



# FRIENDS

*grant fund*

HONORING THE LEADERSHIP LEGACY OF

**E.L. Foster | Jim Copeland | Mack Dunwoody | An Anonymous Friend**

Through their words and deeds over many years, these four extraordinary people established a legacy of leadership, inspiring positive change in Ocala/Marion County, and directly influencing the development of MCA as an arts advocate.

# LEGACY *of leadership*

*“Go. Yes. Do. Make it happen. You have my support. Here’s how I can help.”* These are words often heard by many from four important leaders. Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA) seeks to honor with the Four Friends Grant Fund. Seeking and welcoming new ideas and initiatives across the community of causes, these four - E.L. Foster, Jim Copeland, Mack Dunwoody, and another special friend (anonymous) - have influenced, inspired, and encouraged others, including the founders and membership of MCA,



## *E.L. foster*

E.L. Foster (1933-2016) born in Mississippi, raised in Alabama, Tennessee and South Carolina, E.L. attended the University of South Carolina on a football scholarship, where he met his wife, Ocala native Josephine Alyward. His career includes a long record of public service that began in 1968 when the Fosters left Charleston, South Carolina and came to Ocala as the new owners of the Holiday Inn of Silver Springs, which E.L. operated with his son, Les, for 37 years. During that time, E.L. has served on multiple boards and committees, including the Ocala Elks Lodge, Rotary Club of Silver Springs, the Ocala/Marion Chamber of Commerce, Crime Stoppers, Hospice, College of Central Florida Foundation, Marion Cultural Alliance (MCA), Munroe Foundation and Amsouth Advisory Board.

In 1995, E.L. became the Mayor of Ocala. He was active in the National Conference of Mayors, and became an ambassador for the city he loves. While in office, E.L. was instrumental in the formation of MCA by lending his enthusiastic support to Horse Fever, MCA's founding public art project. E.L. continued his support of MCA, participating in Artist Within, serving on the board of directors, and providing constant encouragement.



## *JIM copeland*

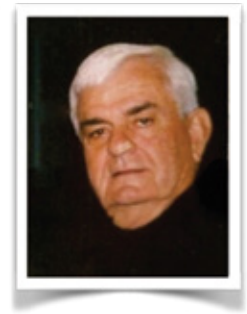
Jim Copeland (1942-2015) was a South Carolina native and moved to Leesburg, Florida with his family while in high school. He attended Clemson University and began his working career with the original Florida Telephone Corporation which is currently Century Link. Jim lived in Ocala for most of his adult life and was actively involved in the betterment of life in Marion County. From the 1960s, Jim participated in many groups, including the Rotary Club, Jaycees, United Way, College of Central Florida, Silver River Museum, and Munroe Regional Medical Center. He supported the launch of the Public Education Foundation and the Golden Apple teacher recognition program.

The arts were an important part of his life from woodworking and painting to music and the theater. He was a key and early supporter of the Discovery Science Center and Brick City Center for the Arts in downtown Ocala, where the seeds of MCA were sewn. Thanks to Jim, in 2001, the painted horse “Old Glory,” created by Kimberly Samson, graced the cover of the Ocala phone book, calling everyone’s attention to Horse Fever, the founding project of MCA that has raised over \$1.5 million to date. Jim continued his support through participation in Artist Within and other projects.

for over 20 years. E.L., Jim, and Mack were so well known for their joint fund raising efforts, they were affectionately dubbed “The Three Musketeers”. In the same spirit of encouragement and good will, this fund is established to carry that positive energy into the future by providing micro grants to Ocala’s creative community. Learn more about the fund on [mcaocala.com](http://mcaocala.com).

## MACK *dunwoody*

Mack Dunwoody (1933-2013) came to Florida from Rome, Georgia at the age of fourteen. He graduated from Dunnellon High School, then joined the Army and proudly served his country during the Korean conflict. After the war, he received a Bachelor of Science and Master’s Degree from the University of Florida. Mack began his career in education as a teacher in Hillsborough County, returning to Marion County in 1962. In 1968 Mack was appointed School Superintendent by Florida Governor Claude Kirk. As superintendent, Mack felt strongly about creating a school system based on equal education for all children. He is credited with integrating the Marion County Public Schools, an accomplishment which he attributed to his defeat in his re-election bid of 1972.



Mack continued his career in banking as Vice-President of Ocala Federal and later President and CEO of Mid State Federal Savings and Loan. In 1987, the Ocala Star Banner named Mack one of the ten most influential and powerful people who made a difference in Marion County.

Mack returned to the Marion County Public School system as the Director of Staff Development and a champion of school funding through his initiative of Business Partners and as Director of Governmental Relations. An active community leader, Mack served in leadership roles in the United Way, Ocala/Marion Chamber of Commerce as well as many other local and national organizations. His love of the arts led him to becoming a FAFO board member.

Together with his friends E.L. Foster and Jim Copeland - “The Three Musketeers” as they came to be known - Mack worked tirelessly behind the scenes of many arts and charitable organizations in securing much needed funding. They were an effective team of spirited friends, who used to tease saying that Jim would come up with the ideas, Mack and Jim would do the work, and E.L. would take the credit!

He often said, “People have called me a liberal. I don’t think I’m a liberal. I think I’m a logical thinker...a realist. I’m self-assured, not cocky, and I have never let anything keep me down. I just hope I’ve made a difference.” MCA is but one organization that recognizes the difference Mack has made for the people of Marion County.

## AN ANONYMOUS *friend*

MCA exists and prospers only through the support of many talented and visionary people in the Ocala community. As a fledgling organization, the right support at critical times was the difference between success and failure for MCA. Though this fund recognizes one such friend, anonymity allows MCA to also recognize any and all of the dozens of artists, philanthropists, business leaders, or volunteers who provided such support over the years. Each is so honored here.

## LOCAL FUNDING FOR THE ARTS

A key element of MCA's mission is supporting local arts organizations with direct funding. Since its founding in 2002, MCA has provided over \$250,000 in support of local arts non-profit organizations through the Cultural Grants program. These dollars have supported dozens of arts initiatives within the creative community, resulting in the enhancement and expansion their offerings, thereby further enriching the quality of life in Ocala, Marion County. In 2015, MCA established the Four Friends Grant Fund as a permanent part of the Endowment.

## FOUR FRIENDS GRANT FUND

We are half way to our initial goal of \$50,000 in honor of four friends of our community!

The spirit of this fund is to honor their legacy by supporting ideas and initiatives of a broad range that encourage creativity, culture, and the creation of beauty within our community.

Once the initial goal is reached, MCA will begin accepting applications from artists and art organizations for small grants for equipment, workshops, and other needs that fall outside the Cultural Grants funding cycle.

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For more information on the **Cultural Grants program** and **Four Friends Grant Fund**, follow MCA on social media and [mcaocala.com](http://mcaocala.com).

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Ana Dunwoody, *Administrative Assistant*

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15 years of arts support