

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **EVANS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GET TRAINING FOR IN-DEMAND ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT CAREERS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA WITH SUPPORT FROM JPMORGAN CHASE & Co.**

**ORLANDO, Fla. — July 17, 2014** — United Arts of Central Florida has been awarded a grant of \$300,000 by JPMorgan Chase & Co. for the development and implementation of Career Pathways to Creative Sector Jobs, a career training program at Evans High School designed to prepare youth for high-demand back-of-house arts and entertainment jobs at area theme parks and cultural institutions.

Through the grant, United Arts will create a 3-year pilot program that will start with curriculum development focusing on three core areas: Entertainment Design and Technology, Sound and Music Technology and Digital Media, which includes TV. Efforts will include defining requirements and establishing training pathways for each focus area, developing academic requirements for admission, graduation and paid internships as well as defining the needs for vocational certification and transition to the next stage of training and/or work. Following this, the program will train faculty and build relationships between schools and internship sites to provide students the opportunity to gain practical experience.

“This is such a terrific opportunity to build the right skills for our youth to thrive in careers at our theme parks as well as the arts and cultural organizations in our region,” said Linda Landman Gonzalez, chair of United Arts’ Board of Directors. “Central Florida has unique workforce needs – the three major theme parks alone employ more than 9,500 ‘creatives.’ This is the right time for this innovative program.”

“This will be transformational for our community and offer young people – in an underserved community – real job skills and opportunity,” said Flora Maria Garcia, United Arts’ President & CEO. “For many, they will make the connection between personal interests and living wage jobs for the first time. That’s thrilling. And I’m very pleased that in the second year of funding our cultural organizations will have the opportunity to offer internships, providing real-world experience to these students. My sincere thanks to JPMorgan Chase & Co. for sharing our vision.”

Evans High School is housed in a state-of-the art, \$73 million campus in Pine Hills and is home to Florida’s first community school which unites school, family and community. Evans Community School was established through a partnership among Orange County Public Schools, Children’s Home Society of Florida and the University of Central Florida. Recently, Central Florida Family Health Center was added as a fourth partner. JPMorgan Chase is a founding partner to the model and in 2013 invested more than \$500,000 in local nonprofits that serve the student population.

“We need to help our youth succeed in the workforce and come ready with the skills employers needs,

so they are better prepared for well-paying jobs and enduring careers. This is an investment in building a strong talent pipeline that can be developed and retained locally,” said Michael Dosal, market leader for JPMorgan Chase in Central Florida.

With Evans’ transition into an arts and entertainment magnet school underway, Career Pathways to Creative Sector Jobs will provide both job certifications upon graduation as well as directed opportunities to advance to work-related post-secondary education at both Valencia College and the University of Central Florida. The program will offer students a clear, direct and speedy path to living wage work by closing the skills gap for available creative jobs.

The third largest institution in the Florida College System, ranked first in the nation for the number of Associate degrees awarded, Valencia has extensive arts and entertainment programming leading to Associate degrees in place as well as opportunities for high school students to get a head start on these degrees. Valencia is a top producer of transfer students with 25 percent of the University of Central Florida’s upper division students originating from Valencia.

The University of Central Florida is a member of the State University of Florida and the second largest university in the nation by enrollment. It offers more than 200 degree options in 12 colleges now including the College of Medicine at Lake Nona. It is a primary participant in the Evans High School Community School.

The Children’s Home Society is also already at work in Evans High School providing soft skills training and paid internships. Career Pathways to Creative Sector Jobs will dovetail with this program, maximizing opportunities and eliminating duplication of effort.

### **About United Arts of Central Florida**

United Arts is a collaboration of individuals, businesses, governments and school districts, foundations, arts and cultural organizations, and artists. Its mission is to unite, strengthen and inspire the Central Florida community through the arts and culture.

United Arts serves residents and visitors in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties through more than 50 local arts, sciences and history organizations. It raises and distributes funds for these cultural groups and provides management, administrative and advisory services.

Now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year of service to the Central Florida community and regional host of power2give.org, the collaborative Campaign for the Arts and OrlandoAtPlay.com, United Arts has invested more than \$126 million in local organizations and education since its founding in 1989.

More information is available at [www.UnitedArts.cc](http://www.UnitedArts.cc) or by calling 407-628-0333. Please email [Denise@UnitedArts.cc](mailto:Denise@UnitedArts.cc) for comments or inquiries.

### **About JPMorgan Chase & Co.**

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