

# PRESS RELEASE

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## EMERGING ARTS LEADERS: CENTRAL FLORIDA

**ORLANDO – SEPTEMBER 1, 2017** – United Arts is excited to announce the inaugural year of the Emerging Arts Leaders: Central Florida (EAL:CF), a local chapter of Americans for the Arts Emerging Leaders Network. The goal of this program is to invest in the next generation of area arts and culture leaders by pairing them with established mentors in their field. The program’s goal is to foster opportunities to create lasting connections with other emerging and established leaders, and increase access to activities that will advance their professional development.

A United Arts staff member, Chris-Ann Panther, who, as a young professional, saw a gap between the existing leadership and the emerging leaders who will one day manage cultural groups in the Orlando region, inspired this initiative. “In order for Central Florida’s arts community to continue flourishing, the younger generation needs to gain insight from those who have gone before us,” explained Panther. “We are a generation hungry for knowledge and guidance and through this program, United Arts is ensuring that the next generation of leaders is fully equipped to maintain and grow the arts community in and around Orlando.”

The definition of an Emerging Arts Leader differs from the concept of other organizations that a prospective member of this program would be fresh out of college. In fact, United Arts defines an Emerging Arts Leader as an interested individual who is either 40 years of age or younger and who has been in the cultural sector for less than 10 years.

The mentorship component is pivotal to the Emerging Arts Leaders program and includes prominent members of the arts community such as **Flora Maria Garcia, Gene Columbus** and **Terry Olson**. “Every established CEO should serve as a mentor to an emerging leader in their field. Given the many years we have served our industries, we have much to share; plus, we are never too old to learn from our younger mentees,” claimed United Arts of Central Florida CEO Flora Maria Garcia. “I have found mentoring to be a mutually rewarding experience and I am so pleased that United Arts is starting an Emerging Arts Leaders program in Central Florida.”

Through these relationships, the goal is for the mentee to glean valuable knowledge about how to preserve and build upon the efforts of arts leaders so that Central Florida will continue to be recognized as a haven for art and culture. Individuals participating in the first cycle of the mentorship programs have been matched with a mentor who is best suited to provide guidance and professional development suggestions for their specialization. In order to be considered for the program there must be a year

commitment with up to two match cycles with a mentor. Each match cycle is six months long and should consist of at least three meetings during this period.

**WellsFargo** has also generously donated funds that will offset the costs of training to the emerging leaders that are currently in the United Arts program through the Rollins College Edyth Bush Institute for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership. Each Emerging Arts Leader is eligible to take **one** workshop that EBI offers at **50%** off of the published member rate (within one year starting September 1, 2017) – the subsidy will be available until the funds are expended and will be on a first-come, first-served basis. This is only available for the United Arts Emerging Arts Leaders; it is not transferable. The Edyth Bush Institute offers workshops that are two hours in length to five days in length – so there is a good fit for all. To review the workshops offered please visit: [www.rollins.edu](http://www.rollins.edu)

### **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 \$145 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](mailto: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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