Harvey and Rica Spivack moved to Tucson from New York more than 40 years ago after visiting what they call “the jewel of the Southwest” as tourists. A big draw for them to make the Old Pueblo their new home was the University of Arizona.

Although they did not attend the University, the Spivacks fully support its programs and initiatives—and particularly the UA Cancer Center and College of Fine Arts.

“We believe in the value of higher education,” Mrs. Spivack said, adding that their love for the arts and family history of cancer partly inspired their giving.

But the couple also believes, quite simply, that giving is a given.

“You have to give,” Mr. Spivack said. “People who have made enough in life to secure their family should give back. This is our pragmatic approach to solving problems—I think the University is the most important part of this community, and we want to put some money in the game.”

Through their charitable contributions to the University, the Spivacks hope to build excellence for students, faculty and even the greater Tucson community. Gifts they provide to the UA Cancer Center are designated as start-up funds for research efforts, and their contributions to the arts are intended to allow students and faculty within the college to fine tune their crafts.

“By supporting these areas, there is a greater ability for students, professors and researchers to do more,” Mrs. Spivack said. “The private sector really has to step in so we can move ahead. The UA is a fine institution—and it can only get better.”

The Spivacks are quick to admit they are “enjoying the fruits of our support” by attending cultural events throughout the community, and learning from the faculty and students they aid through their giving.

“We’re getting an education,” Mrs. Spivack said. “Our lives have been enriched.”