FROM THE CO-DIRECTOR

Dear Neighbors of the Fred Rogers Center,

Mid-Autumn marks the traditional time of celebrating harvests around the world. For weeks and months now, each of us at the Center has been struck by the way Fred’s legacy has borne fruit more than half a century after it had begun. Along with our “older sibling,” Fred Rogers Productions, we have supported the development of the documentary “Won’t You Be My Neighbor,” directed by the Academy Award winning director Morgan Neville; the biography “The Good Neighbor,” written by our former executive director Maxwell King; and the upcoming film “You Are My Friend” currently in production, starring Tom Hanks as Fred Rogers. Perhaps even more important than these spotlight projects, is the continuous flow of viewer letters and emails and visitors to the Center in 2018 that reminded us that the seeds planted by Fred and his many colleagues have never stopped growing in fields of education, media, social work, ministry as well as in everyday community life. Those who have grown up with the Neighborhood are not just “looking for helpers,” they are actively “being helpers” and “helping helpers”
all around the country.

This fall also marks a time of transition and new beginnings at the Fred Rogers Center. After serving as the faculty and Co-Director of the Center, I transition my responsibilities to Dr. Roberta Schomburg, our new Interim Executive Director. Roberta was a consultant to Fred for many years. She is a respected leader and teacher in the field of early childhood education, a wise and kind mentor to many professionals (including me), and the Center’s Senior Fellow who led the development of our work on digital media and learning. Roberta’s leadership of the Center will be well supported by Karen Struble Myers, CFRE, our Associate Director, and Dr. Dana Winters, Director of Simple Interactions and Academic Programs. I continue to support the Center as a Senior Fellow from my faculty role at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and collaborations are well underway to apply the lessons we have learned here at the Center to national and statewide efforts.

For the first time since inception, three academic programs including the Fred Rogers Scholars, the Incubator 143 research and development lab, and the Children’s Studies Minor are all housed within the Fred Rogers Center. The work of the Center is growing and flourishing with our students at home and with communities near and far.

No words or essays can convey my gratitude to Saint Vincent College and the Fred Rogers Center for allowing me to study Fred’s work these past five years. The time of harvest celebrates both the end of a cycle of labor and the envisioning of a new season of hope. As much as we at the Center have endeavored to apply Fred’s lessons to the present, we have only managed to spread a fraction of his legacy. There is so much more to learn and to do by neighbors all over the world who found inspiration in Fred’s work. To all of you, I share with you Fred’s words which I carried in my notebook five years ago when I first came to the Center:

*My hope for you at the beginning of this new moment in your life is that you will take good care of that part of you where your best dreams come from, that invisible part of you that allows you to look on yourself and your neighbor with delight. Do your best to appreciate the gifts that you really are and always will be ... to look for every opportunity that allows you to clap and cheer, loving your neighbor as yourself.*

Warm regards,
Transformations

Over the past few months we have been looking closely at our collection of *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* props and set pieces. It’s fun to discover how these unique pieces were used on the *Neighborhood*. The two balls pictured above have been part of our collection for more than ten years, from the time our building opened. They are kept with the Purple Panda costume and have been displayed in the past in an exhibit about the environment.

However, these props are from the *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood* week on “Transformations.” Mr. McFeely delivers a ball to the Neighborhood of Make-Believe addressed to Purple Panda, but the ball clearly reads “Do Not Open.” Each day of the week the ball changes color and size. We have the rainbow ball (Tuesday) and final solid purple ball (Friday). When the package finally opens itself, it reveals a purple light that flashes 1-4-3 (Fred Rogers’ code for “I love you.”). The ball grew and changed, but was filled with love the entire time. Mister Rogers stressed throughout
the week that, no matter how your outsides change, you are still yourself inside.

NEW ON THE BLOG

Three Children's Apps Fred Rogers Might Appreciate
by Warren Buckleitner, Ph.D.

Back in 1968, Fred Rogers started a challenging career in television to “make goodness attractive.” That was back when televisions were the size of washing machines, and you could count the number of children’s television programs on one hand.

Although the children’s media landscape has changed dramatically, Fred Rogers’ values have not.
In my study of children’s apps, I’ve found that Fred’s attributes for quality in children’s media transfer well to touch screens.

CARRYING THE LEGACY FORWARD
In My Own Words

Just as Fred Rogers understood the importance of community, we know that it takes advocates, collaborators, donors, and so many other friends, to help achieve our mission.

I watched the documentary twice this past weekend. I too was very touched by the life of Fred Rogers through this amazing story. As a musician, children's author, and filmmaker, I can appreciate all the love and talents that went into this production. The most powerful part of the documentary for me were the candid 8mm clips of Fred and the faces of all the interviewees at the end when asked who has helped and influenced them most in life. This brought tears to my eyes. I too, like many of them, thought of my mother who is now in heaven. God bless all of you at the Fred Rogers Center for keeping the story alive.

–Lawrence Cappetto

WORDS OF WISDOM
"Development comes from within. Nature does not hurry but advances slowly." — Fred Rogers