

**March 7, 2016**

Dear valued community members,

We are writing today to ask for your help. You may be wondering why River Tree Arts needs you. Here's our answer:

River Tree Arts has had the luxury of an endowment and a building that were generously donated by Andrea Irvine in 2005. Over the past decade, however, the organization has outspent its means by providing programming and arts to the community with a significant amount of overhead. In 2013, a loan was taken on the property at 35 Western Avenue to continue to fund River Tree's annual operations. The note is due on May 1.

Today, we are faced with the critical need of raising \$500,000 to fulfill our commitment to our lender and we are asking for your help. Before you consider helping, it is important to understand what steps we have taken to ensure that River Tree Arts never faces this situation again.

Over the past two years, we have been working to transform River Tree Arts in order to remain an essential part of our community. River Tree has been revitalized with seven new board members and community partners who are committed to the organization's long term success. We have steadily increased program enrollment and our membership base while decreasing administrative expenses reducing the annual operating loss from more than \$150,000 to less than \$50,000. The current board of directors is proud to be creating a sustainable organization, one that is projected to operate at breakeven in our next fiscal year which begins May 1. In parallel with our efforts to streamline operations, we have also engaged the community to understand what is important to our patrons and supporters.

During our community conversations it became clear that River Tree Arts is part of the fabric of our community. In fact, River Tree exists to make this a vibrant, connected community where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds experience the magical benefits of the arts. River Tree Arts makes a tremendous impact in our community and we need your help today to keep that impact alive. Rest assured, we fully intend to keep our doors open after May 1 and are actively working with local lenders to secure short-term financing while we raise the funds to keep us in our home long term. Strong early results from this capital campaign are critical to demonstrate our ability to make progress toward our goal.

Here's how you can help. We have developed a funding plan to serve as a roadmap to get River Tree Arts to its goal. In order to meet our goal, we need to secure substantial

broad based support including 100 donors to pledge \$1,000 and 50 donors to pledge \$5,000 over a five year period. We are also looking for a handful of supporters to provide cornerstone gifts to the campaign. Please consider a gift today. Your support, no matter the size, will help keep this vital resource in our community. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maureen DiGiovanni  
President of Board of Directors