

PRESS RELEASE

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DR. PHILLIPS CHARITIES RENEWS OSCEOLA SCHOOLS ARTS ENRICHMENT GRANT

ORLANDO – JUNE 12, 2017 – From group violin lessons for prekindergartners to college-application assistance for high-school arts students, the School District of Osceola County **Arts Enrichment Program** reached more than **11,000 students** during the 2016-17 school year. The program’s success led **Dr. Phillips Charities** to renew the **\$100,000 grant** for the 2017-18 school year, United Arts of Central Florida announced today.

“Dr. Phillips Charities invited us to submit a proposal for a second year of funding,” United Arts CEO & President **Flora Maria Garcia** says. “The renewed funding means continued programming that infuses the arts into Osceola County public schools.”

Osceola Arts, Osceola County Commissioners, Osceola School District and Tupperware Brands will match the Dr. Phillips gift, Garcia says, increasing the funding to **\$200,000**.

Through the Arts Enrichment Program, **preschool, elementary, middle- and high-school students** benefit from high-quality arts and cultural experiences that connect with the school-district curriculum. For example, Alan Zansler’s eighth-grade students from **Zenith School** visited Orlando Repertory Theatre for a performance of *The Giver*, based on the novel by Lois Lowry. “The kids really seemed to get into the story, and several have stated that they want to reread the whole book because of this experience,” Zansler says.

Program plans for 2017-18 include:

- String Literacy Program: up to 176 VPK students
- Osceola Arts Behind the Scenes field trip: 3,200 second-graders
- Center for Contemporary Dance performances: 3,450 third-graders
- Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra Young People’s Concert: 4,200 fifth-graders
- Central Florida Community Arts musical-theater production: 3,550 eighth-graders
- Orlando Shakespeare Theater in-class presentations: 640 middle- and high-school students
- stART Summer Arts Intensive: 550 high-schoolers

Mary Ann Rodriguez-Perez of **Boggy Creek Elementary School** says prekindergarten students at her school reap tangible benefits from their twice-weekly violin class. “The skills the students learn help them improve their concentration. We have also seen an increase in their attention span and focus,”

Rodriguez-Perez says.

“Dr. Phillips Charities is honored to be a part of United Arts’ commitment to the Osceola School District Arts Enrichment Program. Our board of directors values the effort to increase exposure and access to the arts, and particularly to music,” Dr. Phillips Charities President **Ken Robinson** says. “We believe it is one more way to foster creativity in children which will hopefully inspire them and open new doors of opportunity.”

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 enrich communities by investing in arts, science and history. United Arts serves residents and visitors in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties through more than 70 local arts, science and history organizations. It raises and distributes funds for these cultural groups and provides management, administrative and advisory services. Since 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$141 million in Central Florida’s arts and culture.

For more information, visit <http://www.UnitedArts.cc> or call 407-628-0333. Please email FloraMaria@UnitedArts.cc for comments or inquiries. You can follow United Arts of Central Florida on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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