



## History of Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities

*The seeds for Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities were planted in the mid 1990s when the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association and the Grand Rapids Dominicans began their collaboration. Their mission was to improve the lives of children and young people in the Grandville Avenue (a.k.a. Roosevelt Park) neighborhood, an underserved area bordered by Wealthy Street, Burton Street, Century Avenue, and Godfrey/Clyde Park avenues.*

*Their first accomplishment was establishing the Grandville Avenue Neighborhood Library which opened in 1996. Originally located in a renovated house at 1260 Grandville Avenue SW, the Grandville Avenue Neighborhood Library provided neighborhood children with a safe, beautiful environment in which they could read, learn, and make friends. By 2005 the Library had outgrown this intimate, 900-square-foot space, and plans were underway to construct a 4,500-square-foot facility several blocks away at 1100 Grandville Avenue SW. The new library, rechristened the Cook Library Center, opened on October 1, 2008.*

*Then RPNA and the Grand Rapids Dominicans teamed up to construct the Grandville Avenue Academy for the Arts which opened in 2001. The Arts Academy complemented the Library's goal of intellectual development by celebrating creative expression, both of the individual and of the community. In 2008 the name of the facility was changed to the Cook Arts Center in honor of the Peter C. and the late Pat Cook.*

*In 1999 a group of dedicated community leaders formed Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities, the umbrella organization that administers the programs of the Library and the Arts Center. Although GAAH is a relatively young organization, its unique niche in the community has set it apart as a model and a leader in its field.*

*Today GAAH is reaping the benefits of the firm foundation on which the organization was built. GAAH's board, staff, and volunteers are passionate about the mission and the work they do at the Library and the Arts Center. In addition, the community has demonstrated its commitment to GAAH through generous financial support that has kept the organization financially viable and has allowed for expansion of programs and services for the neighborhood and in the broader community.*

*The future of GAAH is bright as the board and staff continue to adapt to the needs of the Grandville Avenue neighborhood. GAAH demonstrates a healthy balance of planning for the future and opening itself to new opportunities in an ever-changing socioeconomic environment.*