

MCCU Gifts Eastend with \$5,000 toward Ballroom Renovation

Marshall Community Credit Union has gifted another \$5,000 toward Eastend's 3rd floor ballroom renovation. At the end of 2020, Eastend Studio & Gallery will complete the renovation of the historic ballroom in the Wagner's Block Building in downtown Marshall, including the purchase and installation of an elevator.

"Since 2012, Eastend has raised over \$600,000 toward the renovation of this building. Marshall Community Credit Union has supported us for the entire journey," says Jennifer Conley Darling, Acting Executive Director of Eastend. "Without the support of companies like MCCU, we would be nowhere. We are eternally grateful to MCCU, its board of directors and staff, for continuing to support these efforts."

In addition to this financial donation, MCCU has been a long-time partner of EESG. The credit union has been a sponsor of the Afterschool Arts Apprenticeship Program, has had staff members sit on the gallery's board of directors and has made a large donation to the gallery at the beginning of their ballroom renovations back in 2015.

"We are committed to supporting the communities we serve. Through financial contributions and serving as community volunteers, MCCU shows that commitment," said Heather Luciani, MCCU's Chief Executive Officer. "We believe in supporting the artist, the students, and the gallery in offering this opportunity for the Marshall community. We are pleased to participate in the preservation of part of Marshall's history, and are excited for the public to see Wagner's Block returned to its original beauty," Luciani continued.

Eastend purchased the Wagner's Block Building in 2012, and since then, has undergone a large-scale renovation to create an active visual arts center for artists and the community. The completion of the third-floor ballroom renovation with the installation of an ADA-compliant elevator is the final stage of renovation for the building and will allow Eastend to more effectively carry out its mission to engage both artists and the community at large.

The historic ballroom, located on the third floor of the Wagner's Block Building, served as Marshall's main dance hall from 1870 to 1910, but it has been virtually unused for over 100 years. According to State of Michigan Architect Robb McKay, this ballroom is one of the finest remaining Second Empire-style ballrooms in Michigan. EESG has renovated the basement, first and second floors of the building which now house an art gallery (featuring the work of more than 55 local and regional artists) and three artist studio spaces which are rented by local artists to create their work. The ballroom space will host an extension of Eastend's community engagement program and will also serve as an accessible community space for a variety of private and public events. Overall, Eastend anticipates more than 10,000 community members will access this space annually once completed.

This unique ballroom, which will accommodate 275 people, and up to 100 people for meals, will be open to the general public for exhibits, weddings, receptions, dinners, and more, and is expected to increase tourism and foster artistic community. In particular, the installation of the elevator completes Eastend's efforts to ensure this space is ADA-

compliant and truly accessible to all members of its community. The elevator will also make the second floor of the building accessible, including access to the gallery, classroom, and ceramics studio. Eastend will create a tiered pricing structure, as well as subsidized rates for qualified individuals and companies, ensuring that use of the ballroom will be financially accessible for community members and organizations.

The ballroom is open for tours and walk-throughs while the renovation continues. Come during open hours and Eastend's team will be happy to show you the way.

Marshall Community Credit Union is a federally insured full-service financial institution with offices located in Marshall, Battle Creek, and Coldwater. For more information on products, services or membership, please contact 269.781.9885 or visit marshallcommunitycu.com.



(L-R) Marshall Community Credit Union Financial Education Coordinator, Andrea Tucker, Chief Operations Officer, Corrie Rozell, East End Acting Executive Director, Jennifer Conley Darling, MCCU Chief Executive Officer, Heather Luciani and East End Program Director, Kat Whaley. Photo by: Worthington Photography