

Recognizing Leadership of Today and Tomorrow

United Arts honors Rita Lowndes, and celebrates emerging women in music.

Reflecting on the most recent Collaborative Campaign, it is inspiring to see the devotion and support of donors. We are reminded that residents have fostered a community where charitable giving is built into the DNA of Central Florida's society. United Arts of Central Florida is grateful for each donor and recognizes the strong and supportive leaders in the region who have contributed to the successes of the cultural sector.

Leading by Serving

Rita Lowndes is a tour-de-force in the Central Florida cultural, academic and social services sectors. She has generously served many areas in the local community and has been actively involved with the cultural community for more than 30 years. Often known for her successful efforts in establishing the John and Rita Lowndes Shakespeare Center, Rita Lowndes has been involved in many decisions and projects that have left an enduring impact on arts and culture in the region. It is because of her continued devotion to ensuring that residents and visitors have access to high-quality art experiences that United Arts proudly honors Rita Lowndes as the third recipient of the **Jerry Hilbrich Arts Leadership Award**. This award is funded by a gift from the Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation.

"Rita Lowndes leads through example, inspiring others around her to volunteer their time and financial support to benefit the lives of Central Floridians," says United Arts President and CEO Flora Maria Garcia. "Rita is generous, motivated and philanthropic in every sense of the word. She has been either the president or chair of the board at Orlando Shakes for more than 30 years, dedicated her time to serve as an officer on the United Arts board, served on the Orange County Arts and Cultural Affairs Advisory Council along with many other boards."

In conjunction with the award, United Arts provides a \$5,000 gift to a cultural nonprofit chosen by the award recipient. Ms. Lowndes selected Orlando Shakes as this year's beneficiary. United Arts presented the award during its June 26 annual board meeting held at the Orlando Museum of Art.

Leadership of Tomorrow

In addition to honoring established cultural leaders, United Arts celebrates young, emerging women in the arts who impact the local community. Through a relationship with American Express, United Arts nomi-



RITA LOWNDES

nated three of the Emerging Arts Leaders this year who were accepted into the **American Express Women in Music Leadership Academy** in New York City. This three-and-a-half-day conference was created in partnership with the Center for Creative Leadership and was only offered to 48 emerging leaders nationally from the music industry. United Arts congratulates Sarah Overton from A Gift for Music, Theresa Smith-Levin from Central Florida Vocal Arts and Heidi Evans Waldron from Florida Symphony Youth Orchestra for representing Central Florida music nonprofits during this conference. **OAM**