Dear Don and Kay:

It is always with great pleasure that I submit thank you letters and testimonies of your student recipients of the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grants in Visual & Performing Arts. Thank you for your support of our graduate students and their research. You will notice in all of the thank you letters several themes that emerge: the personal impact of your generosity on students’ abilities to complete extensive research that contributes to their field of inquiry; the impact on a global level both in raising the visibility of TTU’s graduate programs and in contributing to international understanding; and, in our students’ understanding of the importance of philanthropic support and giving back in a multitude of ways.

Graduate Arts research is relevant and uniquely individual, always pushing the boundaries of current knowledge in new and interesting directions. Bryan Wheeler’s research of cultural analyses of Texas post office murals is an example of uniquely individual and timely research. Texas murals created during the great depression under Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal are of particular interest given the regional heritage of Texas. Research such as Bryan’s contributes to the historical knowledge and adds to the current base of information.

Many of your recipients find that their research is global in nature, such as Dawn Schluetz’s dissertation that required researching and interviewing David Wood, a renowned children’s playwright. Your support gives students diverse opportunities to gather their research creating insightful dissertations and theses that are making an impact on their fields of study.

Each year, I have the pleasure to speak with these talented students about their research, aspirations, and dreams for their futures. All of these students say that the support provided by the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grants has had an immeasurable impact on their research. But perhaps even more important is their understanding of what philanthropic support means, and their desire to provide support to others when they have an opportunity to do so.

Don and Kay, I know that you will find these thank you letters to be inspiring and the testimonies to be heartfelt. Thank you, thank you for all that you do for the College of Visual & Performing Arts.

All My Best,

With Heart Felt Gratitude,

Carol D. Edwards, Ph.D.
Dean
Jason Derouin
Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Art: Critical Theory and Artistic Practice
School of Art

“I am writing to express my gratitude for your generosity in funding the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual & Performing Arts. I am honored to be a recipient of this award.

I am currently in my first year of the Fine Arts Doctoral Program, specializing in Critical Theory and Artistic Practice, which will prepare me for a leadership role in visual art at an academic institution. My research is about the representation of bachelorhood in American image culture during the mid-twentieth century. In the course of my studies at Texas Tech University I will produce a dissertation as well as artwork informed by this topic.

Your support allowed me to leverage additional funding through the School of Art. These contributions gave means to attend the recent College Art Association (CAA) Conference in New York which featured presentation of up-to-date scholarship relevant to my research with seminars including:

Mad Men and the Visual Culture of the Long Sixties, including Mad Men, Bad Men, and Empty Modernism and Becoming a Bachelor: Don Draper, the Apartment, and the Closet;

The Modern Interior as Space and Image, including The Domestic Interior as a Tactile Space and Fashioning the (Masculine) Interior;

Nordic Modernism at Home and Abroad, 1880-1920 (NB: Nordic modernism impacted the decoration of American bachelor “pads”);

The Art History of American Periodical Illustration, including discussion of Beyond the Auteur: The Illustration as a Word/Image Object and Affective Illustration (NB: My study of American image culture will concentrate particularly on illustrations in men’s magazines.)

Attendance at this four-day international event allowed me to make contact with scholars with shared interests in the representation of masculinity in visual art. This experience will assist the development of my thesis, and I am confident that I can make a meaningful contribution to this area of study.

The Dona and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant represents a significant contribution to the arts and is an important medium for its promotion. Once again, thank you for your generosity.
Jason’s dissertation topic of masculinity in mid-20th century United States is one of great importance, with ramifications not just for gender and sexuality but to an entire understanding of mid-20th century society, politics, and culture....I strongly support the nomination of Jason Derouin for a Don and Kay Cash Grant.

Kevin Chua, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Art History
School of Art
A-Ta’s work as a student attending classes and as a young scholar has been impressive. He has worked very hard to lay the groundwork for his dissertation...I support him and his application for the grant without hesitation.

Constance Cortez, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of
Art History
School of Art
Yuan-Ta Hsu  
Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Art: Critical Theory and Artistic Practice  
School of Art

“Thank you for your contribution to Texas Tech University. I was very happy and appreciative to learn that I was selected for funding by the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual & Performing Arts.

I am an international student from Taiwan. I graduated and got my MA degree from Institution of Art History and Art Criticism at Tainan National Fine Arts University in Taiwan. Besides teaching in two universities, I was an active art critic in Taiwan after graduating from TNNUA. I also wrote reviews and critiques that were published by national museums, magazines, and periodical journals. However, I found the need to further explore knowledge in art for my professional field of study. Therefore, I applied and proudly got admission from Texas Tech University.

I chose the Fine Arts Ph.D. Program at Texas Tech University because of Professor Hsieh Dung-Shang’s influence. Dr. Hsieh is a Texas Tech graduate. He was one of the best professors I met when I was pursuing my master’s degree in Taiwan. I was intrigued and inspired by his critical knowledge and decided to follow in his academic steps and further my education by attending TTU. I plan to go back to Taiwan and devote myself to Taiwanese art and culture education after I graduate from TTU. After I have completed this Ph.D., I would like to pursue academic research and teaching at the professional level in Taiwan.

My dissertation mainly focuses on huai hsiang subject in two Taiwanese photographers’ photographic work. Therefore, it will provide significant progress when I go back to Taiwan to collect data for my dissertation. Without your scholarship, I would not be able to collect enough data about the two photographers and interview one of the photographers for my dissertation. Thanks to your generosity, it was possible for me to make my trip to Taiwan and enhance my dissertation data.

Once again, thanks to the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual & Performing Arts. I treasure this opportunity which was made possible, from your contribution, to have enhanced my data by a trip back to Taiwan. Your generosity will always provide a great connection to my experiences in the United States while achieving my higher education goals.”
Marla Britton-Johnson
Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Theatre
Department of Theatre and Dance

“Thank you very much for your contribution to Texas Tech University. I am a recipient of the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual and Performing Arts.

I am currently finishing my fifth and final year of the doctoral program in the theatre arts department. Originally from Montana, I came to Texas Tech University because of its unique fine arts degree that provides me the opportunity to not only research but be actively involved in productions and other fine arts events.

I have had an interest in Holocaust drama since my time studying as a graduate student at Western Washington University. While at Texas Tech, I focused my research further to the portrayal of the female Nazi in American drama and film. I believe that the understanding of the American viewpoint of female involvement in the Third Reich will further develop Holocaust education not only in the U.S., but globally. I will be presenting some of my findings at the American Literature Association Conference in Boston.

My paper explores the treatment Arthur Miller has given his Aufseherin (female overseer) characters in his play, Playing for Time, based on the experiences of Fania Fenelon in Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was not until the 1980s that the idea of women being active participants in the murder of millions became a credible topic. Women served as more than just innocent bystanders, mothers, and wives in the Third Reich. Miller had specific intentions with his creation of Maria Mandel and Frau Schmidt – both based upon real people. For Miller, the play was another attempt to explore the humanity of the perpetrators...My paper is directly related to my dissertation research and future scholarship, as I explore female involvement in the Holocaust and the effect this knowledge has on American Holocaust education.

This grant allows me the opportunity to discuss my research with theatre colleagues and peers, and allows me to build my professional reputation as a writer and theatre scholar while representing Texas Tech.

Upon graduation, I will pursue a university teaching career. I firmly believe the arts are key in the development of future generations, regardless of their major, and I want to be a part of that development.

Once again, I am grateful for the generous grant and your strong support of the arts.”
The opportunity to present her work to other scholars writing about American drama, and specifically Arthur Miller, will be advantageous to Marla as she prepares to finish her dissertation.

Dorothy Chansky, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Head of History/Theory/Criticism
Department of Theatre & Dance
Already Vallie Owens is developing relationships and making contacts around the world, even as a student. It is hard to predict what influence her work will have at the Ph.D. level, but it is certain to be considerable...It is my privilege to recommend Vallie Owens...

Janice N. Killian, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair-Music Education
School of Music
Vallie Owens
Masters Program/Music Education
School of Music

“I am writing to express my gratitude for your generous research grant that helped to fund my recent trip to Uganda, Africa for the Pan-African International Society of Musical Arts Education (PASMAE) Conference. Being a recipient of the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual & Performing Arts funded my flight to Kampala, Uganda. I would not have been able to have this amazing opportunity without the financial support of the research grant.

As a Music Education Masters’ student at Texas Tech, the trip to Uganda afforded me the amazing experience of presenting my research paper, *The Effect of Transient Student Populations on a Primary Level Music Program: An Ethnographic Study of Three Music Educators*, at the conference and meeting many music educators from throughout Africa. This experience has forever changed me as I am now very interested in global music education and the possibility of one day teaching overseas.

I also made many contacts and friendships with music educators in Africa and hope to continue corresponding in the future. I am currently working to help a potential PhD student from Uganda who would like to come to Texas Tech University to pursue his higher-level learning.

Additionally, I am interviewing one of the professors I met while in Uganda and writing a case study of the ways in which he incorporates indigenous music and western music within his music curriculum. This study will be the basis for my thesis that I hope to defend in October.

The trip to PASMAE has also provided me with the opportunity to attend and present on our trip at several other conferences throughout this school year, and potentially an international conference. I was able to attend and present with my traveling companions: Dr. Janice Killian, Dr. John Wayman and Mrs. Melody Gamblin-Bullock about our trip to PASMAE at several conventions including: Society of Music Teacher Education, North Carolina; National Association for Music Educators Research Conference, Missouri; and Texas Music Educators Association Conference in San Antonio.

Additionally, our workshop presentation about the trip to PASMAE has been accepted to the International Society of Music Education World Conference, which was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Thank you so very much for your investment and generosity through the Don and Kay Cash award.”
Leobardo Guerrero Ramirez
Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Music: Piano Pedagogy
School of Music

“The purpose of this letter is to share with you not only my professional achievements and goals but also my deepest gratitude. I am a Ph.D. student in Fine Arts with emphasis on Piano Pedagogy at the School of Music. The Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual & Performing Arts has been an exceptional award at this moment in my career because it allowed me not only to collect valuable information for my project research but also it gave me an incredible life experience that changed completely my perception between being a student and a professional.

My dissertation research focuses on a four-volume piano collection by a Swiss composer Ernst Widmer who lived in Brazil most of his life. This project will concentrate on the music itself and the benefits of using it as teaching material. However, it was crucial for me to understand the concept behind this wonderful material as it includes elements of European musical traditions and Latin-American folk music. Therefore, it was through this grant that I was able to travel to Brazil to conduct interviews with some members of the Federal University of Bahia in Salvador da Bahia, as well as some family members and former students of Ernst Widmer.

My dissertation topic research has the potential to become a much more ambitious project as it could be good material for editing, publishing, and audio recording. Also, promoting this material among pedagogues and scholars at national and international platforms has been taken into consideration for my professional future plans.

It is my pleasure to reaffirm that small projects like mine could turn into great contributions for future generations, and they are only possible due to your incredible generosity given to students with this award. I cannot express my gratitude enough for this outstanding grant. Your contributions not only change projects but also shape lives.”
To my knowledge, Leobardo is the only scholar in the U.S. currently delving deeply into analyzing Widmer’s piano works…He has my full support and I believe he will once again represent Texas Tech University and the Cash Scholarship to the best of his ability.

Carla Cash, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy
Chair, Keyboard Area
School of Music
I have the highest respect for Abi’s self-discipline, imagination, and intellectual capacity... Abi has also served since Fall 2009 as the Administrative Coordinator for the TTU Vernacular Music Center, where she has played a key role in the expansion and diversification of VMC profile, on the regional, national and international level.

Christopher Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Chair of Musicology
Director,
Vernacular Music Center
School of Music
Abi Rhoades

Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Music: Arts Administration
School of Music

Fine Arts Doctoral student, “I am a student in the Fine Arts Doctoral Program and a recipient of the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant for the College of Visual and Performing Arts. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for your generosity in providing research opportunities for fine arts graduate students such as myself.

Education has always been important to me and from a very young age I knew that I wished to pursue graduate studies, although I was not sure where my interests would lead me. As a masters student at Texas Tech, I had the chance to participate in several fine arts study abroad initiatives. Additionally, I was offered a position to work as the administrative coordinator for the TTU Vernacular Music Center, creating events and educational programs that foster collaborations between students, faculty, and the general public. Both opportunities strongly influenced my decision to pursue a doctorate based on the construction of a pilot program to streamline the process of requesting and receiving credit for overseas course equivalencies.

Receiving this grant allowed me to attend the 8th International Conference on the Arts in Society, held in Budapest, Hungary. The purpose of the conference is to create an intellectual platform for the arts and arts practices through the medium of an interdisciplinary conversation on the role of the arts in society. I presented a pedagogical workshop entitled “Shared Experience: Creating Community Through the Use of Vernacular Arts” that discussed ways in which traditional music, dance, storytelling and other related arts can be used to build connections between and across geographic and cultural barriers.

As someone who is very interested in the enhancement of international partnerships and the promotion of community arts, the chance to attend this conference was invaluable. I was able to meet and network with artists, scholars, and teachers from around the world while gaining critical feedback on my research and ideas. More importantly, I was able to engage in and contribute to an ongoing dialogue about the significance of the arts in our everyday life.

As a graduate student and single parent, my attendance at this conference would not have been possible without financial assistance. Your support has had an immediate and profound impact on my future career, and I am extremely grateful for the encouragement and interest shown in my work.”
Dawn Allyson Schluetz
Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Theatre
Department of Theatre

“I am writing to thank you for your wonderful gift of financial aid toward my dissertation research. I recently received funding from the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual and Performing Arts.

I am in the process of obtaining a Ph.D. in Fine Arts. My specific area is Theatre with tracks in Acting/Directing and Playwriting. After graduation, I would be delighted to teach in a faith-based institution and to help build a theatre program, especially in playwriting and children’s theatre. I would also like to encourage growth in children’s theatre in America through the creation of a new poetic for writing adaptations for children and youth.

My dissertation has to do with cross-cultural adaptations to the stage for young audiences. I was honored to be invited to the UK to do research and to interview David Wood, who is a prestigious, internationally known children’s playwright. This opportunity would allow me to gather much needed experience and research toward the writing of my dissertation.

Your gift allowed me to take this trip to the UK in December. Since Great Britain has a long tradition of mounting well-done children’s theatre during the holiday season, the timing was perfect. David Wood was an incredibly bountiful source of information that will help me complete my work. Being able to research at the Bodleian Library, the British Library and the Victoria and Albert Theatre Archive at Blythe House were added bonuses in my research. None of this, however, would have been possible without your generosity.

I also believe that the connections that I was able to make within the world of children’s theatre will be invaluable to my emerging professional reputation. In other words, your kindness has set me up for immediate success in obtaining much needed research funds and the writing of my dissertation as well as giving me a boost in my professional career as I wrap up my studies at Texas Tech University.

Again, I cannot say it enough. Thank you. Thank you for your incredibly generous support of the arts and specifically for your support of my personal research through the Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant in Visual & Performing Arts.”
Ms. Schluetz’s dissertation will be based on her work in children’s theatre. She had the wonderful opportunity to meet with David Wood, one of the premiere playwrights in this field… At a time when we look for new audiences, producing new dramatic works that will appeal to children seems more important than ever.

Bill Gelber, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Director of Theatre
Department of Theatre & Dance
Jared is the top playwright in our program, and *Iphigenia Come Home* represents his abilities very well… His acceptance into the Workshop is well deserved…I am pleased to write this letter of support.

Norman A. Bert, Ph.D.
Professor & Head of
Playwriting
Department of Theatre & Dance
Jared Strange
Masters of Fine Arts Program/Playwriting
Department of Theatre and Dance

“I am writing to express my sincere gratitude for your investments in the College of Visual & Performing Arts at Texas Tech University. Thanks to your generosity, I have recently received a Don and Kay Cash Graduate Research Grant to aid my upcoming appearance at the Mid-America Theatre Conference.

While at the conference, I will be work-shopping and presenting a short play of mine entitled *Iphigenia Come Home*, as well as work-shopping my paper “Mystery and Morality in the Twenty-First Century: The Last Days of Judas Iscariot as a Postmodern Interrogation/Revision of Catholic Drama” with several editors of major peer-reviewed journals. Both these projects tie heavily into my work as an M.F.A. in Playwriting candidate in the Department of Theatre and Dance, where I have focused my time on writing and promoting new plays and examining the ways theatre and performance intersect with religion and spirituality. My thesis play, *The Prophet Darla*, which was fully produced by the Department last fall, dealt heavily with religious and spiritual matters, and was a major success for me as an artist, scholar, and person.

Assistance from people like you has helped me thrive at Texas Tech. Without the education I have received at this institution, I would not be at all prepared to pursue a life as a writer, educator, and all around man of the theatre. Thanks to Texas Tech, I will leave Lubbock with plenty of experience, a host of new skills, and many professional contacts. Presenting at MATC will allow me to pursue my art and scholarship on a national scale, and hopefully go some way to paying back how much Texas Tech – and you – have invested in me.

Once again, I say thank you, from the bottom of my heart. I wish you all the best in your own personal endeavors and hope to thank you in person someday. Best wishes!”
Bryan Wheeler
Fine Arts Doctoral Program/Art: Critical Theory and Artistic Practice
School of Art

“Please accept my sincere gratitude for the award of the Don and Kay Cash Research Grant. I completed coursework towards my Ph.D. in the School of Art and spent the summer conducting research for my dissertation. To do so, I was required to travel to Washington, D.D., to access documents in the National Archives, Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institute. This travel would not have been possible without your generous grant, and my dissertation would have suffered greatly without the archival research. Further, the travel and research was invaluable as an introduction to professional practices and, just as importantly, colleagues and peers in my field who have already aided me greatly in the achievement of my immediate goals.

The College of Visual and Performing Art’s doctoral program has prepared me, as perhaps no other program could, to successfully complete my dissertation. My dissertation is essentially a two-part study which utilizes methodologies from art history, cultural studies, social semiotics and “empirical” history. I am conducting a cultural analysis of the Texas post office murals that were created during the Great Depression under the aegis of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal. In doing so, I have found it necessary to draw from political and economic history and theory, social theory and data, literature, folklore and music, and stylistic analysis of the murals and related artworks. My intent is to demonstrate the artists’ positions within the dominant artistic discourses of the 1930s and the murals’ relationship to the construction of Texas identity at its moment, according to my argument, of reification. I am confident that my dissertation will continue to aid in the “recuperation” of art and artists that have largely fallen outside the scope of traditional art history. Further, I hope to do my part in complicating notions of key art historical concepts like modernism and regionalism.

Finally, I have been assured by some Texas historians that my study will greatly benefit Texas Depression scholarship, which remains inadequate at present.

As I enter this key period, synthesizing three years of intensive research, I can look at many of the materials I now have at my disposal and know that they would not be there but for this award. Put simply, my dissertation would not be as successful without the Don and Kay Cash Research Grant. So, again, please accept my sincere thanks for this grant.”
In addition to being among the brightest students in the academic Fine Arts Doctoral Program, Bryan Wheeler is a highly accomplished artist with exhibitions in major venues in Texas and in several countries. He is also a musician of some note. I am very pleased to offer my highest support.

Carolyn E. Tate, Ph.D.
Professor of Art History
School of Art
Additional Recipients for Performances, Presentations, and Archival Research

Katy Ballard, FADP  
School of Art  
National Art Education Association’s National Convention  
Fort Worth, Texas

David Barrientos, FADP  
School of Music  
Twenty-First Edition International Festival of New Music  
Moldova, Italy

Michael Flood, FADP  
Department of Theatre & Dance  
Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)  
Orlando, Florida

Gilbert D. Jones, MA, Graduate Certificate in Medieval & Renaissance Studies  
School of Art  
Sixteenth Century Society and Conference  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Elizabeth C. Parks, FADP  
Department of Theatre & Dance  
Odin Week Festival  
Holstebro, Denmark

Page Petrucka, FADP  
Department of Theatre & Dance  
Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)  
Orlando, Florida

Kristen Rogers, FADP  
Department of Theatre & Dance  
Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)  
Orlando, Florida

Richard St. Peter, FADP  
Department of Theatre & Dance  
Victoria and Albert Museum  
London, England
Graduate Research Grants in Visual & Performing Arts

Don and Kay Cash

Program:

The CVPA has a significant but finite sum of funding to support and stimulate graduate student research, made available through the generosity of Don and Kay Cash. As support for research, activities that are to be funded will relate to final projects required for the applicant’s degree program since these constitute original creative/research. We envision applications from all graduate degree programs for such support as:

» Student travel to professional meetings at which they present their own research results.

» Expenses involved with shipping MFA art/design projects to peer-reviewed exhibitions.

» Participant travel to peer-reviewed exhibitions if attendance at the event’s opening is required.

» Student travel (DMA students, for example) to professional performance venues essential to establishing creative/research reputations.

» Student travel to competitive creative/research performance venues.

» Student travel to archives, etc., to consult resources essential to final projects.

» Student travel to consult persons whose expertise is important to final projects (e.g. interviewing).

In order to realize completely the gift’s potential, students whose projects are funded by the college must seek matching funds, if eligible, via the Graduate School’s Travel Funding program: depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/current/travel.php The Graduate School requires materials at least 30 days in advance, so allow substantial lead time for the decision-making process.

Should Graduate School funding be denied, applications can be re-submitted to the CVPA with [1] clear indication of re-submission status, [2] documentation of denial, and [3] reasons for denial, if known.

Students whose projects are funded must file a letter of thanks for the Don and Kay Cash Research Grant with the CVPA dean's office for subsequent delivery to the donors.

Application Procedure:

Complete application form using 12-point font (two-page maximum), and obtain departmental signature.

Attach: copy of verification from sponsoring agency, acceptance of submission, or other evidence of peer review, as is appropriate for the discipline and project.

Attach: letter of support from principal advisor or graduate coordinator. The letter of support [1] should be concise (not more than one page single-spaced), [2] should explain scope and significance of venue in relation to profession, [3] should provide qualitative assessment of project, and [4] should verify/explain relationship of project to degree requirements. The letter can also provide additional information that should be considered in the decision-making process.

Send to: Associate Dean Brian Steele, 218 Administration Building, CVPA, MS 5060, with a copy to Business Manager Mike Smith, 224 Administration Building, CVPA, MS 5060.

Review: Applications are reviewed by the dean’s office as received, on case-by-case basis. Criteria used in decision-making include: total and unfunded costs of project; scope (international / national / regional); scope of degree program (terminal or leading to other); significance of proposed project in relation to degree requirements; GPA; etc.