

The Henry Ford Effect

Volume 8 | 2015 | Making an Impact Through Giving

contents



Page 2

Welcome New Board Member Hau Thai-Tang

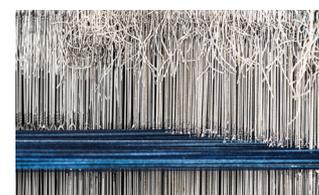


Page 3

The Matilda R. Wilson Fund
A Passion for Culture Drives the Region



A Legacy Gift & Life Mission
Inspired by Clara Bryant Ford

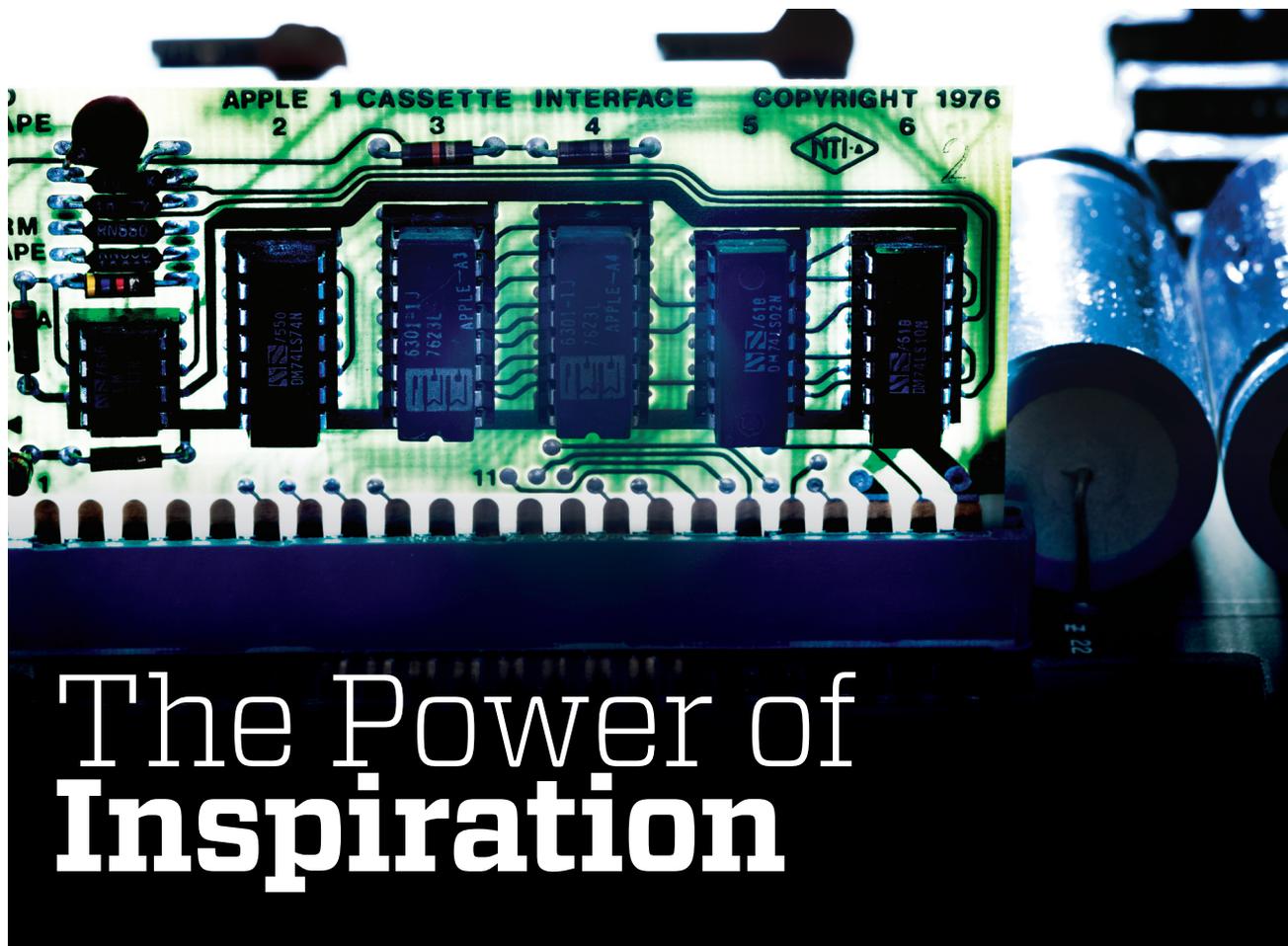


Page 4

Spark Innovation
Will you help us inspire future change makers?
Photo credit: Lisa Spindler

What is The Henry Ford Effect?

It's the impact and inspiration you create through your philanthropic investments. Your generosity helps us nurture a vibrant cultural scene, preserve and increase accessibility of national treasures, and develop innovative learning tools.



The Power of Inspiration

The Apple 1 Computer, 1976. Photo credit: Lisa Spindler

A letter from The Henry Ford President

Dear Friends:

As we come to the close of another year and savor the transformation of our lovely grounds into another season here at The Henry Ford, it seems an appropriate time to also recognize and celebrate the shift we continue to make as an institution.

More than 80 years ago, The Henry Ford opened as a school, inspired by our founder's belief that the genius of the American people wasn't being sufficiently recognized, never mind taught in the textbooks of the day.

And look where we are now: an internationally recognized cultural institution that honors our nation's past through the stories of ingenuity, resourcefulness and innovation that helped shape America. Our mission is to inspire our young people in particular to learn from these traditions and ensure a better future for us all. To help make that goal a reality, The Henry Ford Archive of American Innovation™ features 1 million three-dimensional and 25 million two-dimensional objects and artifacts for our 1.6 million yearly visitors, as well as countless others who access our collection online.

While our collection is our most precious asset, so too is the core group of dedicated people here who bring our artifacts, objects and stories to life for all the world to see, to learn from and, most important of all, to be inspired by. They are members of our staff, the people you see in Henry Ford Museum, Greenfield Village, Ford Rouge Factory Tour, or the Benson Ford Research Center. But there are also those you don't see—our curators and conservators, all working collaboratively, diligently and very much behind the scenes every day. Then there are the donors, volunteers and board members, coming together as one to preserve the heritage that's so important to the story we tell.

This issue of *The Henry Ford Effect* highlights just a few of them.

Shirley Damps moved to Dearborn 12 years ago after she retired from her job as a schoolteacher in Chicago. Her life from that point on has been devoted to The Henry Ford, as a selfless and dedicated presenter in Greenfield Village. Over

that time, she's donated nearly \$15,000 out of her weekly paycheck. And she recently signed an agreement pledging a seven-figure estate gift—creating The Shirley Damps Endowment for Greenfield Village.

A shared vision and passion is also at the root of our partnership with The Matilda R. Wilson Fund, which is not only deeply personal but also a testament to Mrs. Wilson's steadfast belief in the importance of the arts and museums to the vitality of our region.

There's the remarkable story of our newest board member, Hau Thai-Tang. We welcome him and are all so inspired by his story. Hau's amazing life journey began in Vietnam and continues today in his role at Ford Motor Company, as one of its most important and influential executives.

And speaking of inspiration...

Shirley Damps, The Matilda R. Wilson Fund, and Hau Thai-Tang... each is the essence of all we strive for every day at The Henry Ford.

They inspire us as we continue to take the vision of our founder forward to achieve the potential that resides in every one of us.

Patricia

Patricia E. Mooradian





Hau Thai-Tang, Trustee, The Henry Ford

Innovation & Inspiration

Are Essential Values for Board's Newest Member

"Everybody can make a difference," says Hau Thai-Tang. "I think as individuals we can make a huge difference by showing our commitment by supporting education, celebrating American ingenuity, and inspiring our innovators of the future."

Hau Thai-Tang happily concedes that the path his life has taken is truly remarkable.

"I think it really highlights how great this country is," he says. "There are limitless opportunities available to anybody if they're willing to work at it."

One of the newest members of the Board of Trustees at The Henry Ford has worked at Ford Motor Company for 27 years, launching his career in 1988 as a college graduate trainee, after earning a degree in mechanical engineering from Carnegie Mellon University. His title these days is Group Vice President, Global Purchasing, responsible for more than \$90 billion in annual spending on production and nonproduction goods and services around the world.

Not bad for a kid who was born in Vietnam, grew up in Saigon and arrived in the United States for the first time when he was just 10 years old.

"I was fortunate to be able to leave Vietnam at the end of the war," Hau says. "My mother worked for an American company."

The family settled in Brooklyn, New York, eventually moving to Staten Island, where Hau spent most of his adolescent years. Once he arrived at Ford Motor Company, he held a variety of jobs in the design and product development areas, including several international assignments, overseeing operations in Germany and Brazil. The career highlight so far?

"I think that was in early 2000," he says. "I was the chief program engineer for the fifth-generation Mustang program, which was launched in 2005. That had market success for over a decade, before we just replaced it this year. So it's something I'm really proud to be part of."

And because Hau, an avid car enthusiast, has spent well over half his life immersed in the process of product development and creation, he recognizes how vital innovation and creative, bold thinking is to every aspect of his job.

"The whole essence of what I do is understanding people and their unmet needs and figuring out how to come up with innovative solutions to address those needs," he explains, "so I think the whole theme of innovation is very relevant to what I've done for the majority of my career at Ford."

Of course, innovation is at the very core of the mission statement for The Henry Ford. Yet another reason why Hau is such a perfect fit for the board.

"I think what's really exciting for me as we move into this next chapter of digitizing a lot of the assets," he says, "is making The Henry Ford accessible anywhere and inspiring people all around the world, not only those who have the opportunity to visit, but be anywhere with an Internet connection and get inspired!"

Hau, his wife Jenny and their two daughters, now teenagers, have been frequent visitors to The Henry Ford over the years, so he has a special appreciation for its impact, particularly on young, impressionable minds.

"Just being able to connect with that young child and helping them realize their potential," he says, "that's very powerful in terms of inspiring the next generation of designers, tinkers, and engineers to think holistically about problem solving. So that's an exciting mission that we have."

A mission, he's quick to add, that is deserving of consistent and generous support.

"Everybody can make a difference," he says, "and it doesn't matter if you're making what you think is a small donation, which may seem pretty nominal compared to a corporate sponsorship. I think as individuals we can make a huge difference by showing our commitment by supporting education, celebrating American ingenuity, and inspiring our innovators of the future. These are all things I think have made and will continue to make this country great. And to be able to contribute to that in any way possible is just a wonderful opportunity." ■



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4

The Matilda R. Wilson Fund

A Passion for Culture Drives the Region

The relationship between The Henry Ford and The Matilda R. Wilson Fund began exactly 30 years ago, in 1985, and its longevity is very much a testament to a shared vision.

"What we've tried to do with the Wilson Fund is stay true to the charities and organizations that Mrs. Wilson supported," says David Larsen, one of the fund's three supervising trustees. "She was always a supporter of the arts and museums and recognized the importance of museums in a metropolitan area. So there's always been a balance in the fund between organizations she was directly involved with and others that had the same set of goals and interests."

Over the years, it's all added up to donations to The Henry Ford exceeding \$1.5 million, ranging from gifts with specific designations to those supporting the museum's overall mission, through the Annual Fund.

"We have a lot of faith in that board and in the leadership there and in their vision for the place," says Larsen, "so that's why it's no problem for us to give support that has very little restrictions on it."

And it's safe to say the partnership is deeply personal too.

Matilda Wilson's first husband was automotive pioneer John F. Dodge, co-founder of the Dodge Brothers Motor Car Company. He died in 1920, leaving Matilda one of the wealthiest women in the world. In the mid-1920s, she and her second husband, Alfred Wilson, built Meadow Brook Hall, a spectacular 88,000-square-foot home on the grounds of what is now Oakland University in Rochester Hills. By the early 2000s, the mansion was in need of some significant repairs, which is when Steve Hamp, then the president of The Henry Ford, contacted Larsen and his fellow trustees.

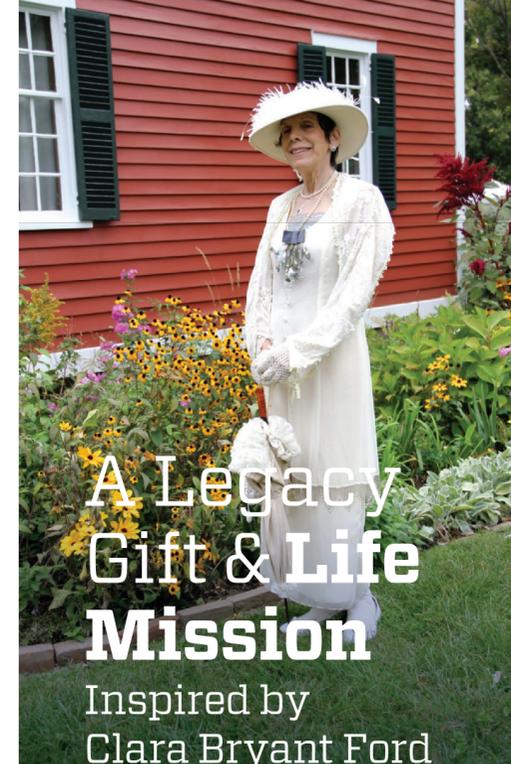
"He came to us with a plan to rescue Meadow Brook Hall," Larsen recalls. "He said her home needed to be preserved as a museum and maintained decades into the future. He had ideas for how to refurbish it and also how to run it as a museum going forward, and it's done that. So we feel we have a good bit of gratitude and a good connection to The Henry Ford, for sure."

There's also a strong bond when it comes to The Henry Ford's education initiatives and its commitment to inspire and energize the innovators and visionaries of the future.

"Mrs. Wilson was a big supporter of educational issues too," Larsen says, "and The Henry Ford has adapted over time. They're relentless. They don't stop changing and progressing and dealing with the modern world, so it stays relevant, stays interesting and is adapting to the ways people get information and think."

All the more reason, Larsen asserts, for the institution to be enthusiastically and generously supported.

"You can't have a great city or metropolitan area without institutions like this," he says. "You have to have them, and the institutions can't make it on their own. They have to be publicly supported; it's the only way it works. Southeast Michigan and Detroit have a great history of very, very generous giving and support for their institutions. There's been a tremendous generosity going back at least to the 1920s, because people here are hardworking but they give their time and their money; it's part of our general ethic and culture, unlike some other places. So given the available resources, I think we do pretty well here." ■



A Legacy Gift & Life Mission

Inspired by Clara Bryant Ford

What Shirley Damps happily calls her second career began in 2003, several years after her retirement as an educator in her native Chicago. That's when she moved to Dearborn, bought a home in the historic Ford district and began working a variety of jobs as a presenter in Greenfield Village.

From her very first day, Shirley enthusiastically joined the over 700 employees and volunteers of The Henry Ford who generously donate to the institution. Last year alone, The Henry Ford employees and volunteers committed nearly \$100,000 of donations!

And now Shirley has taken her devotion and generosity to an even higher level, making a legacy gift to The Henry Ford.

This gift created The Shirley Damps Fund for Greenfield Village and will support The Henry Ford's presentation of 300+ years of American life in Greenfield Village—Henry Ford's celebration of people whose unbridled optimism came to define modern-day America.

"I'm at the stage of my life where I'm not 20 or 25 anymore," she says. "I'm on my own and I've made my own way in life, and when you start to think about what it is that you want to do with what you leave behind, it's really a very important decision to make, and it's soulful. So I've spent the last year gathering my ideas and thoughts, and I was inspired to develop this trust, which is the output of a sustained lifetime of giving."

Shirley says her donation is in honor of Clara Bryant Ford, our founder's wife.

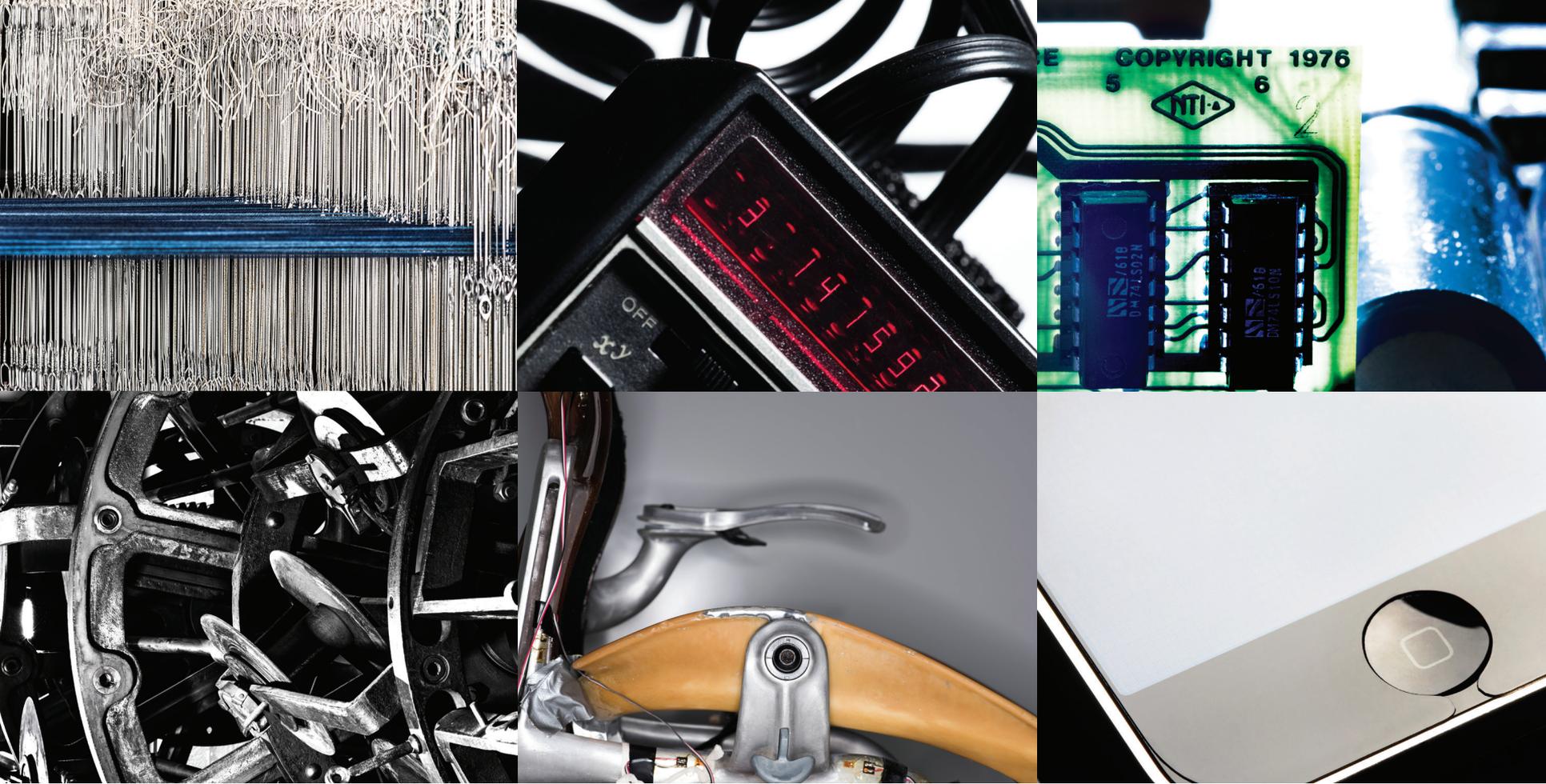
"She's probably been my greatest inspiration," Shirley says. "She and her husband were billionaires, but she was always thinking about those who had less or were outcasts. So many people with money get caught up in what they can do with it for themselves, but she did so many things behind the scenes. All of her life, everything she did continually built up to the beauty of who she was."

Serendipitously, Shirley's gift means she's now a member of the esteemed Clara Bryant Ford Society, an organization for donors who've made a planned or legacy gift commitment to the institution.

"Every day I spend at Greenfield Village is a constant reminder of the legacy Mr. and Mrs. Ford left," she says. "And I feel the smallest part I can do, and the supreme thing I can do, is to continue that legacy as one person in one way." ■

Above: 1. Matilda R. Wilson, circa 1929 2. Matilda R. Wilson, circa 1955 3. Matilda R. Wilson, circa 1935 4. Matilda R. Wilson, circa 1945.

Above: Shirley Damps



Spark Innovation

Will you help us inspire future change makers?

"I was inspired by the challenge to create unique and powerful

imagery of

the six objects

I was given

based around

communications and technology.

I loved the idea

of giving people

a different

perspective of

these objects that

represent the

advancement of

the technological

world in which we

live." - Lisa Spindler,

Photographer

The Henry Ford recently launched our first digital crowdfunding initiative, Spark Innovation, which will unfold as a story in six parts. Supporters of The Henry Ford will have the chance to donate to the Annual Fund through this unique online campaign through November 2016.

The Henry Ford partnered with internationally renowned Detroit photographer Lisa Spindler to share the stories of how ordinary people and objects inspired inventions that shaped our future. Lisa created a series of stunning thank-you gifts for participating donors: museum-quality prints inspired by our collections.

Lisa is a fine arts photographer whose images have been exhibited at the Detroit Institute of Arts, Tampa Museum of Art, Boca Museum of Art, and have appeared on several covers of *The New York Times Magazine*. Her work is on display in private and corporate collections in the United States, Europe, and South America. Her life's work and distinctive signature are discernible in the figurative, botanical, and experimental graphic imagery for which she is known.

Lisa's six-part photography series featuring The Henry Ford Archive of American Innovation™ showcases artifacts as art, capturing the essence of these historically significant pieces through a modern lens. These limited-edition prints are individually numbered and signed by Lisa Spindler and certified by Marc Greuther, The Henry Ford's Chief Curator and Senior Director of Historical Resources.

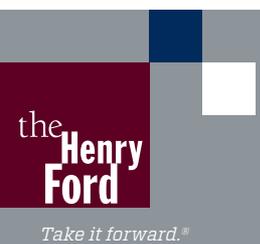
Over the course of the next year, we will release a new print from the photography series every two months while sharing a story told through artifacts from the collections of The Henry Ford. How did a weaving loom lead to one of the greatest innovations of the 21st century? Follow along as we set out to answer this question, starting with an exploration of the Jacquard Loom, invented by Joseph Marie Jacquard.

Donations of \$150 or more, through this online campaign, qualify for an art print thank-you gift, and those who give \$1,200 or more will receive the full set of six prints as our story unfolds throughout the year, while supplies last.* Donors have the option to opt out of the thank-you rewards while still supporting the Annual Fund. We've inspired dreamers, doers, movers and makers with the stories of the greatest breakthroughs and inventions throughout history. Gifts raised through this initiative will help us inspire future change makers by immersing them in new learning environments, providing digital access and engaging them in innovation at work. They can learn from their failures and successes, then take it forward. Together we can realize the archive's potential as a creative catalyst! Your support goes a long way toward unleashing The Henry Ford Archive of American Innovation™ and making our collections available to the world. ■

Please direct any questions regarding the Spark Innovation program to Danielle Blasko, Manager, Annual Fund & Campaign Events: 313.982.6026 or DanielleB@thehenryford.org. To learn more and get involved, visit thehenryford.org/sparkinnovation.

*A portion of donations made through the Spark Innovation online campaign are tax-deductible. Tax deduction = total donation minus fair market value of print.

Above, clockwise from top left: Jacquard Loom, 1934; HP-35 Calculator, 1972; The Apple I Computer, 1976; Cable Machine, circa 1860; Aeron Chair by Bill Stumpf and Don Chadwick for Herman Miller, 1994; iPhone by Apple Inc., 2007. Photo credit: Lisa Spindler



Mission Statement

The Henry Ford provides unique educational experiences based on authentic objects, stories and lives from America's traditions of ingenuity, resourcefulness and innovation. Our purpose is to inspire people to learn from these traditions to help shape a better future.

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