

# Duke Energy Powers Diversity in the Arts

United Arts of Central Florida continually seeks to enrich *all* communities with arts, science and history. In recent years, the agency has taken a more deliberate interest in ensuring that arts and culture is accessible, inclusive and representative of every diverse community in the region. Making the arts accessible to all is more than just simply opening doors to the public or offering discounts or free admission days. It is about making the arts inclusive to all populations by inviting them to actively participate as audience members and artists.

For the past three years, Duke Energy and United Arts have partnered to make arts and culture more reflective of the richly diverse communities of the region. Duke Energy, one of the largest electric power-holding companies in the United States, celebrates diversity and has become a cornerstone that has helped turn diversity initiatives into reality.

United Arts is honored to continue its partnership with Duke Energy, especially as local demographics are continually evolving and diversifying. Central Florida has welcomed countless families from the Caribbean and Puerto Rico who are finding new homes after the destruction of hurricanes Irma and Maria. With a local population that is almost 60 percent ethnically diverse, arts and cultural organizations are encouraged to provide content and programming that attract and appeal to this growing multicultural region.

Since 2015, the large-scale impact of the Duke Energy Foundation's \$150,000 in funding support to United Arts has been:

- 177 staff from local cultural organizations attended seven *Target Marketing to Diverse Communities* workshops;
- 22 Diversity Grants, totaling \$76,000, funded programming that reached approximately 30,000 individuals;
- 6,000 individuals from diverse communities throughout Central Florida attended free cultural events at *Arts for ALL Day*; 28 percent of surveyed respondents were first-time arts attendees; and
- Community outreach at 11 cultural heritage festivals, in front of approximately 217,350 attendees.

The funding provided by Duke Energy encouraged the cultural sector to become more inclusive of different cultures, heritages and world-views. While the funding was designated toward diversity workshops,



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Albin Polasek Museum & Sculpture Gardens hosted various events in conjunction with its *Contemporary Visions of Frantz Zephirin: Haitian Mystic*.

grants and outreach, these initiatives inspired additional programs that United Arts found necessary toward making arts and culture more inclusive, accessible and equitable. One of these programs has been the creation of Diversity Task Forces.

Establishing Diversity Task Forces connects community leaders from various ethnicities with the cultural establishments of the area. Currently, United Arts has organized an African-American Task Force and a Hispanic Task Force, with plans of creating an Asian Task Force. These groups produced an open dialogue between diverse communities and arts organizations. They also helped keep members from varying populations informed about upcoming events of interest and most notably, have encouraged these members to take an active role on boards and in staff positions for various nonprofits.

United Arts looks forward to continuing a meaningful relationship with Duke Energy — one that continues to power diversity in the arts. **OAM**