



**News Release - For Immediate Release, September 7, 2023**

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## **Foellinger Foundation Celebrates 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with \$1M Grant to Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation**

In celebration of its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Foellinger Foundation board of directors has approved a three-year, \$1,000,000 grant to the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation department for capital support of the Foellinger Outdoor Theatre and Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory.

The Foellinger Outdoor Theatre was originally constructed in 1949 as a gift to the community from Helene Foellinger in memory of her father, Oscar Foellinger. The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory opened in 1983 with the support of a gift from Foellinger Foundation. Helene's mother, Esther Foellinger, had initially recommended the Foundation board of directors support the establishment of a conservatory in Fort Wayne in 1965.

"We are pleased to carry forward the Foellinger family's tradition of supporting these important cultural establishments in our community," said David Bennett, Foellinger Foundation Interim President and CEO. "As the Foundation celebrates 65 years since its creation by Helene and Esther Foellinger, this gift is both a continuation of their family legacy and a celebration of the community their family has called home since 1836."

"These funds will allow us to continue to address key improvements at these two signature facilities," added Steve McDaniel, Director of Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation. "We are deeply thankful for Helene Foellinger's vision of giving back to the community and the ongoing support of the Foellinger Foundation to ensure this legacy continues for future generations to enjoy."

Since 1997, the Foundation has awarded anniversary grants totaling more than \$5.4M in capital support of the two venues to Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation.



For more information, contact David Bennett, Interim President and CEO, at 260 422-2900 or [david@foellinger.org](mailto:david@foellinger.org).

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### **About Foellinger Foundation**

Foellinger Foundation is a private, charitable foundation that invests in organizations, programming, and initiatives that serve Allen County citizens with the greatest economic need and least opportunity. The Foundation was created in 1958 by Helene Foellinger, The News-Sentinel publisher from 1936 to 1981, and Esther Foellinger, her mother. Visit [foellinger.org](http://foellinger.org) for more information.