



**For Release:**

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**CHEEKWOOD COMPLETES *THE CHEEKWOOD CAMPAIGN*,  
THE FIRST MAJOR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN IN OVER 20 YEARS  
AND LARGEST IN THE INSTITUTION'S HISTORY**

**Campaign Made Possible Enhancements to  
The Ann & Monroe Carell Jr. Family Sculpture Trail, Blevins Japanese Garden and Frist  
Learning Center, and the New Bracken Foundation Children's Garden**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – This summer, Cheekwood celebrates the completion of *The Cheekwood Campaign*, its first major fundraising campaign in over 20 years and the largest in the institution's 61-year history. With a total of over \$37 million pledged in support of the Campaign, exceeding its original goal of \$30 million, Cheekwood secured pivotal funding to enhance facilities, elevate the guest experience, and increase its endowment from \$4.8 million to \$20 million.

An unprecedented effort that began quietly in 2015, *The Cheekwood Campaign* was created to address decades of deferred restoration in both the gardens and facilities; increase endowment and establish capital reserve funds to ensure the ongoing and long-term care of the estate; and initiate the first phase of Cheekwood's Master Site Plan, including enhancements to the Ann & Monroe Carell Jr. Family Sculpture Trail, Blevins Japanese Garden, and Frist Learning Center as well as the new Bracken Foundation Children's Garden. Following the Campaign, Cheekwood's endowment increased from \$4.8 million to \$20 million (with pledges for an additional \$1.5 million), and an institutional commitment to continue to raise funds for its endowment through planned gifts recognized by the Homer Gibbs Legacy Society.

*The Cheekwood Campaign* was led by nine seven-figure gifts, including the Ann & Monroe Carell Foundation, the Bracken Foundation, and the Frist Foundation, joined by Melba & Bill Blevins, Mrs. James C. "Tooty" Bradford, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. William H. Freeman, and an Anonymous donor, as well as other donors who have made significant legacy giving commitments. Campaign leadership included Honorary Co-Chairs Jim and Nicky Cheek, Joan Cheek, and Will T. Cheek, Jr; and Co-Chairs Jim Hunt and the late Jimmy Webb, both former Chairs of the Cheekwood Board of Trustees.

Jane O. MacLeod, President/CEO of Cheekwood, said: "We are beyond thrilled to have reached the finish line of *The Cheekwood Campaign*, an important milestone in our institution's history.

The Campaign has allowed us to address significant deferred restoration, while enhancing our gardens and facilities, and increasing our endowment to ensure the estate is well cared for and the institution financially strong. Especially during this last year, Cheekwood has served to support our community as a place of incomparable beauty that provides both solace and joy—this Campaign makes certain that Cheekwood will continue to do so for generations to come.”

MacLeod continued, “On behalf of Cheekwood, I want to thank each and every individual and organization that contributed to the Campaign, and particularly our generous donors who made leadership gifts. The unwavering support of our Board of Trustees and Senior Team is demonstrated by the 100 percent participation that the Campaign witnessed. Notably, among the many hundreds of donors to the Campaign were large numbers of younger families who supported the Bracken Foundation Children’s Garden at significant levels, building a new layer of philanthropic support at Cheekwood. We are delighted that Cheekwood’s future has never looked brighter.”

### **About The Ann & Monroe Carell Jr. Family Sculpture Trail**

Renovations to the Ann & Monroe Carell Jr. Family Sculpture Trail were made possible by a generous \$5 million gift from The Ann & Monroe Carell Foundation to both enhance and endow the trail. New features include an upgraded entrance, wayfinding and signage, and enhanced horticulture. Lighting has been added to the Hickory Loop, which is now fully paved, making this portion of The Carell Trail accessible for all, even after dusk, and all sculptures have been restored. The Carell Trail was established in 1999 through the generosity of Ann and Monroe Carell Jr. and features ten works of modern and contemporary outdoor sculpture on a 1.5-mile woodland path.

### **About The Blevins Japanese Garden**

Renovations to the Blevins Japanese Garden were made possible by a lead gift from the Blevins Family to both enhance and endow the garden. The new site plan features enhanced horticulture, new wayfinding and a secondary entrance, new gates, gazebo and viewing benches, and the restoration and repairs of existing structures. Formally established in 1990, *Shōmu-en: The Pine Mist Garden*, as the garden is known, was designed by David Engel, one of the most important designers of Japanese gardens in the United States during the twentieth century. The origins of this nationally recognized garden began in the 1960s, when a community with a shared vision for friendship between Tennessee and Japan began the effort to establish a Japanese garden at Cheekwood.

### **About The Frist Learning Center**

The renovation of the Frist Learning Center, Cheekwood’s hub of education, exploration, and discovery, was made possible by a generous \$4 million gift from The Frist Foundation. Located in the building which originally served as the Cheek family’s horse stables and garages, the Frist Learning Center was created in the late 1990s with support from the Frist Foundation to accommodate Cheekwood’s year-round educational and public programming. The Foundation’s

recent gift provided for enhanced art studios, meeting and classroom spaces, and visitor amenities including the addition of Café 29.

### **About The Bracken Foundation Children's Garden**

The Bracken Foundation Children's Garden is a new and exciting permanent family feature, made possible by a gift from The Bracken Foundation; and endowed with additional gifts from the community totaling more than \$2 million. The new two-acre Children's Garden, which serves as a welcoming and accessible reflection of the estate and garden's unique offerings of gardens, nature, art, and history, is situated between the Howe Garden and the Frist Learning Center. Paying homage to Bryant Fleming's inspiration for the original design of Cheekwood, the Children's Garden incorporates a series of connected garden rooms amid a woodland setting, alongside an open lawn with multiple occasions to experience scenic vistas, characteristic of a Country Place Estate, while fostering creative and imaginative play for children.

### **About The Homer Gibbs Legacy Society**

Building on the philanthropy of generous individuals and civic groups that helped to found Cheekwood in 1960, members of the Legacy Society share the common interest in preserving the heritage of this beloved place for generations to come by leaving a legacy that ensures those who follow will continue to enjoy Cheekwood's treasures.

There are several ways to support Cheekwood through estate planning. To discuss options, please contact [esheets@cheekwood.org](mailto:esheets@cheekwood.org), or contact any member of the Cheekwood Legacy Council listed on Cheekwood's website. The Legacy Council is a distinguished group of estate planning professionals ready to assist families who wish to include Cheekwood in their estate plans.

### **About Cheekwood**

Cheekwood is considered one of the finest American Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the extraordinary 1930s estate, with its 30,000-square-foot Mansion and 55 acres of cultivated gardens and expansive vistas, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum, and museum with period rooms and art galleries, showcasing works from its permanent collection as well as traveling exhibitions. The property includes 13 distinct gardens including the Blevins Japanese Garden and the Bracken Foundation Children's Garden, as well as a 1.5-mile woodland trail featuring modern and contemporary outdoor sculpture. Each year, Cheekwood plays host to seasonal festivals including *Cheekwood in Bloom*, *Summertime at Cheekwood*, *Cheekwood Harvest* and *Holiday LIGHTS*. Cheekwood is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, and is a three-time *USA Today* Top 10 Botanical Garden. In 2020, the grounds were awarded a Level II National Arboretum Accreditation by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum. Cheekwood is located just 8 miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. Daily hours of operation: Tuesday through Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission to Cheekwood must be purchased in advance at [cheekwood.org](http://cheekwood.org). For further information, call 615-356-8000 or visit [cheekwood.org](http://cheekwood.org).

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