Dear Friends:

As we come to the close of another year and savor the transformation of our lovely grounds into another season here at The Henry Ford, it seems an appropriate time to also recognize and celebrate the shift we continue to make as an institution.

More than 80 years ago, The Henry Ford opened as a school, inspired by our founder's belief that the genius of the American people wasn’t being sufficiently recognized, never mind taught in the textbooks of the day. And look where we are now: an internationally recognized cultural institution that honors our nation’s past through the stories of ingenuity, resourcefulness and innovation that helped shape America. Our mission is to inspire our young people in particular to learn from these traditions and ensure a better future for us all. To help make that goal a reality, The Henry Ford Archive of American Innovation™ features 1 million three-dimensional and 25 million two-dimensional objects and artifacts for our 1.6 million yearly visitors, as well as countless others who access our collection online.

A shared vision and passion is also at the root of our partnership with The Matilda R. Wilson Fund, which is not only deeply personal but also a testament to Mrs. Wilson’s steadfast belief in the importance of the arts and museums to the vitality of our region.

There’s the remarkable story of our newest board member, Hau Thai-Tang. We welcome him and are all so inspired by his story. Hau’s amazing life journey began in Vietnam and continues today in his role at Ford Motor Company, as one of its most important and influential executives. And speaking of inspiration...

Shirley Damps, The Matilda R. Wilson Fund, and Hau Thai-Tang... each is the essence of all we strive for every day at The Henry Ford. They inspire us as we continue to take the vision of our founder forward to achieve the potential that resides in every one of us.

Patricia E. Mooradian

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Welcome New Board Member Hau Thai-Tang

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The Matilda R. Wilson Fund A Passion for Culture Drives the Region

Page 4
Spark Innovation Will you help us inspire future change makers? Photo credit: Lisa Spindler

What is The Henry Ford Effect?
It’s the impact and inspiration you create through your philanthropic investments. Your generosity helps us nurture a vibrant cultural scene, preserve and increase accessibility of national treasures, and develop innovative learning tools.
“Everybody can make a difference,” says Hau Thai-Tang. “I think as individuals we can make a huge difference by showing our support by supporting education, celebrating American ingenuity, and inspiring our innovators of the future.”

Hau Thai-Tang happily concedes that the path his life has taken is truly remarkable. “I think it really highlights how great this country is,” he says. “There are limitless opportunities available to anybody if they’re willing to work at it.”

One of the newest members of the Board of Trustees at The Henry Ford has worked at Ford Motor Company for 27 years, launching his career in 1988 as a college graduate trainee, after earning a degree in mechanical engineering from Carnegie Mellon University. His title these days is Group Vice President, Global Purchasing, responsible for more than $90 billion in annual spending on production and nonproduction goods and services around the world.

Not bad for a kid who was born in Vietnam, grew up in Egan and arrived in the United States for the first time when he was just 10 years old.

“I was fortunate to be able to leave Vietnam at the end of the war,” he says. “My mother worked for an American company.”

The family settled in Brooklyn, New York, eventually moving to Staten Island, where Hau spent most of his adolescent years. Once he arrived at Ford Motor Company, he held a variety of jobs in the design and product development areas, including several international assignments, overseeing operations in Germany and Brazil. The career highlight so far?

“I think that was in early 2000,” he says. “I was the chief program engineer for the fifth-generation Mustang program, which was launched in 2005. That had market success for over a decade, before we put the car into production.”

So it’s something I’m really proud to be part of.”

And because Hau, an avid car enthusiast, has spent well over half his life immersed in the process of product development and creation, he recognizes how vital innovation and creative, bold thinking is to every aspect of his job.

“The whole essence of what I do is understanding people and their unmet needs and figuring out how to come up with innovative solutions to address those needs,” he explains. “So I think the whole theme of innovation is very relevant to what I’ve done for the majority of my career at Ford.”

Of course, innovation is at the very core of the mission statement for The Henry Ford. Yet another reason why Hau is such a perfect fit for the board.

“I think that’s really exciting for me as we move into the next chapter of digitizing a lot of the assets,” he says. “It’s making The Henry Ford accessible anywhere and inspiring people all around the world, not only those who have the opportunity to visit, but anywhere with an Internet connection and get inspired.”

Hau, his wife Jenny and their two daughters, now teenagers, have been frequent visitors to The Henry Ford over the years, so he has a special appreciation for its impact, particularly on young, impressionable minds.

“Just being able to connect with that young child and helping them realize their potential,” he says. “That’s very powerful in terms of inspiring the next generation of designers, thinkers and engineers to think habitually about problem solving. So that’s an exciting mission that we have here.”

A mission, he’s quick to add, that is deserving of consistent and generous support.

“Everybody can make a difference,” he says, “and it doesn’t matter if you’re making what you think is a small donation, which may seem pretty nominal compared to a corporate sponsorship. I think as individuals we can make a huge difference by showing our commitment by supporting education, celebrating American ingenuity, and inspiring our innovators of the future. These are all things I think have made and will continue to make this country great. And to be able to contribute to that in any way possible is just a wonderful opportunity.”

The relationship between The Henry Ford and The Matilda R. Wilson Fund began exactly 30 years ago, in 1985, and its longevity is very much a testament to a shared vision.

“Mr. Wilson was a big supporter of educational issues too,” Larsen says. “And The Henry Ford has adapted over time. They’re relentless. They don’t stop changing and progressing and dealing with the modern world, so it stays relevant, stays interesting and is adapting to the ways people get information and think.”

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All the more reason, Larsen asserts, for the institution to be enthusiastically and generously supported.

“Because you can’t have a great city or metropolitan area without institutions like this,” he says. “So we feel we have a good bit of gratitude and a commitment to inspire and energize the innovators and visionaries of the future.”

The gift created by Shirley Damps Fund for Greenfield Village and will support The Henry Ford’s presentation of 300 years of American life in Greenfield Village—Henry Ford’s celebration of people whose unbridled optimism came to define modern-day America.

“I’m at the stage of my life where I’m not 20 or 25 anymore,” she says. “I’m on my own and I’ve made my own way through life, and when you start to think about what it is that you want to do with what you leave behind, it’s really an important decision to make and it’s a risk. So I spent the last year gathering my ideas and thoughts and I was inspired to do this because it’s the output of a sustained lifetime of giving.”

Shirley says her donation is in honor of Clara Bryant Ford, whose unbridled optimism came to define modern-day America.

“For me, the theme is unbridled optimism, which is very American life in Greenfield Village—American life in Greenfield Village.”

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The Henry Ford’s education initiatives and other mission-supporting the museum’s overall mission, through the Annual Fund.

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Spark Innovation
Will you help us inspire future change makers?

The Henry Ford recently launched our first digital crowdfunding initiative, Spark Innovation, which will unfold as a story in six parts. Supporters of The Henry Ford will have the chance to donate to the Annual Fund through this unique online campaign through November 2016.

Donations of $150 or more, through this online campaign, qualify for an art print thank-you gift, and those who give $1,200 or more will receive the full set of six prints as our story unfolds throughout the year, while supplies last.* Donors have the option to opt out of the thank-you rewards while still supporting the Annual Fund. We’ve inspired dreamers, doers, movers and makers with the stories of the greatest breakthroughs and inventions throughout history. Gifts raised through this initiative will help us inspire future change makers by immersing them in new learning environments, providing digital access and engaging them in innovation at work. They can learn from their failures and successes, then take it forward. Together we can realize the archive’s potential as a creative catalyst! Your support goes a long way toward unleashing The Henry Ford Archive of American Innovation™ and making our collections available to the world.

* A portion of donations made through the Spark Innovation online campaign are tax-deductible. Tax deduction = total donation minus fair market value of print.