 related improvements

MILWAUKEE – Today, the Marcus Performing Arts Center announced a re-envisioned Phase One of its Campus Master Plan. The \$4 million project is made possible through the generous support of donors, including two lead donors: a \$1 million gift from Donna and Donald Baumgartner and a major gift from an anonymous donor.

“We are extremely grateful for the commitment of Donald and Donna Baumgartner and our anonymous donor,” said Marcus Center President and CEO Kendra Whitlock Ingram. “Their generosity will allow our organization to move forward with re-envisioned priorities, which will greatly enhance the patron experience in Uihlein Hall, make our facility more accessible to all and prepare us to emerge stronger post-COVID-19.”

In creating its Campus Master Plan, the Marcus Center provided for significant flexibility to adjust timelines and priorities. With the emergence of COVID-19, this Spring, the Marcus Center embarked on a process to re-envision the plan. Renovations within Phase One will take place over the next six months.

"Despite the challenges of being shut down because of COVID, we recognized that we also had a unique opportunity to reinvest in our most important interior performing space, while the building is closed," said Whitlock Ingram. "Our visionary donors recognized this opportunity and stepped up to make this vision a reality."

"We enthusiastically support the remodel of the Marcus Center to not only invest in the future of Milwaukee's performing arts community but to help create a more exciting and comfortable audience experience," said Donna and Donald Baumgartner.

The re-envisioned Phase One, also made possible through a generous grant from the Herzfeld Foundation, will prioritize investments in physical spaces, including:

- Renovation of Uihlein Hall, including new seats, a new seating configuration utilizing multiple aisles, increased public health and safety amenities and enhanced ADA accommodations;
- Creation of a dynamic and vibrant new outdoor public space to serve as a forum for safe, accessible and socially distanced programming for the Marcus Center and its eight local arts resident partners; and
- Enhanced cleaning practices in all high-traffic patron and artist spaces with a focus on quality, efficiency, health and safety.

"The investments in the Marcus Center will revitalize the in-person audience experience, and our entire company is grateful for the generosity of these donors," said Michael Pink, artistic director of the Milwaukee Ballet, a long-standing resident of the Marcus Center. "We look forward to safely welcoming back our audience members to our live performances and showing off these transformative improvements at the Center."

"A positive, memorable experience is an essential aspect of every live performance for theatergoers, and the Florentine Opera Company is thrilled to welcome back that experience in a space that prioritizes health and safety," said Maggey Oplinger, General Director & CEO of the Florentine Opera Company, a long-standing resident of the Marcus Center. "The Marcus Center and these generous donors have demonstrated a commitment to creating a safe, re-imagined environment for all resident groups, and we are grateful for that commitment."

Expanding Access Through Technology

In addition to investments in the physical space of the Marcus Center, Phase One will prioritize the installation of state-of-the-art live streaming technology in all of its performance venues, as well as the Bradley Pavilion. This new technology will expand access to the arts to audiences across the state of Wisconsin, including schools. This work is a continuation of an expansion of service expansion started as a result of the pandemic. This summer, the Marcus Center transitioned to offer online programming, including *KidZ Days at the Center*, a free summer youth program that incorporates performing arts education into interactive participation. As a virtual offering this summer, the program had more than 46,000 views through social channels and website. The Center has also offered virtual concerts and events, including *Christopher Jackson: Live from the West Side* and the upcoming national watch party of the John Lewis documentary *Good Trouble* with an accompanying national panel discussion.

About Marcus Performing Arts Center

Established in 1969, the Marcus Performing Arts Center is the premier performing arts community gathering space in Southeastern Wisconsin. As the Marcus Center celebrates its 50th anniversary, it continues to build bridges between diverse members of our community through high-quality arts entertainment in the region and the state. The touring Broadway series, sponsored by Johnson Financial Group, is recognized as bringing the best of Broadway entertainment to Milwaukee for the past 20 years and provides opportunities to educate, entertain and engage audiences. The Marcus Center is also the home to the Milwaukee Symphony, Milwaukee Ballet, Florentine Opera, First Stage plus a variety of other important community and family events throughout the year. For more information about events visit the Marcus Center website at www.MarcusCenter.org. The Marcus Center is a private non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation and is a dedicated veterans memorial in Milwaukee.