

San Diego Foundation Receives Historic, Transformative \$100M Gift



Gift is the largest-ever unrestricted gift to a San Diego nonprofit

San Diego, Calif. (Feb. 2, 2023) – San Diego Foundation announced today that it has received a historic, transformative unrestricted \$100 million cash gift from the estate of local entrepreneur Jay Kahn, the largest-ever gift of its kind to a San Diego nonprofit.

“Jay Kahn was a compassionate man who loved San Diego and wished for his legacy and estate to be used for the good of San Diego,” said Mark Stuart, President & CEO of San Diego Foundation. “We had no existing relationship with Jay until we learned that he believed San Diego Foundation would achieve his goal and honor his wishes. We are humbled by this incredible generosity and we will honor Jay by continuing to inspire enduring philanthropy and enable community solutions to improve the quality of life in the San Diego region.”

The first grants from Kahn’s gift, which is the third-largest gift of its kind to a U.S. community foundation, include \$150,000 unrestricted grants to 10 San Diego-based music education nonprofits to advance their work with under-resourced children. The intent of the grants is to grow music appreciation in San Diego in memory of Kahn, a classical musician who played clarinet in symphonies at University of California San Diego and University of San Diego. The \$1.5 million in total grants were awarded at the SDF Board of Governors retreat on February 2, 2023. Grantees included:

- A Reason to Survive (ARTS), which offers free after-school arts education to South County youth and young people
- Classics 4 Kids, which provides free live music programming to children at 236 San Diego County schools
- David’s Harp Foundation, which serves system-affected and homeless youth to achieve academic success through music education
- Guitars and UkEs in the Classroom, which trains, inspires and equips educators to engage students in learning through the joy of making music and the power of song
- Heartbeat Music Academy, which provides affordable after-school music programs in preparation for enrollment at Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs)
- San Diego Symphony, which makes music an integral part of the cultural fabric of the San Diego region
- San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory, which provides ‘cradle through college’ music education through its flagship ensemble program, neighborhood engagement projects and early childhood music curriculum
- San Diego Young Artists Music Academy, which offers programs in vocal, instrumental, choir, dance and many other positive activities in a healthy and safe environment

- Voices of Our City, which reconnects San Diego's unsheltered neighbors with hope and housing through the healing power of music, individualized care and advocacy
- Young Lions Jazz Conservatory, which enriches the lives of middle and high school students by inspiring imagination, intellectual curiosity, character and self-confidence through jazz music instruction

Aside from a portion of Kahn's gift that will support housing and other strategic plan initiatives, more than \$86 million will establish the Jay Kahn Endowment Fund at San Diego Foundation so that Kahn's legacy and impact continues to grow and transform San Diego County in perpetuity.

Kahn, who passed away at 90 years old, lived in San Diego's Ocean Beach neighborhood from 1972 until his death in 2022. He worked in the clothing industry in the San Diego-Tijuana region, and amassed his fortune as an entrepreneur, eventually retiring early to manage his personal investment portfolio that included early investments in Price Club, the San Diego-based predecessor to Costco, and Apple.

Kahn's gift is one of several unsolicited gifts in recent years for San Diego Foundation, including an \$8 million gift from American novelist and philanthropist McKenzie Scott in 2020 to the San Diego COVID-19 Community Response Fund.

About San Diego Foundation

San Diego Foundation inspires enduring philanthropy and enables community solutions to improve the quality of life in our region. Our strategic priorities include advancing racial and social justice, fostering equity of opportunity, building resilient communities, and delivering world-class philanthropy to realize our vision of just, equitable and resilient communities. For more than 47 years, SDF and its donors have granted more than \$1.4 billion to support nonprofit organizations strengthening our community. Learn more at SDFoundation.org.

###

Contacts

Lorena Nava Ruggero, San Diego Foundation, lruggero@sdfoundation.org, 619-814-1365

Theresa Nakata, San Diego Foundation, theresan@sdfoundation.org, 619-890-1378

Bailey Hahn, Mixte, bailey@gomixte.com, 619-732-0789 x 224