

## Alice L. Walton



**Philanthropist and arts patron Alice Walton is committed to increasing access to arts, improving education, enhancing health and well-being, and advancing economic opportunity for all. Alice is dedicated to promoting diversity and access in all of her philanthropic work.**

In 2005, Alice Walton founded Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art as a non-profit charitable organization for all to enjoy. Alice's interest in art began in her childhood when she discovered watercolors, as she and her mother often painted landscape scenes on family camping trips or hikes in the Ozarks. As an adult, Alice began to collect watercolor paintings, and over time, that grew into a broader interest in art history and all types of American art.

Alice gifted her art collection to form the basis of the Crystal Bridges collection, and the Walton family gifted 120-acres of land in downtown Bentonville, Arkansas as the site for the museum. Designed by renowned architect Moshe Safdie, the museum opened to the public on November 11, 2011.

Crystal Bridges mission is to welcome all to celebrate the American spirit in a setting that unites the power of art with the beauty of nature, with no cost for admission.

The museum's art collection spans five centuries of American masterworks from early American to current day and is enhanced by temporary exhibitions. A rare Frank Lloyd Wright-designed house was preserved and relocated to the museum grounds in 2015. Crystal Bridges offers

public programs including lectures, performances, classes, and teacher development opportunities. An extensive school visit program provides educational experiences for school groups at no cost to the schools. More than five miles of walking and biking trails add to the experience of art, architecture, and nature. In its first decade, the museum welcomed more than 10 million visitors to its building and grounds.

In 2020, Crystal Bridges opened a satellite location, the Momentary, focusing on contemporary visual and performing arts. The Momentary also welcomes all with free admission.

### **Sharing Art Across the US**

Building on Crystal Bridges' success in sharing masterworks of American art from its Arkansas location, Alice Walton established the Art Bridges Foundation in 2017 to expand access to American art across the nation, especially in rural and small to mid-sized communities where museums often struggle.

Art Bridges Foundation provides funding and support to get art out of storage and into communities. It has its own art collection, and it also partners with museums with vast collections to share art with institutions throughout the US. The foundation provides funding to museums to expand their art offerings through temporary exhibitions, art collection loans, and learning/engagement programs that connect with local communities.

### **Creating Access for All**

In 2017, Alice founded the Alice L. Walton Foundation, a non-profit philanthropic organization committed to increasing access to the arts, improving education, enhancing health, and supporting basic needs in Arkansas and beyond. Recent gifts include a \$3 million gift to the University of Central Arkansas to support the arts, \$1.28 million to University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences to fund school nutrition programs plus collaborating on a \$350,000 gift to fight food insecurity, \$10 million to Crystal Bridges to support enhanced internship programs, and collaborating on a \$4 million gift to the American Alliance of Museums to support diversity in museum leadership.

Through this work, the foundation strives to deliver meaningful and lasting change to individuals and communities most in need.

Alice is a member of the Walton Family Foundation, which works in three areas: improving K-12 education, protecting rivers and oceans and the communities they support, and investing in its home region of Northwest Arkansas and the Arkansas-Mississippi Delta.

Additionally, in 2017 Alice Walton spearheaded a family foundation gift that provided \$120 million to establish a School of Art at the University of Arkansas, creating the first and only accredited, collegiate school of art in the state.

## **Enhancing Health and Well-being**

Alice Walton's transformative experiences in the arts led to an interest in wellness, and how art, nature, and the spaces around us shape and improve our lives. In 2019, Alice established Heartland Whole Health Institute, a non-profit organization that addresses physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being by working with health systems, partners, employers, and communities to redesign health care delivery.

Construction is currently underway to locate the institute on the 120-acre Crystal Bridges campus, with access to its natural offerings as well as the museum.

In addition to the institute, the formation of the non-profit Alice L. Walton School of Medicine was announced in 2021. The school will offer a four-year, medical degree-granting program that integrates conventional medicine with holistic principles and self-care practices. Taught by leading medical practitioners and scientific minds, the first-of-its-kind medical school will help students rise to the health challenges of the 21st century with a focus on physical, mental, and emotional health.

Construction began in early 2023 on the new 154,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art school. It will be located east of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, and connected through the trails to its sister organization, Heartland Whole Health Institute. Completion is slated for 2025, with the goal of welcoming the first class that fall, pending accreditation.

## **Philanthropic Leadership**

Alice Walton's vision and philanthropic leadership has prompted numerous accolades. She is a recipient of the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art Medal, the John Cotton Dana Medal for Visionary Leadership in Museums, the Leonore and Walter Annenberg Award for Diplomacy through the Arts and the Getty Medal for contributions to the Arts and Humanities. She was recognized by TIME magazine in 2012 as one of the most influential people in the world and was inducted into the International Women's Forum Hall of Fame in 2018.

Alice is currently on the advisory council for the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum. She has served as a member of the board of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, the Trustees' Council of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and was the inaugural chairperson for the Northwest Arkansas Council.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity University and an honorary Doctor of Arts and Humane Letters from the University of Arkansas.