



# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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## ***UNITED ARTS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA AWARDS \$1.48 MILLION IN OPERATING SUPPORT GRANTS***

**ORLANDO – Dec. 18, 2017** – The Board of United Arts of Central Florida approved the recommendations of three grant panels composed of 34 volunteer reviewers to award \$1,480,000 in operating support grants to 37 Central Florida nonprofit cultural institutions.

“It is critical to the mission of United Arts to provide this essential support for cultural organizations,” stated SVP, Community Affairs Manager – Florida, Wells Fargo, and Chair of United Arts’ Board of Directors, Kate Wilson. “These funds are unrestricted and support the organizations’ programs throughout the year.”

Operating support is essential funding for nonprofits, which helps “keep the lights on” by funding a portion of their entire season of operations and programming, allowing them to offer free and low-cost arts and cultural experiences for the public. As organizations grow, the need for this funding increases; this year, the available grant pool fulfilled only 42% of total requests. These grants are supported by gifts to United Arts’ *Arts for ALL* Fund.

The value of these grants is clear: last year, United Arts’ Operating Support Grants helped 38 arts organizations mount 4,162 exhibitions and productions, provide arts access and arts education to 887,112 students, offer 1,481,566 free tickets, and attract 2,663,525 visits. These grants support 321 full-time and 497 part-time staff positions, as well as 13,698 artists.

United Arts’ tiered Operating Support Grant program is based on operating budget size: Small (\$25,000 - \$249,999), Midsize (\$250,000 - \$899,999) and Large (\$900,000 and more). Each tier had a dedicated panel of knowledgeable volunteer reviewers that include artistic discipline experts, nonprofit experts, corporate and foundation funders, community leaders who attend the arts frequently and United Arts board members. Panelists conduct in-depth site visits and attend cultural events year round produced by the groups they are reviewing. Combined, they volunteer more than 1,300 hours annually to this process.

The grant review process is highly competitive and based on a 100-point evaluation system covering Artistic Merit (40%), Management & Fiscal Responsibility (35%), and Education & Outreach (25%). As in recent years, a particular focus of the grant review is diversity. United Arts has provided extensive education for cultural groups on how to engage the diverse community of Central Florida through programming, target marketing and inclusion in decision-making. Many grantee organizations have made significant outreach to diverse audiences in the past few years, and are expanding the diversity of their boards of directors and advisory councils.

Detailed reports for each applicant organization were presented at the full-panel meetings and included a financial analysis by a CPA. Total scores were used to rank applicant organizations within their budget category. For their final award recommendations, panelists took into account the history of prior funding for each applicant organization, budget size and the score ranking based on the panel's review.

"In its 28 years of funding, United Arts has contributed more than \$145 million to nonprofit cultural groups in Central Florida," said President & CEO Flora Maria Garcia. "This highly competitive grant process ensures that Central Florida residents are receiving intriguing, inclusive, and creative exhibitions from local cornerstone cultural institutions."

The Operating Support grant deadline was at the end of August 2017; final awards were determined at formal meetings of each grant panel in late October and November and approved by the United Arts Board on December 12. Grants cover cultural programs from January 1 through December 31, 2018. The Operating Support Grant program is one of more than six United Arts funding programs, including designated giving raised through the *Collaborative Campaign for the Arts*; match dollars provided by United Arts' Trustees and corporate donors; and contracts for services supporting educational programming.

## **2018 Operating Support Grants – Grantee Descriptions**

### *Awards for Calendar Year 2018 activities*

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#### **LARGE BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS**

The **Art & History Museums-Maitland (FY18 Award \$42,700)** offers immersive art & history experiences throughout its five museums. A&H's largest museum is the Maitland Art Center, a 1937 artist colony and National Historic Landmark. A&H programs include artist residencies, exhibitions, and hands-on learning in unparalleled architectural environments.

The **Bach Festival Society of Winter Park (FY18 Award \$61,400)** presents a full season of choral and orchestral concerts, the annual three-week Bach Festival, a Visiting Artists Series featuring the world's finest musicians, outreach concerts, and educational programs for all ages that celebrate the legacy of J.S. Bach.

**Crealdé School of Art (FY18 Award \$61,700)** offers 125 visual art classes for all ages, scholarships and free classes to those in need, programs for emerging artists, and multidisciplinary exhibitions and educational events that promote cultural appreciation.

**Downtown Arts District (FY18 Award \$22,900)** leads, stimulates, and guides the development of a vibrant and innovative arts district in downtown Orlando by managing cultural facilities, providing arts engagement programs, executing public art projects, and supporting local emerging and established artists.

**Enzian (FY18 Award \$47,600)** is Central Florida's only full-time alternative cinema, offering mostly independent and foreign films, and is home of Eden Bar and the Florida Film Festival. A member-supported, nonprofit arts organization, Enzian exists to entertain, inspire, educate, and connect the community through film.

**Garden Theatre (FY18 Award \$27,300)** is a professional performing arts center with culturally-diverse and unique programming that includes innovative live theater, concerts, dance, movies and impactful education outreach programs benefiting under-served youth.

The **Orange County Regional History Center (FY18 Award \$27,400)**, located in downtown Orlando, displays the Historical Society of Central Florida's collection of historical artifacts on four floors of permanent exhibits that describe the region's 12,000-year history.

**Orlando Ballet (FY18 Award \$176,100)** seeks to entertain, educate, and enrich cultural growth in Florida through dance. OB is the only professional ballet company in Central Florida that performs a complete season of full-length ballets, new works and non-traditional programs appealing to a wide array of audiences.

**Orlando Fringe (FY18 Award \$27,000)** is best known for its annual event the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival. This immersive event brings local, national, and international artists together with audiences to experience a myriad of theatrical performances, visual art displays, and activities for everyone.

The **Orlando Museum of Art (FY18 Award \$115,400)** is a center for cultural engagement that seeks to inspire creativity, passion and intellectual curiosity by presenting compelling visual art exhibitions, exciting community events, and innovative and inspiring education and outreach programs for the public to experience.

The **Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra (FY18 Award \$199,600)** is Central Florida's premier professional music organization, providing 120+ inspiring performances and engaging educational programs for residents and visitors each year. 2017-2018 marks its 25th Anniversary Season, including 25 unique concerts.

**Orlando Repertory Theatre (FY18 Award \$121,200)** creates experiences that enlighten, entertain, and enrich the lives of family and young audiences through professional productions, an award-winning Youth Academy, a bevy of community engagement programs, and a partnership with UCF hosting a Masters of Fine Arts program.

**Orlando Science Center (FY18 Award \$173,200)** is a nonprofit informal education museum whose mission is to Inspire Science Learning for Life. The Science Center provides iconic STEM learning experiences through hands-on exhibits, programming, and outreach.

**Orlando Shakespeare Theater in Partnership with UCF (FY18 Award \$157,500)** produces classic, contemporary, and children's plays through its Signature Series and Children's Series productions, in addition to innovative programming in new play development, arts education and community outreach.

## **MIDSIZE BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS**

The **Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens (FY18 Award \$15,100)** preserves a 200+ piece collection of works by world-renowned Czech-American sculptor Albin Polasek and offers tours of his home, studio and sculpture gardens. It is also home to the historic 1885 Capen House and hosts the annual Winter Park Paint Out.

**Bay Street Players (FY18 Award \$8,100)** provides a wide variety of quality community theater and entertainment. It serves patrons from the Eustis area, to as far away as The Villages and Port Orange. There are four different branches: Bay Street Players, Studio Series, Young People's Theater, and One Night Only.

**Central Florida Ballet (FY18 Award \$21,600):** Innovative ballet productions, educational programs, and international partnerships are the keystones of this organization with glowing recognition from ABC News, CNN, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and the U.S. House of Representatives.

**Central Florida Community Arts (FY18 Award \$20,300)** has extensive program areas comprising a community choir; symphony orchestra; black box theatre; a school for performing arts; children and youth arts programs; an orchestra for young artists; and performing arts-based health and wellness programs for senior citizens.

**Florida Symphony Youth Orchestras (FY18 Award \$14,200)** exists to encourage children and young adults, through the performance of music, to become passionate leaders, thinkers, and contributors in their community. Annually, more than 300 students of diverse backgrounds travel from nine counties to participate in FSYO programs.

The **Holocaust Memorial Resource & Education Center (FY18 Award \$30,000)** is dedicated to combating all forms of bigotry and prejudice with the goal of creating a moral and just community. The 2018 Season includes exhibits, films, lectures, and Holocaust commemorations open to all members of our community.

**The Mennello Museum of American Art (Friends of) (FY18 Award \$10,200)** celebrates a season of culturally diverse American art. The dynamic 2018 season includes painting, photography, drawing, and installation with five exceptional exhibitions. Exhibiting artists respond to the environment, race and popular culture.

**MicheLee Puppets (FY18 Award \$9,900)**, Florida's only educational puppetry arts organization and nationally awarded by Puppeteers of America, delivers original, issue-based shows and workshops in schools and public venues throughout Florida.

**Mount Dora Center for the Arts (FY18 Award \$13,700)** is a community-based organization committed to bringing arts alive in our diverse community by mounting varied exhibits of original art, educational programs for adults and children and the nationally recognized Mount Dora Arts Festival.

The **Osceola County Historical Society (FY18 Award \$4,300)** preserves and shares Osceola County history with the community's residents and visitors, offering a variety of educational and social programs to foster appreciation of the area's natural and cultural heritage.

**Wayne Densch Performing Arts Center (FY18 Award \$6,600)** has a mission to preserve and operate a historic theater in order to offer quality entertainment, foster regional talent, deepen appreciation for the performing arts and be an economic driver for Seminole County.

## **SMALL BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS**

The **Asian Cultural Association (FY18 Award \$4,818)** breaks down ethnic barriers and joins together audiences of all backgrounds through the presentation of various art forms from the Indian subcontinent, including visual art exhibits, exotic music concerts, dance demonstrations, and film screenings/festivals.

**Global Peace Film Festival (FY18 Award \$6,140)** celebrates film and the arts, and uses creative media as a catalyst to inspire positive change in communities. GPFF encourages awareness of and engagement for peace and environmental sustainability locally and worldwide.

**Lake Eustis Museum of Art (FY18 Award \$2,302)**, Lake County's first art museum, is dedicated to the exhibition and collection of fine art and the presentation of museum-quality art education programming to enrich culture and enhance development of our diverse community.

**Leesburg Center for the Arts (FY18 Award \$5,063)** exists for the purpose of promoting growth and vitality to the community by providing art education for all ages, cultural events for the community, and provides a sense of place for creatives, artists and appreciative audiences.

**Opera Orlando (OO) (FY18 Award \$6,377)** is redefining the operatic experience with theatrical works of high artistic quality. OO is creatively fusing various genres and mediums to engage the community with innovative productions and educational programs. OO has become the city's premier opera company.

**Orlando Gay Chorus (FY18 Award \$7,473)** inspires individuals, the community and the world through excellence in musical entertainment. Celebrating 27 years, Orlando Gay Chorus uses music to bring the community together and make the world a better place.

**PAST, Inc. (FY18 Award \$2,100)** is dedicated to the celebration and preservation of the African-American contribution to Central Florida. As part of its mission, PAST owns and operates the Wells' Built Museum of African American History and Culture. They also host several events focusing on recognizing African-American influencers and honoring their works.

**Steinway Society of Central Florida (FY18 Award \$7,549)** provides keyboards, refurbished pianos, and free piano lessons to economically and culturally disadvantaged children. The Society also sponsors concerts, recitals, workshops and master classes for the general public, as well as for students in a school setting.

The **Timucua Arts Foundation (FY18 Award \$3,138)** presents diverse, high quality, and usually free musical performances. Most of these events take place at Timucua (Tim-oo-koo-wa), known to locals as "the white house," an intimate and acoustically refined chamber music venue and recording studio.

**Urban Think Foundation (FY18 Award \$9,080)**, the parent organization for Page 15 and Burrow Press, provides community-based programs that enrich Orlando's literary landscape such as youth writing, youth tutoring programs, literary publishing, writers' workshops and more.

The **Winter Garden Heritage Foundation (FY18 Award \$6,883)** is the driving force behind the preservation of the rich heritage of West Orange County, fostering an understanding of the social, cultural, economic, and environmental transformations that have shaped the area.

The **Winter Park Historical Association (FY18 Award \$4,077)** (DBA Winter Park History Museum) operates the city's history museum, preserves city artifacts and promotes the city's rich heritage through engaging exhibits, lectures and diversified outreach programs.

## **Panelists for 2018 Operating Support Grants**

### **Large Budget Category**

Mark Jones (Ex Officio – Chair), Senior Vice President, Orlando Health; President Orlando Regional Medical Center

Daniel J. O’Keefe (Ex Officio – Finance), CPA, Moore Stephens Lovelace, P.A.

Art Bunday, retired from The Disney Company

Byron Clercx, Professor of Visual Art, UCF

Debbie Fahmie, Fine & Performing Arts Resource Specialist, Osceola School District

Dr. Charles Griffin, Composer

Dianne Hopstetter, Fundraising Consultant, The Garnett Group

Dr. Stacey Johnson, President, Valencia College, East & Winter Park Campuses

Melba Luciano, former superintendent, Osceola County Public Schools

Cheryl Boza, Manager, Community Relations, Walt Disney World Corporate Citizenship

Hope McMath, Founder and Director of Yellow House

Gerard Mitchell, Owner, The Social, The Beacham, Foundation Presents

Diane O’Dell, VP, Community Relations, Universal Orlando Resort

Gail Rayos, Manager Central Florida, Wragg & Casas Strategic Communications

Dr. Richard Sandler, Nemours Children’s Hospital & UCF

### **Midsized Budget Category**

S. Brendan Lynch (Ex Officio – Chair), Shareholder, Lowndes Drosdick

John Webb (Ex Officio – Finance), CPA, Strombeck Consulting CPA’s

John Almeida, Associate Professor, UCF Music

Scott Evans, Coordinator, Visual & Performing Arts, Orange County Public Schools

Biff Godfrey, Attorney, Godfrey Legal; former board, Orlando Shakespeare Theater

Ha’Ani Hogan, Development Manager, Downtown Arts District

Valerie Read, Director, Universal Orlando Foundation

Lisette St. Hilaire, Senior Account Manager, iHeartMedia

Myles Thoroughgood, Choreographer

Sara Van Arsdel, Former Executive Director, Orange County Regional History Center

Dorcas Williams, former Marketing Strategy Manager, Walt Disney World Resort

### **Small Budget Category**

Penelope Perez-Kelly (Ex Officio – Chair), Attorney, Fisher Rushmer, P.A.

Wilson Lopez (Ex Officio – Finance), Managing Director, RiskPoint Consulting Group

Marilyn Cortes-Lovato, Visual Arts Director, Osceola Arts

Stuart Doyle, Associate Course Director, Communications, Full Sail

Julia Gagne, retired chair of theater department, Valencia College; Director

Sisaundra Lewis, Artistic Director, Grove 2 Glam Media; professional vocalist

Hollie Mahadeo, Former General Manager, Enzian

Susan Mitchell, former grants & marketing, The Holocaust Center

Ken Naigus, strategic planner, Off the Beaten Path Florida Arts Tour

Sarah Overton, Director, A Gift for Music

Andrew Sandall, Executive Director, The Museum of Arts & Sciences, Daytona Beach

Joshua Vickery, Executive Director, Central Florida Community Arts

Heide Evans Waldron, Executive Director, Florida Symphony Youth Orchestras

**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 60 arts, science and history cultural providers. 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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