In 1912, Washington, D.C., received a gift of 3,000 cherry trees from Japan, and a Polish scientist identified vitamins for the first time. The Titanic sunk that year, and one of the first skydives was made by parachutist Albert Berry. In 1912, too, the world welcomed John Zeigler, a baby who would become one of the College’s most generous benefactors.

In February, Zeigler celebrated his 100th birthday. Long a supporter of the School of the Arts, Zeigler has been a regular at concerts at the College and a friend and supporter of numerous musicians and artists, including Eunjoo Yun ’95, the founder and executive director of the Charleston Academy of Music; opera singer José Lemos ’01; and Florencia Di Concilio ’01, a pianist who’s composed scores for more than 20 films.

More recently, senior George Metropolis, a theatre major at the College, says Zeigler’s support enabled him and three other students to travel to Daytona Beach, Fla., this year to compete in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, where Metropolis and a partner were finalists.

"It was a great honor and I would not have been able to go if not for the generosity shown me," says Metropolis. "The faith that Mr. Zeigler shows in me and my craft through his willingness to support me has spoken volumes where money alone could not."