



**The Board of Directors of
The Heineman Foundation for Research,
Education, Charitable and Scientific Purposes**

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As the former president of the Heineman Foundation for Research, Educational, Charitable and Scientific Purposes, Inc., currently serving on its board of directors, and now current president of the Rose Family Foundation, it is my honor and pleasure to recommend Susana Valadez for this well-deserved prize. The Heineman and Rose Family Foundations combined provide an average of \$1 million in grants annually. These grants are typically \$60,000 and support a wide array of projects. Over the last twenty years, both foundations have approved funding grants to the Huichol Center varying from \$40,000 to a \$300,000 multi-year grant.

As someone who is in the fortunate position to enable the gifts of meaningful sums of money, I always feel that these grants are a form of investing in the future. Investing in the Huichol Center has given returns on our investment beyond our expectations.

The first Heineman Foundation grant was in the fall of 1997. The principle purpose of the grant was to provide general funding to help sustain the many ongoing projects at the Huichol Center. These projects included bringing right livelihoods to Huichol artisans, who celebrate their cultural patrimony by conveying their story through bead and yarn art. Funding also helped found a school for Huichol children that exists to this day. The school offers the children mental, physical and spiritual sustenance through a carefully hand-crafted curriculum in Spanish and Huichol, a nutritional lunch program of Huichol farm to table foods, and a full immersion in Huichol identity. Heineman Foundation grants also helped with the purchase of valuable arable land for the Huichols to farm. Finally, the early Heineman Foundation grants provided funds for the digital archiving of Huichol myths and symbology, which were in danger of being lost to time. I remember how impressed I was at how Susana early on had the presence of mind to tediously transcribe Huichol designs onto graph paper, and also spend hours of audio recording the stories of a beloved Huichol shaman. I have since noted with pride and pleasure how these early attempts at preserving the Huichol culture have evolved into a digital encyclopedia that can be openly accessed. And through this archival work the school curriculum could be printed.