

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact:

Denise C. Bealin

Director of Development and Donor Communications

407-628-0333 x222

Denise@UnitedArts.cc



Disney, United Arts of Central Florida Bring Live, Local Theater to Budding Art Lovers

ORLANDO, Fla. — MAY 5, 2015 — Every eighth grade student in Orange County Public Schools will have their social studies curriculum brought to life onstage at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, thanks to a \$200,000 donation from Walt Disney World Resort to United Arts of Central Florida.

“This special gift will allow our young children – many for the first time – to experience the theater, sparking a potential life-long appreciation for the arts and culture,” said Flora Maria Garcia, president and CEO of United Arts.

This week, all 13,000 eighth graders will have the opportunity to attend a performance of “The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg” at the Walt Disney Theater inside the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. The presentation by the Orlando Repertory Theatre tells the Civil War-era story of a young boy following the Union Army in search of his brother. The production is based on a popular work of fiction and complements the county’s eighth grade social studies curriculum.

“The arts play an important role in a student’s overall academic experience,” said Bill Sublette, chairman of Orange County Public Schools. “By adding arts to the science, technology, engineering and math movement, we help students build critical thinking skills through creativity.”

As a company steeped in storytelling and entertainment, Walt Disney World is committed to supporting the local artistic community and fostering creativity among children, families and its own Cast Members. Today’s donation was shared during the district’s annual State of the Schools address.

“While growing up in Central Florida, I attended a performance that opened my eyes to the vibrant world of theater,” said George A. Kalogridis, president of Walt Disney World Resort. “By collaborating with these community organizations, we’re bringing this theater experience to young people to enhance their education in a fun, memorable and engaging way.”

As an entertainment company with 74,000 Cast Members who live and work in Central Florida, Disney supports organizations that value the role of arts in the community. One of the earliest and largest investors in Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, Disney pledged \$12.5 million for the 2,700-seat, state-of-the-art Walt Disney Theater. In addition, Cast Members provide expertise to local arts organizations through pro bono work, assistance with community stage productions and arts workshops.

In 2014, Walt Disney World Resort donated more than \$37.9 million in cash and in-kind support to local organizations, as well as more than 235,000 volunteer hours through the efforts of Disney VoluntEARS.

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