

# Dear Cultural Supporter:

Besides ongoing efforts to raise money to support the important work of our cultural sector, United Arts of Central Florida is exploring the development of a number of initiatives. I'd like to share with you the three that are rising to the top — programs that will strengthen our grassroots cultural groups, expand cultural access to underserved communities and grow millennial audiences.

## Empowering Grassroots Cultural Organizations

United Arts has submitted a concept paper for a large funding request to a major national foundation for a multi-layered, multi-year initiative to support diversity and inclusion programs as well as equity and accessibility training. Throughout its history, United Arts has significantly invested in and made professional development opportunities available to the cornerstone cultural institutions; but it has only been in recent years that United Arts has started to support grassroots cultural organizations, both through small grants and technical assistance. As Central Florida grows, so do community-based cultural organizations that require not only funding, but also a well-crafted, thoughtful capacity-building program focused on strengthening the management infrastructure of these groups so they can grow and become viable. To do this, we are exploring partnerships with agencies such as The Urban League and the Center for Hispanic Entrepreneurship, whose focus is to “grow” small businesses and to provide them with management expertise and mentoring opportunities. Capacity-building for grassroots cultural groups is labor-intensive and requires a lot of handholding, thus, United Arts will target a small number of groups that have viable artistic product, support of their community and committed leadership to participate in such a program. Of course, a program like this will only be possible if new funding becomes available from the national foundation.

## Accessibility Partnership

Another component of this major grant request will be to ensure that our cultural sector is trained to address



**Flora Maria Garcia**

the needs of Central Florida's disabled residents and visitors. We have been in conversations with a statewide service provider — Very Special Arts (VSA), Florida — whose mission is to provide, support and champion arts education and cultural experiences for and by people with disabilities. Their vision, shared by United Arts, is to create a world in which the arts are universally accessible. In a potential partnership, VSA would provide workshops to Central Florida cultural groups to ensure that their venues and programs are accessible to the “varied abled” community. VSA would also work with the many cultural summer camps to ensure that they are accessible to children

with varying abilities. A third component, offered by VSA, will be to annually import an internationally recognized cultural group made up of artists of varying abilities for a series of performances at a local arts venue, coupled with a one- to two-week workshop series offered to the community.

## Relating With Millennials

United Arts recognizes the opportunity to create a program targeting increasing arts attendance by the ever-growing millennial population in Central Florida. Many of our cultural providers are hosting programs of interest to millennials, but there is no comprehensive effort to identify and promote all our collective cultural programs under one umbrella, which United Arts is positioned to do. Learn more about our efforts to incentivize millennials to engage in the arts in the UA Insider.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Flora Maria Garcia". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Flora Maria Garcia  
President & CEO  
United Arts of Central Florida

---

*“We are exploring development of several programs that will strengthen our grassroots cultural groups, expand cultural access to underserved communities and grow millennial audiences.”*

---