



Lowndes, Drosdick, Doster, Kantor & Reed, P.A.

Spotlight on Friends of the Arts

Advancing Central Florida through the Arts, Sciences and History

Local arts organizations enhance community development and create environments that attract skilled and educated workers. **Lowndes, Drosdick, Doster, Kantor & Reed, P.A.** has always been on the forefront of helping advance activities that benefit the Central Florida community, and has been a proud supporter of United Arts of Central Florida (UA) through its annual workplace giving campaign for the past 25 years. In fact, since 1999, the firm has contributed more than \$446,000 to the nonprofit organization that enriches over 50 nonprofits located in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties by investing in the arts, sciences and history. “Art, science and history organizations help build strong communities, and I look forward to working with others to further develop the many programs in our area that benefit from United Arts,” says firm partner Brendan Lynch, who was recently appointed to UA’s board of directors.

There are many reasons for supporting UA with a workplace giving campaign, including contributing to the economy and quality of life in the community, fostering critical thinking among teams and engaging employees. The funds raised and distributed by UA help each of the four counties offer classes, performances, concerts, art appreciation programs, exhibits, dance lessons and more to its residents, and in particular to Central Florida’s youth.

“Employees want to live and work in a vibrant community,” says Meredith Level, a longtime partner at the firm and the head of the firm’s charitable contribution committee. “When individuals and companies support local theater, music, museums, dance and public art, the return on the investment is to the current and future community.”

Decades of Support

The Darden Restaurants Foundation has been supporting UA for more than 20 years, contributing nearly \$4 million during that time. Darden supports UA because the arts help us express our values, build bridges between cultures and bring us together regardless of ethnicity, religion or age. The arts are also instrumental in academic performance. Students with an education rich in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores, and lower drop-out rates—benefits reaped by students regardless of socio-economic status. Further, the arts spark creativity and innovation and are proven to have a positive social impact. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have demonstrated that a high concentration of the arts leads to higher civic engagement, more social cohesion, higher child welfare, and lower crime and poverty rates. In the

past year alone, UA and its cultural partners have facilitated more than 755,000 cultural experiences in and out of school, primarily to underserved children.

By supporting UA, we can all make a positive impact on cultural organizations, large and small, in a number of ways. Last year, UA raised and allocated funds to more than 50 arts and cultural nonprofits in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties. An Operating Support Grant from UA includes a comprehensive evaluation that ensures accountability and also provides recommendations for strengthening the organizations, and Mini Grants of up to \$2,500 help support community-based groups.

Darden has seen firsthand the tremendous contributions that UA has made to the cultural enrichment of Central Florida and is proud to help ensure it remains a valuable resource for championing the arts in our community.

To support UA, please visit UnitedArts.cc. **oam**

Lowndes
Drosdick
Doster
Kantor &
Reed, P.A.

ATTORNEYS
AT LAW

DARDEN

