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## EXCLUSIVE: Philanthropist helps two Louisville organizations relocate HQs to Main Street

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Jun 1, 2017, 7:01am EDT Updated: Jun 1, 2017, 9:12am EDT

The [Louisville Orchestra](#) and [The University of Louisville Kentucky Author Forum](#) have new homes, thanks to local businessman [David Fenley](#).

The organizations will share the sixth floor of the Doe Anderson Building, at 620 W. Main St. The orchestra moved its administrative offices into the 8,500-square-foot space at the beginning of May, and the author forum is expected to follow in the coming weeks.

Fenley, whose real estate company, Fenley Real Estate, owns the building, is underwriting at least some of the costs to enable the organizations to occupy their new headquarters. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed, but Louisville Orchestra executive director [Andrew Kipe](#) said his organization would not have been able to afford the prime location without assistance.



WILLIAM DESHAZER

"As we started looking down Main Street, we had a a little bit of sticker shock," Kipe said. "It is a really generous donation that David is making."

The orchestra's offices had been located at 323 W. Broadway since 2008 and were subsidized by the Fund for the Arts.

The new space houses 24 orchestra employees and two members of the author forum staff. Officials invited us in to tour their new headquarters this week, and you can check out a photo gallery above.

The offices are on the top floor of the 19th century building and overlook Museum Row and the Ohio River. The hallways are lined with photos of orchestra musicians playing their instruments in front of local landmarks, part of a series by photographer [O'Neil Arnold](#). A conference room large enough to fit the entire administrative staff, a first-time luxury for the group, is at the center of the space. Several offices decorated with album covers from the orchestra's old recording company, an outdoor patio and a break room with a small kitchen fill out the suite.

Kipe said the orchestra decided to move because its staff was growing and because officials wanted to be closer to The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts and its Whitney Hall. He said both problems have been solved by the new location.

"We were often going back and forth two or three times a day from Broadway to Main Street for meetings and rehearsal," Kipe said. "There are a lot of positives for the efficiency of the organization."

One of the largest positives might be the consolidation of the organization's production department and music library. Before the move, the orchestra's librarian, who is responsible for preparing the music that is given to the musicians, worked out of a store room in the basement of The Kentucky Center. Kipe said this is the first time the entire staff has been at one location.

"One of the board members said that in the nonprofit world, you can't necessarily compensate employees the same way you can in the corporate world. But giving them an environment to be able to do their best work and to really excel at what they do, while not like a paycheck, is one of those things we can do," Kipe said.

The Kentucky Author Forum's offices, which previously were located in a building next door, will be at the south end of the floor and will be home to the group's associate producer and an assistant. The organization's television show, "Great Conversations," is distributed to about 250 PBS stations and is filmed inside The Kentucky Center.

The forum's founder and producer, Mary Moss Greenebaum, said that sharing office space with the orchestra made perfect sense for both parties. The author forum had been working out of a temporary space, and the orchestra had extra room at its new location. She also said cohabitating will create opportunities for the two groups to work together.

"Believe me, I have a little collaboration in mind," Greenbaum said. "I just suspect we are going to come up with something delicious."

The forum has featured musicians on its telecast in the past, including Wynton Marsalis and Jessye Norman.

Greenbaum said the climate for cooperation among arts groups in the city has changed for the better in recent years, especially downtown. Fenley said that is one of the reasons he decided to help.

Fenley, who started a program to bring sciences, technology and the arts to children in foster care called UpstartU, said it is important for kids to see individuals step up and support the arts, rather than just corporations.

"When I learned they were looking, I made up my mind that we are going to do what we need to do to get them here," Fenley said. "I felt they needed some face on Main Street."

The groups hope to show off their new offices during a series of open houses yet to be announced.

Officials say there is still some decorating to be done inside the headquarters and signage to be installed on the outside. And both Kipe and Greanbaum said they are "grateful" to be working out of such a nice space.

"A couple of our board members have joked that maybe we shouldn't bring donors up here," Kipe said. "They might think we don't need the money."

