

PRESS RELEASE

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NEW STEAM HIGH SCHOOL WILL BRING CREATIVE JOBS MAGNET PROGRAM TO OSCEOLA COUNTY WITH SUPPORT FROM JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

ORLANDO, Fla. — June 30, 2016 — United Arts of Central Florida has been awarded a grant of \$350,000 by JPMorgan Chase to create an arts and entertainment program at the new high school in Osceola County. The new high school in Osceola County, scheduled to open in 2018, will expand and replicate the *Career Pathways For Creative Jobs* program that started at Evans High School based in Orange County, and was designed to prepare youth for high-demand back-of-house arts and entertainment jobs at area theme parks and cultural institutions.

The pilot program at Evans High School was funded with an initial \$300,000 grant in 2014 from the banking firm as part of their commitment to promote workforce development and open pathways to opportunity.

“The demand for creative talent is expected to grow 20 percent in the next few years and we want our youth to be prepared to participate and be ready for those opportunities that can lead to prosperous, meaningful careers that positively impact our economy,” said Joseph Terry, a market leader for JPMorgan Chase in Central Florida. Mr. Terry is Executive Director of J.P.Morgan in Central Florida and is a newly appointed Trustee at UA.

Through this grant, United Arts, the School District of Osceola County, Valencia College, and other relevant parties will plan and implement the development of a curriculum and vocational program to train students for “back-of-house” and entertainment jobs in Osceola County. Jobs will focus on lighting and sound design, digital media, graphic design, and other technology focused skill sets that target the entertainment production industry so prevalent in Central Florida. Students will be able to earn industry recognized credentials, a two year degree from Valencia College, or a four year degree from the University of Central Florida, depending on the level of complexity they wish to pursue.

“The pilot program at Evans High School has been a huge success,” said Flora Maria Garcia, president & CEO of United Arts of Central Florida. “We are very pleased with the continued investment that JPMorgan Chase has in this community, in ensuring that the arts are not only an imperative component to education by turning STEM to STEAM, but that arts are also a viable career pathway for students who live near an area as rich in creative employment opportunities as Central Florida.”

Curriculum in this program is designed specifically to reflect the job skills needed for employment in the arts & entertainment industry. This program will be implemented at the new Osceola STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) high school currently being constructed, and opening in 2018. Development of the program will take place over two years, September 2016 through June, 2018.

Using the success of the Evans High School program as a template, United Arts, Valencia College and the School District of Osceola County will work together as a focused task force to develop and implement the program for the new STEAM high school being developed in Osceola County.

“The creation of this new STEAM high school is such a terrific opportunity to continue building the right skills for our local youth to thrive in careers at our theme parks and wide range of cultural and arts organizations in our region,” said Debbie Fahmie, Fine & Performing Arts Specialist for the School District of Osceola County. “The three major theme parks in Central Florida alone employ nearly 10,000 ‘creatives’, many of whom are imported from outside the region because there are not enough qualified applicants in Central Florida to meet the job demand. This is the perfect time to expand this innovative program and begin cultivating a locally-grown ‘creative’ workforce.”

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, sciences and history. 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 27th year of service to the Central Florida community, United Arts has invested more than \$136 million in local organizations and education since its founding in 1989.

More information is available at www.UnitedArts.cc or by calling 407-628-0333. Please email Erica@UnitedArts.cc for comments or inquiries.

About JPMorgan Chase & Co.

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