Chris and Suzy DeWolf believe that art has the power to connect people. That’s why the Cedar Rapids entrepreneurs and philanthropists are helping the University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art create a new home for Jackson Pollock’s world-famous Mural. The co-owners of Lil’ Drug Store Products, Inc., a leading consumer-products company, have made a visionary gift of $1.5 million to name the Chris and Suzy DeWolf Family Gallery, which will house the museum’s pièce de résistance in the new building.

This gallery will help the museum fulfill its mission of helping visitors discover extraordinary works of art, explore new ideas, and cultivate fresh insights. The cornerstone of the Stanley’s prized collection, Mural will draw patrons, scholars, and art aficionados from across the country—and even the world—to the Chris and Suzy DeWolf Family Gallery.

The DeWolfs first became interested in collecting art because of their three children—Riley, age 20; Lindsay, age 17; and Weston, age 14—who have been involved in the visual and performing arts since they were young. Here, the couple explains what inspired them to make their leadership gift for Mural and the museum.

Q What motivated you, as business owners, to give back to the arts?

CHRIS Suzy’s parents, Dennis and Donna Oldorf, started our business in the 1970s, and we eventually bought it from them. We view our business as a catalyst for making a difference in the lives of our employees, customers, and consumers. Most importantly, we want to use it to positively impact the communities that we serve and in which we live.

Q How does art enhance people’s lives?

SUZY Through our children’s experiences with the arts, we’ve been able to see, firsthand, how art can build confidence and allow for expression. Our appreciation for the arts—and for the organizations that support the arts—has deepened. Now, we also collect art, and we choose to support local artists and to acquire pieces during our many family travels.

Q How does art enrich communities?

CHRIS We believe that art is inclusive—and that it brings people together. Anyone can appreciate art, regardless of his or her background.

Q What do you love most about the UI Stanley Museum of Art?

SUZY We love the history of the original art museum, and we think it has a really interesting story. The new facility will usher in a new chapter and will help us reassemble the university’s—and the state’s—impressive art collection back in one place.

Q What do you hope will be the lasting legacy of your gift?

CHRIS Knowing that the Pollock will have a permanent home at the University of Iowa will help ensure that the Stanley Museum of Art remains an attraction for people from throughout the great state of Iowa and across the world.