

Three ways of giving equal one timely gift for Encounter Center at state museum

“The timing of this gift could not have been better,” Priscilla Grew said with a smile.

The director of the University of Nebraska State Museum is overjoyed about a gift that enables the museum to renovate its Encounter Center for the first time in more than 20 years. Unlike other areas of the museum, it’s here that visitors can actually touch and hold objects representing global biodiversity.

The timing is important because the museum’s funding from the state was cut last year by 49 percent, a nightmare to the tightly budgeted museum at Morrill Hall in Lincoln. As a result, the museum reduced its staff by 15 positions, and news about the budget cuts left many wondering if it was even open.

It is more than open. Thanks to support from people like Betty Marx, it’s also improving – and healing. “The fact that we can move forward this year on a major renovation project of great importance to the museum, is a statement of faith in the museum and its future,” Grew said.

The good news came soon after Marx, a Lincoln native who now lives in Tampa, Fla., asked the University of Nebraska Foundation for advice about a memorial to honor her late husband, Paul D. Marx, M.D. Of the options, support for

the museum seemed to resonate the most with Marx and her family.

“We thought this would be wonderful because we appreciated the museum and have good memories of visiting it,” said Marx, who recalls that they always made a point to take their out-of-town company to Morrill Hall.

“We decided this would be a nice way to memorialize my husband, who was born and raised in Lincoln, graduated from the university and established his medical practice in Lincoln,” she said. The new Encounter Center will be named the [Dr. Paul D. and Betty Marx Science Discovery Center](#).

Once Marx decided where to direct her memorial, she consulted development specialists at the foundation, as well as her own financial advisors, to tailor a sensible giving plan. The result was a creative combination of gifts to meet her philanthropic goals: a gift of real estate, gifts of stock to be transferred over time, and a planned gift of life insurance.

The museum began renovating the space this spring, including design and construction of four large educational display cases and new entryways into

the center. The second part of the renovation involves the discovery center’s interior.

Support from Betty Marx is also forming a permanent endowment to provide ongoing funding for future updates and maintenance.

According to Judy Diamond, the museum’s associate director for informal science education, modern research on how people learn and new information about biodiversity are being combined to create a more dynamic experience for visitors to the Marx Science Discovery Center.

“This room is very, very important to us,” she said.

“We feature items from all over the world and objects of tremendous significance.

And this memorial from Betty Marx and her family now gives us this wonderful opportunity to enhance this area and better educate children and their families.”

The Marx gift is just one example of how the foundation’s development professionals can tailor personalized plans to meet individual philanthropic goals. For more information about outright and planned gifts please contact the foundation at 800-432-3216 or visit www.nufoundation.org.

