For Andrew Mendizabal, a sophomore pursuing majors in biology and music performance, music is both a foundation and a release.

“Music has been an important part of my life for as long as I can remember,” says Mendizabal. “It has helped me to express my thoughts, emotions and words in ways that other academic areas could not.”

While Mendizabal appreciates the outstanding arts education he is receiving at Nevada, he acknowledges that the campus’s current facilities can occasionally become a little crowded.

“We have an array of amazing faculty in our college who are willing to work with students for their growth through education and performance,” says Mendizabal, “but it can be pretty hectic for music students trying to work hard in their classes. Overbooking of rooms and limited practice space puts pressure on students who depend on Church Fine Arts as their second home.”

With these concerns in mind, the second phase of the School of the Arts expansion project, known as Act Two, is moving forward with leadership support from George W. Gillemot, the Nell J. Redfield Foundation, The Clarence & Martha Jones Family Foundation and philanthropist Carol Franc Buck.

The $4 million Act One phase of the project was completed in June 2014 and included renovating and modernizing the Redfield
Proscenium Theatre, remodeling the Front Door Gallery and creating an atrium entrance to the Church Fine Arts Building. Act Two will involve the construction of a new 35,000-square-foot building to the east of Church Fine Arts that will connect to the original space through a skywalk or bridge. It is estimated that the Act Two phase of the project will cost approximately $20 million, all of which will come from private donations. Construction is planned to begin in 2017.

A great university needs a great arts program, and a great arts program provides excellent and inspirational facilities for its students,” said President Marc Johnson. “Act Two will provide unparalleled opportunities not just to musicians and artists, but to everyone on campus while strengthening the University’s connection to our vibrant arts community.”

Perhaps the most significant feature of the new building is a 300-seat, 5,372-square-foot recital hall, which will incorporate outstanding acoustics in an intimate atmosphere for an unparalleled performing and listening experience. The new performance space will make more room on the calendar of the larger and often overbooked Nightingale Concert Hall, which stages hundreds of performances and welcomes thousands of audience members annually.

Also planned for the new arts building is a 5,400-square-foot contemporary gallery that is being designed with the atmospheric and security protocols needed to house and display oversized objects, antique and climate-sensitive artworks and items of significant value. This would greatly improve University Galleries’ ability to borrow artwork from collectors and museums and show more works from its permanent collection.

The building will also be home to new digital media space, multiple rehearsal and practice rooms, a recording studio, office space and teaching studios.

“Ambitious projects like this simply would not be possible without the dedicated support of donors and patrons who believe that arts education is important and adds great value to our society,” said College of Liberal Arts Interim Dean Larry Engstrom. “We are grateful that so many in our community want to ensure that the arts will endure and thrive on our campus.”

“I am beyond ecstatic about the improvements and the planning of a new fine arts building,” says Mendizabal. “Being a music performance student at Nevada is a delight, and we as a school are growing every year with students who want to be part of such great programs.”

We thank the following donors for their generous support of Act Two:

Carol Franc Buck Foundation
George W. Gillemot
Barbara R. Hall
The Clarence & Martha Jones Family Foundation
Nell J. Redfield Foundation
Norman R. Cartwright Estate
Elbert Harvey Fitz Irrevocable Trust
Robert Z. Hawkins Foundation
Heidemarie Rochlin
Phil & Jennifer Satre
James & Deena Behnke
John & Catherine Farahi
Carlee Ferrari
Marc Johnson & Karen Penner-Johnson
Ruth I. Russell Estate
J. Everett & Barbara Sanderson
Charitable Remainder Unitrust
Rick & Cathy Trachok
Karen D. Vibe

John K. Carothers
Dickson Realty, Inc.
Will & Carey Eber
The William P. Forney Living Trust
Thomas & Peggy Hall
Donald & Heather Hardy
Jim & Mary Anne Kidder
Laurie McLanahan
Jeff & Claire Resnik

To learn more about supporting Act Two in the School of the Arts, please contact Stuart Golder, director of development, at sgolder@unr.edu or (775) 784-1222.