For nearly four decades, retired University of Iowa professors Dr. Ramon Lim and Dr. Victoria Lim have lived in an airy, art-filled house that once overlooked the original UI Museum of Art. During those years, they've watched the arts campus evolve before their eyes. This inspired the couple to contribute to that growth by making a generous gift of $250,000 to the Fund for Rebuilding the UI Stanley Museum of Art.

“The original museum before the flood was a wonderful place,” says Victoria, a professor emerita of internal medicine who studied endocrine and metabolic disturbances in patients with kidney failure. “Not infrequently, I would go there alone just to sit for a while, to relieve my daily tension, to sink in contemplation, and to allow the beauty of human creation to nurture me. Now, we want to make sure the new museum can offer the same experiences to others.”

Ramon shares this enthusiasm for the arts on campus. A professor emeritus of neurology and conducted research in the area of brain proteins and brain cell biology, he grew up making art. As a young man, he embraced abstract painting and even won a national art competition in the Philippines. Today, he is a skilled calligrapher who shares his talents with students at the Confucius Institute of the University of Iowa.

In a book he published about literature and art, Ramon wrote, “While science allows me to explore the natural world, art, on the other hand, bestows solace, comfort, and equanimity. Thus, I pursue science and art with equal zeal.”

The Lims passed on their passion for science and art to their children and grandchildren. Many of them pursue both disciplines with zest, and their works are proudly displayed in the Lim home alongside those of well-known artists. “Visual art is not just a fashion. Like science, literature, and music, it represents some of the best products of human creativity and has immense healing power,” says Victoria. “It makes us wiser, kinder, and better human beings.”

This belief is what has motivated the couple—who explore the art museums in every city they visit—to invest in the museum and other arts-focused areas on campus. The Lims see Iowa City as a “unique place of culture and creativity,” and they are proud to give back to this community which exemplifies the relationship between the creative arts and the healing arts.

“[Visual art] makes us wiser, kinder, and better human beings.”

Dr. Victoria Lim