

Chris Peimann  
Director of Marketing and Publicity  
[cpeimann@TheSheldon.org](mailto:cpeimann@TheSheldon.org) | Ph: 314.533.9900 ext. 19

Sarah Samples  
Marketing and Publicity Coordinator  
[ssamples@TheSheldon.org](mailto:ssamples@TheSheldon.org) | Ph: 314.533.9900 ext. 21



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**SHELDON ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION DOLLAR GIFT FROM STEWARD FAMILY FOUNDATION  
- NEW PLAZA AND WEST WALKWAY TO BE NAMED STEWARD FAMILY PLAZA -**

ST. LOUIS – The Sheldon is pleased to announce that The Steward Family Foundation has generously contributed \$1 million towards its Capital Campaign, making possible the creation of a walkway and plaza that will be known as “Steward Family Plaza.” The naming announcement was made tonight by campaign chair Sue Engelhardt, and Sheldon board chair Anne Bannister, at The Sheldon’s annual gala dinner and concert featuring George Benson.

“The entire Sheldon family is grateful to the Steward family - Dave, Thelma, Dave II, Mary and Kimberly - for their leadership gift,” said Sheldon executive director Paul Reuter. “Steward Family Plaza will welcome over 125,000 adults and children each year who come for concerts, art exhibits, education programs and community events.”

“Thelma and I are honored and blessed to have the opportunity to help The Sheldon better serve our community,” said David Steward, founder and chairman of World Wide Technology. “The Sheldon is a unique cultural resource for St. Louis, bringing quality music and art to families from across the region. The Plaza and walkway will add a whole new gathering place at The Sheldon for generations to come.”

Designed by internationally acclaimed architect Benjamin Gilmartin, Steward Family Plaza will connect The Sheldon with Public Media Commons to the south and Washington Boulevard to the north, and is The Sheldon’s portion of ArtWalk, a pedestrian walkway linking Grand Center institutions together. Steward Family Plaza will feature a three-story, 240-foot long vertical garden along the west wall of The Sheldon’s Emerson Galleries building. The project’s landscape architect, dLandscape, Inc., in collaboration with Scott Woodbury, director of Shaw Nature Reserve (part of Missouri Botanical Garden), have designed the sculptural garden to flourish year-round, with native Missouri plants chosen specifically to survive St. Louis’ hot summers and harsh winters. The garden’s structure will be constructed from steel panels, laser-cut in an organic filigree pattern, donated by Kathy and Robert Williams, Jr. of Williams Patent Crusher.

MORE...

*Sheldon Steward Plaza cont'd.*  
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The plaza will also include a new 10-foot tall sculptural sign designed by Cobalt Office in collaboration with Benjamin Gilmartin; a promotional video blade facing Washington Boulevard; bio-retention areas and bio-swales which will divert storm water to irrigate the landscaping, thanks to a Project Clear grant from the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District; and built-in benches and grassy knolls for lounging or resting.

The Plaza will also include named gathering areas, including the Engelhardt Family Terrace made possible by the Engelhardt Family Foundation, trustees Irl and Sue Engelhardt; and the Centene Gallery made possible by a grant from the Centene Charitable Foundation that will feature a loaned sculpture from the Gateway Foundation. The vertical garden also benefited from an Innovation Grant from the Regional Arts Commission and the support of many other generous donors.

The design team for Steward Family Plaza is led by Benjamin Gilmartin, one of the top designers and architects in the country, with experience renovating Lincoln Center Plaza in New York, and leading the work on Public Media Commons and many other projects around the world. Gilmartin has assembled a team of experts including Andrew Colopy of Cobalt Office as Project Designer, Randy Burkett of Randy Burkett Lighting, Susannah Drake of dLandstudio as landscape architect, and local architect Fred Powers of Powers Bowersox., all with impressive credentials on many similar projects. General contractor for the plaza is S.M. Wilson.

Construction of Steward Family Plaza is scheduled to be completed this fall.

The Sheldon opened its doors in 1912 and the Concert Hall is known around the world for its perfect acoustics. Today The Sheldon presents jazz, folk, classical and world music concerts and the adjoining Sheldon Art Galleries present quality exhibits in many genres. Over 25,000 young people are engaged in Sheldon education programs and, overall, 125,000 individuals participate in over 350 events each year at The Sheldon.

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