

PRESS RELEASE

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CELEBRATING A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT UNITED ARTS ANNUAL MEETING

ORLANDO, Fla. — June 27, 2019 — During the **annual board of directors meeting** on June 26, United Arts of Central Florida recounted accomplishments, highlighted the current state of arts and culture in Central Florida, and honored key supporters of the arts in celebration of its 30th year of service to the community as the local arts agency for Orange County.

United Arts annual meeting welcomed more than 100 people to the Orlando Museum of Art and nearly the entire Central Florida state delegation of elected officials. United Arts President & CEO **Flora Maria Garcia** opened the year in-review noting that United Arts' 2019 *Collaborative Campaign for the Arts* surpassed its goal, generating more than **\$2.2 million** in support of Central Florida arts and cultural organizations. Since its creation in 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$155 million to cultural nonprofits in Central Florida.

Garcia noted that as a result of United Arts' grants to more than 60 cultural groups, the agency and its funded organizations: make possible 5,439 exhibitions and performances, provide arts access and arts education to more than 1 million students; offer more than 1.6 million free tickets; generate more than 2.9 million cultural experiences and support 375 full-time and 580 part-time staff positions, as well as 10,973 artists.

Through arts-education partnerships, United Arts' support makes possible: over 1,084,371 student (K-12) cultural experiences each year including: ALL 3rd, 4th & 5th graders in Orange County and all 5th graders in Osceola County attend the Young People's Concerts with the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra; all 2nd graders in Orange County are introduced to dance by the Orlando Ballet; all 8th graders in Osceola County get to see a theatrical performance by Central Florida Community Arts and all Orange County 8th graders attend live theatrical performances by Orlando Repertory Theatre.

Additionally, with the agency's continual efforts to ensure that art and culture is reflective of the diverse Central Florida community, United Arts has established and maintained a number of initiatives that encourage diversity and inclusion of its funded cultural organizations. Flora Maria Garcia focused on the recent creation of diversity task forces, which have helped establish best practices for reaching diverse audiences and have also been a driving force behind board and staff diversity. Bolstering these initiatives with support from Duke Energy, United Arts also expanded programming that reaches and appeals to diverse audiences with projects such as Wayne Densch Performing Arts Center's production of *Dreamgirls*.

The board approved new officers to the Executive Committee including Brendan Lynch from Lowndes as the new Board Chair, Daniel J. O'Keefe from MSL CPAs & Advisors as the new Vice Chair, and Lindsay Abt from Ernst & Young LLP as the new Treasurer. The board also approved nine new board members: Lindsay Abt, Ernst & Young LLP; Carlos Barrios, Baker Barrios; Marcellene Baugh, Massey Services;

Charles King, KPMG LLP; Linda Ferrone, OUC; Dr. Wendy Givoglu, Valencia College; Pam Gould, Orange County Public Schools; Debra Pace, Osceola School District and Matthew Pengra, Full Sail University.

The third annual **Jerry Hilbrich Arts Leadership Award** winner was announced and honored Rita Lowndes, an active community leader who has generously dedicated more than 30 years of time, talent and treasure to arts and culture in Central Florida. This honor is accompanied by a \$5,000 gift for Orlando Shakes – the arts and cultural nonprofit of Rita Lowndes' choice.

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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 organizations and provides management, administrative and advisory services. Since 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$155 million in Central Florida's arts and culture.

More information is available at www.UnitedArts.cc or by calling 407.628.0333. Please email FloraMaria@UnitedArts.cc for comments or inquiries.