



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 31, 2016**

**Gift from the late Joan S. Beren will help preserve Wichita State's outdoor art collection**

The Joan S. Beren Outdoor Sculpture Conservation Fund at Wichita State University has been dedicated to the Wichita philanthropist whose passion for the university's acclaimed collection of outdoor art led her to donate more than \$1 million for its care.

That announcement was made Sunday at a public event held on the WSU campus to celebrate the reinstallation of the Joan Miró mural "Personnages Oiseaux (Bird People)," which adorns the façade of the Ulrich Museum of Art. The work had undergone a five-year, \$2.2 million conservation and restoration project paid for largely through private donations.

The Joan S. Beren Outdoor Sculpture Conservation Fund will provide resources for the ongoing cleaning and maintenance of the massive mural, as well as for the 75 other pieces in the Martin H. Bush Outdoor Sculpture Collection spread throughout the WSU campus. A longtime supporter of Wichita State in the areas of arts, athletics and student aid, Beren died last January.

"Our mother was an ardent admirer of the outdoor sculpture collection," said Adam Beren, one of Beren's four children. "It was important to her to see it maintained at a level equal to its prominence so that students and visitors to the campus could enjoy it for many years to come."

Beren had the wisdom and foresight to recognize that great works of art require a high degree of ongoing maintenance, said Bob Workman, director of the Ulrich Museum of Art.

"It takes extraordinary people to generously commit resources to the care of our cultural assets," he said. "We are deeply grateful and honored to be the recipient of Joan Beren's legacy."

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### **Page 2**

“Joan was proud of Wichita State for many reasons, but she especially treasured its magnificent art collection,” said Elizabeth King, president and CEO of the WSU Foundation. “This gift to help preserve the quality and integrity of our outdoor sculptures is one that came from her heart and soul.”

During her life, Beren served two terms on the WSU Board of Trustees, including one as its chairman, as well as on the WSU Foundation National Advisory Council and the advisory boards for the Ulrich Museum and the College of Fine Arts. She chaired the Ulrich’s Outdoor Sculpture Committee for several years. In 2000, the WSU Foundation recognized her commitment to Wichita State by awarding her the Fairmount Founders’ Award.

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*Media note:* Photo may be found at [www.wichita.edu/foundationphotos](http://www.wichita.edu/foundationphotos)

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**WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION**