

PRESS RELEASE

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CREATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES: ARTS + PUBLIC HEALTH FLORIDA CONFERENCE

ORLANDO – October 3, 2019 – *Creating Healthy Communities: Arts + Public Health Florida Conference* was an intensive, two-day, statewide conference, that occurred on September 23 - 24, 2019 at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. More than 280 attendees, including arts professionals, public health professionals, educators, researchers and government officials, from around the nation, gathered to connect at the intersections of the arts, public health and community development.

Florida's leadership and innovation in building healthy communities through the arts was highlighted during the conference and commended by Florida's Secretary of State, Laurel M. Lee. Orange County Mayor, Jerry Demings, spoke to conference attendees regarding the role that the arts play in healthy communities and especially touted the role the arts had in pulling the community together after the Pulse tragedy. The conference featured effective program and practice models, current research, issues that affect the health and wellbeing of communities and provided opportunities for dialogue, strategic thinking and learning. Topics covered included arts and the military, accessibility and inclusion through the arts, mental health and the arts, and art therapy in the medical sector, and incorporating art in placemaking initiatives to promote healthy lifestyles.

The conference was a part of *Creating Healthy Communities: Arts + Public Health in America*, a national initiative designed to accelerate collaboration among the arts, public health, and community development sectors. Many Central Florida cultural organizations were encouraged to continue providing innovative programs that serve veterans, seniors with physical and/or mental degradation, children with varying abilities and cancer patients, while other cultural organizations were inspired to partner with the medical sector to fulfill needs in the community.

This conference was presented by the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine, in partnership with United Arts of Central Florida, ArtPlace America, and the Florida Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs and hosted by the Pabst Steinmetz Foundation and the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts.

This conference was sponsored by Orlando Health, the Pabst Steinmetz Foundation, Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, University of Central Florida, Valencia College, and Citizens for Florida Arts.

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

For more information, visit <http://www.UnitedArts.cc> or call 407.628.0333. Please email FloraMaria@UnitedArts.cc for comments or inquiries.