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Kennedy Center gets largest donation

Philanthropist gives \$100 million

Author: *Ann Geracimos, THE WASHINGTON TIMES*

Article Text:

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts will announce today a \$100 million donation from the **Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation**, the largest single gift in the center's 31-year history.

The \$100 million will be included in the Kennedy Center's \$250 million fund-raising campaign for construction of an education facility to house the center's extensive learning programs and interactive exhibits about the performing arts.

"The Kennedy Center is not only the nation's center for the performing arts, it is a living memorial to President Kennedy," Mrs. **Reynolds** said in a press release.

"President Kennedy believed that the arts are the highest achievement of the individual and an enduring source of national greatness. It is a privilege for the **Foundation** to help fund an education center that celebrates these beliefs."

Center officials will announce the **Reynolds** donation during today's annual luncheon for board members and supporters of the Kennedy Center Honors, a two-day event recognizing the lifetime achievements of five performing artists. Honors weekend includes a fund-raising gala tomorrow evening that will be shown on CBS-TV later this month.

Kennedy Center President Michael Kaiser said the center had been talking to Mrs. **Reynolds**, a well-known philanthropist and entrepreneur, about the project for a year and a half. In September, President Bush appointed her to the center's board of trustees.

"She also joined the architecture selection committee, so she learned more and more about the project," Mr. Kaiser said. "We sent her a proposal and she accepted it."

The Kennedy Center spends more than \$15 million a year on education programs for teacher and professional training, arts management, touring theatrical works for young people and long-distance learning.

"I think this is an exciting project that has national implications and repercussions - and an attractive one for donors. It will affect both the District and the nation," Mr. Kaiser said of plans for the education center.

In February, the **Reynolds Foundation** withdrew most of a \$38 million donation to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, citing controversy over a proposed exhibit about prominent Americans.

"Control remains with me," Mr. Kaiser said of the **Reynolds** gift, adding that no strings were attached.

As a member of the board of trustees, which oversees center activities, Mrs. **Reynolds** has input and votes on board proposals.

Almost exactly one year ago, her **foundation** donated \$10 million to the Kennedy Center for a 10-year project called the Series for Artistic Excellence, which underwrites performances of special interest.

Caption:

Reynolds [NO CREDIT]

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