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## Hanna Theatre project lands \$1 million Kresge grant

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**Tony Brown**  
Plain Dealer Theater Critic

The \$19.2 million campaign to renovate PlayhouseSquare's historic Hanna Theatre in downtown Cleveland got a major boost Tuesday - a \$1 million gift, and an implicit seal of approval, from a big charitable foundation.

The challenge grant from the Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., puts Great Lakes Theater Festival's campaign only \$2.9 million from its goal. The 1921 theater is scheduled to reopen as Great Lakes' new home on Saturday, Sept. 27, but the campaign will continue to run for another year.

"Awesome," said Charles Fee, Great Lakes' producing artistic director. "This ramps up the Hanna project onto a very different level. The competition for Kresge grants is on a whole other scale."

The Kresge Foundation had assets of \$2.6 billion in 2006 and made charitable donations of nearly \$160 million, according to tax documents.

To cash in the Kresge grant, Great Lakes must first reach \$18.2 million in fund raising. The Hanna campaign now has \$15.3 million.

But there's more than money to a Kresge grant, according to Thomas Schorgl, president of Northeast Ohio's Community Partnership for Arts and Culture.

"To get a Kresge grant, you have to go through lots of scrutiny," Schorgl said. "When other philanthropic organizations see that you've gotten a Kresge, they know it's a worthy project."

Great Lakes and PlayhouseSquare are six months into a \$14.7 million renovation of the Hanna that will transform it into an intimate, state-of-the-art venue for 21st-century productions of Shakespeare and other classics.

The remaining \$4.5 million will pay for the campaign's expenses and an endowment to support theater operations.

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