

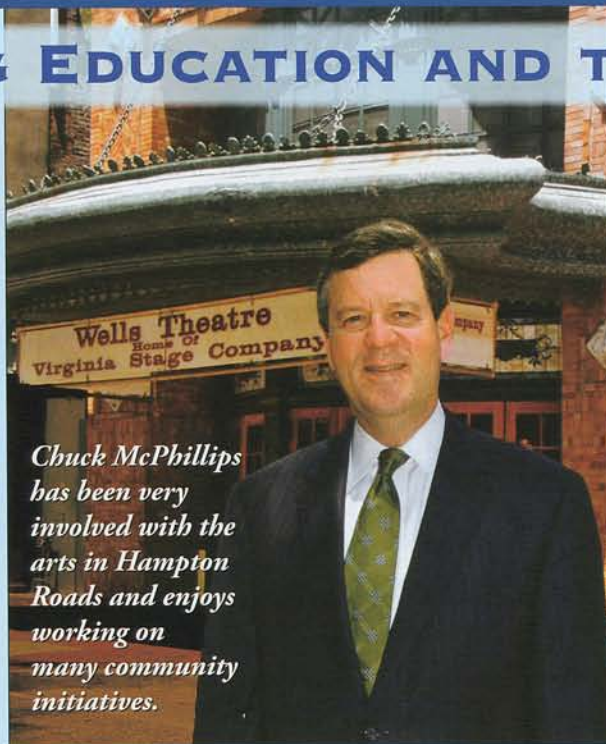


MERGING EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

Chuck McPhillips, TowneBank Norfolk director, loves practicing law, but he readily admits that the best thing about his long career with Kaufman & Canoles is the opportunity to make a difference in his community. “It’s pure grace to be in such a great law firm. My partners are tolerant when I spend far too much time working on community projects that are close to my heart,” Chuck laughed.

One significant project began last summer when Chuck helped form Communities Against Bigotry—a group of educators, business and government leaders, and faith-based institutions. “Some folks in the Jewish and Catholic communities came together in friendship to see what we could do to address the problems we still have with bigotry and prejudice,” Chuck said. “Hampton Roads is an open and accepting community, but we were witnessing a resurfacing of bigotry, especially among young people. We don’t want pockets of bigotry to define us.”

A member of the group was familiar with *No More Raisins, No More Almonds*, a play written by Holocaust survivor, Batia Bettman, based on the experiences of European youth during World War II. The play debuted in Canada, and is performed



Chuck McPhillips has been very involved with the arts in Hampton Roads and enjoys working on many community initiatives.

by an all teenage cast. Each performance is followed by discussions between the audiences and the actors focusing on the lessons for today.

“We raised funds to bring about 60 cast and crew from Canada, plus sets and production equipment,” said Chuck. “We called on the business community for support. I can’t remember one person who declined to help. In the end, we raised \$120,000.”

The production was a huge success. All three

matinees at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts in November 2007 were packed, and several thousand students from local public and private schools saw the play. “It was a poignant, healing, unifying moment in the community,” Chuck said. “Everyone who attended, no matter his or her religious background, felt the impact.”

Chuck is also a recent past president of Virginia Stage Company and served during a tumultuous time. “The company was on the brink of closing. We were about to lose a cultural icon in Hampton Roads.” The board stuck together, new management was recruited to turn things around, and now performances at the historic Wells Theater are well attended.

Chuck recalls how he first got involved with TowneBank. “Billy Foster and I had a delightful meeting where we talked about TowneBank and the priority they placed on contributing to the community. I knew they were the type of people I wanted to be associated with. I am excited and honored to serve.” “Chuck is a great friend to the bank,” says TowneBank Norfolk president, Billy Foster. “He has stepped in to represent Towne on my behalf at various events sponsored by the bank. He’s a wonderful part of our family!” ♦