



Marshall Community
Credit Union

MCCU Approves Grant Request from Franke Center

Marshall Community Credit Union (MCCU) recently approved a \$10,000 grant request to help fund the *Refresh the Franke* renovation project for the Joyce and Lucy Franke Center for the Arts.

Refresh the Franke is working to establish funds to transform the interior appearance of the center. Construction began in March to revitalize the center's lower-level meeting area, but the real goal is to redecorate the auditorium in the original Arts & Crafts style, as well as add a black box theatre, which will lend itself to youth productions and other concert and theatrical productions. In addition, a much needed upgrade to the heating and cooling system will be completed, and state of the art updates will be made to the auditorium's sound and lighting systems. The current light and sound booths will be remodeled and become deluxe seating areas.

"The goal is to raise the level of audience comfort and pleasure and to enhance the economic viability of Marshall, Calhoun County, and the surrounding area," said Patty Williams, the Center's executive director.

When considering grant and other donation requests from community organizations, MCCU assesses the segment of the community that will be served by any approved funds. "We want to see our donations spent on projects and events that benefit the communities we serve as a whole," said Heather Luciani, MCCU's CEO. When it comes to this particular grant, many segments of the community will be served. "Many groups will benefit from the completed renovations including The Children's Theatre, Marshall Area Service Clubs, concert performers, The Marshall Civic Players, and others who attend or participate in events at the Center," said Williams. "The Franke Center will also continue to serve as our Marshall Civic Center. With these upgrades and renovations, the hope is for the Center to become a more suitable convention and meeting center for the whole community," Williams continued.

The Franke Center for the Arts occupies a 1920 historic church building, which became home to the Marshall Civic Players after the United Methodist Church relocated in 1970. The Marshall Civic Center Trust, Inc. (MCCT) was formed in 2001 by a group of civic and culturally minded citizens to save, improve and maintain the use of the building as a center for the arts and cultural activities for the Marshall and greater Calhoun County communities. However, a complete overhaul was needed at that time. This included hundreds of thousands of dollars in repairs and renovation costs and required the center to be closed for several months. Thanks to the many volunteers and monetary contributions, the Joyce and Lucy Franke Center for the Arts reopened in February of 2004. Since the first year, over 8,500 seats have been filled annually as audiences enjoy varied performances presented by the Marshall Civic Players, the Marshall Children's Theatre Group, various other community productions as well as events brought into Marshall by the Center to provide unique forms of entertainment to the community. The Franke Center also serves as home to the Exchange Club, Rotary and numerous special community and business gatherings.

Marshall Community Credit Union is a federally insured full-service financial institution with offices located at 839 West Green Street in Marshall and 1157 East Michigan Avenue in Battle Creek. For more information on products, services or membership, please contact 269.781.9885 or visit marshallcommunitycu.com.



Patty Williams, The Franke Center for the Arts Executive Director, receives a donation from Heather Luciani, Marshall Community Credit Union CEO.