




# 20 Questions With ... Wendy Leigh

CEO | The Franciscan Center

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Wendy Leigh has had a unique career trajectory: in education, entertainment, the arts, community engagement, marketing, public relations and development and as an executive on a leadership team.

In 1999, she won the USF Distinguished Alumna Dean's Award for Outstanding Service to the Arts—marking the first time it had been given to a theater major.

Leigh was instrumental in launching both the Shimberg Playhouse and the Patel Conservatory from ground up, totaling more than 20 years of service at the Straz Center.

She most recently served as director of development and community relations at Hillel Academy and, before that, as the chief development and marketing officer at the University Area Community Development Corporation.

**1. College alma mater? Two—The University of South Florida and Columbia College, Missouri.**

**2. Last book you read? Carrie Fisher's The Princess Diarist.**

**3. Last place you vacationed? St. Augustine, Florida (but had a work trip to Assisi, Italy!)**

**4. PC or Mac? PC.**

**5. Guilty-pleasure food? Soft serve twist ice cream cone with orange juice and vanilla ice cream from Yellow Banks Grove (of Largo).**

**6. We'll find you on the weekend doing? Hot yoga and then the beach.**

**7. Biggest fear? Snakes, I suppose?**

- 8. Proudest moment? My children and their accomplishments, mostly ... but, opening my theater, The Loft Theater. Looking back now, I'm amazed that I did it and that it stayed open so long. And of course, the Patel Conservatory, its opening and now having just celebrated its 15th anniversary.**
- 9. Dream dinner companion? Carol Burnett.**
- 10. Any pets? Cats: Brisket and Mittens.**
- 11. Who did you last text? Family group message.**
- 12. What is your cellphone wallpaper image? My two daughters, Emma and Gillian.**
- 13. What do you listen to in the car? 93.3 FLZ.**
- 14. What is your go-to drink order? Seltzer water.**
- 15. Favorite candy? Dark chocolate.**
- 16. Do you suffer from Primenesia (the act of ordering from Amazon and forgetting about it.)? No!**
- 17. Pool or beach? Beach.**
- 18. Charity you support? The Franciscan Center. And other nonprofits, especially those in the arts.**
- 19. Favorite childhood memory? Riding my bike on the boardwalk in Ocean City, Maryland.**
- 20. Words of advice? Keep going and stay positive. What you think, you create.**
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