



**University of Washington School of Music
January 12, 2021**

**Media Contact: Joanne DePue; jdepue@uw.edu;
School of Music Director: JoAnn Taricani; muhst@uw.edu**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Two historic gifts for organ performance announced
at the University of Washington School of Music**

Two donor gifts in support of organ performance will honor over a century of organ instruction and performance at the University of Washington School of Music, moving this highly regarded program to a new level of national prominence.

The organ builder and artist Paul B. Fritts has generously endowed the first Faculty Fellowship in the School of Music, with a remarkable \$1.5 million gift that will provide support for the organ performance degree programs. The Paul B. Fritts Endowed Faculty Fellowship will fund instruction from outstanding organists who are noted for their exceptional scholarly and professional contributions to the field. This gift establishes one of the largest endowments in the School of Music.

Leading his team at Paul Fritts & Co. Organ Builders, Mr. Fritts (pictured), a native of Tacoma, has designed, built, and reconstructed over fifty renowned organs over the past forty years, with his creations located in churches, universities, and residences across the country and abroad. His high level of craftsmanship and the beauty of his instruments represent a career-long dedication to reclaiming the best practices of organ building in the 17th and 18th centuries in Northern Europe, a high point in the history of organ composition and performance. The University of Washington is fortunate to house a remarkable example of his work: the Littlefield Organ in the Walker-Ames Room in Kane Hall (pictured), which debuted in 1990 and has been the location of numerous organ concerts over the past thirty years.

Director of the School of Music, Professor JoAnn Taricani, declared that she is “delighted to welcome this endowed faculty fellowship and its organists to the university as a companion to the beautiful Littlefield Organ that was built by Mr. Fritts. The organ program has always brought distinguished students to our campus, and this gift will allow our great legacy to continue into future generations.” Professor Emerita of Organ, Carole Terry, who taught organ at the university for forty years, echoed that “I am elated by this news and by the wonderful gift from Mr. Fritts.”

At the same time, the School of Music has received a generous gift of \$250,000 from an anonymous donor to create a four-year organ competition for early-career organists. Showcasing exceptional young talent, the competition will enable a larger audience to discover and admire the beauty of celebrated organ music. The timing and details of this competition will be announced once it is possible again to schedule public events. Professor Taricani remarked that “this is a perfect alignment of gifts to encourage young organists, with the competition beginning at the same time that the faculty endowment will commence.” Professor Emerita Carole Terry further observed that “I am filled with gratitude for the generosity of those who love the organ and its music.”

#