



PRESS RELEASE

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DISNEY AWARDS \$200,000 GRANT TO UNITED ARTS FOR LIVE THEATER PRODUCTION FOR EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS

ORLANDO, FL – Nov. 2, 2018 – United Arts of Central Florida received a \$200,000 grant from Walt Disney World Resort as a part of the company’s commitment to supporting the academic, creative, and emotional development of Central Florida youth. Given Disney’s dedication to creativity and artistic expression, this special investment helped United Arts bring inspiration to more than 14,000 Orange County eighth graders as they experienced the local arts community firsthand on a field trip to Bob Carr Theater.

The students saw a unique rendition of “The Giver” performed by the Orlando Repertory Theatre. This educational production is made available to all eighth graders of Orange County Public Schools and directly correlates with student curriculum and Sunshine State Standards. Collectively, over the past four years, this grant from Walt Disney World Resort has provided more than 50,000 Orange County students with the opportunity to see the live production, connecting lessons from the classroom to the onstage performance.

“Walt Disney World Resort continues to be a pivotal community partner in providing arts education experiences that teach students to think creatively and examine their own world through the lens of a theatrical production,” said Flora Maria Garcia, President and CEO of United Arts of Central Florida. “We can’t thank them enough for making this opportunity possible for young students in Orange County year after year.”

The play, based on the popular 1993 novel by Lois Lowry of the same title, brought literature to life on the stage. The story emphasizes the importance of personal voice, the power of choice and highlights the importance of creating change in a changing world, lessons that align well with the student’s curriculum. For some students, this was their first time visiting a theater.

“One of the most foundational experiences of my middle-school years was seeing a professional theatrical production,” said George A. Kalogridis, president of Walt Disney World Resort. “Many of us here at Disney remember a similar experience; it showed us how a well-performed story feeds the soul. We wanted our county’s eighth-graders to have that same experience.”

The show’s director, Tara Kromer, is pleased to have the opportunity to continue sharing the story of “The Giver” with local students. “We not only hope that our production might help to inspire the next generation of theater makers and theater goers, but to inspire the next generation of thinkers and doers,” she said. “In today’s society, it is vitally important that we instill in our youth the capacity to sift through the deluge of information they are faced with every day and to use logic and reason to

motivate action that can create change, just like we see in the young protagonist of “The Giver.””

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 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 \$150 million in Central Florida’s arts and culture.

About Walt Disney World Resort arts outreach

The annual \$200,000 grant from Walt Disney World Resort to United Arts of Central Florida is just one of the many ways Walt Disney World Resort helps connect children with the arts. In addition to supporting countless organizations of the local arts community, Walt Disney World Resort Cast Members also provide expertise to local arts organizations through pro bono work, assistance with community stage productions and arts workshops.

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For more information, visit <http://www.UnitedArts.cc> or call 407.628.0333. Please email 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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