

PRESS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE, NOVEMBER 18, 2021



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UNITED ARTS RECEIVES \$500,000 GRANT FROM NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

ORLANDO, Fla. — November 18, 2021 — United Arts of Central Florida is pleased to announce that the agency has won a competitive grants process to receive \$500,000 from National Endowment for the Arts as part of the American Rescue Plan.

This grant will allow United Arts to expand its existing grants program to keep pace with the growth and diversity of the Central Florida region. United Arts is one of 66 arts agencies nationwide to which NEA will award grants totaling \$20,200,000.

“The NEA’s significant investment in local arts agencies, including United Arts of Central Florida, is a key element in helping the arts and culture sector recover and reopen, while ensuring that American Rescue Plan funding is distributed equitably,” said Ann Eilers, NEA’s acting chair. “These grants recognize the vital role of local arts agencies and will allow them to help rebuild local economies and contribute to the well-being of our communities.”

United Arts’ grants portfolio includes operating support, diversity in the arts, project and arts and culture access (arts education) grants.

In 2021, United Arts expanded its grantmaking to include 15 new cultural organizations, and it hopes to welcome 15 more eligible organizations to apply for operating support. NEA’s Local Arts Agencies for Subgranting program will help United Arts jump-start this expansion and meet the growing needs and aspirations of the cultural sector in 2022-23 and beyond.

“Central Florida is one of the fastest growing regions in the nation and the fastest in Florida at a rate of 25% annually and is on track to be the most culturally diverse city in the world by 2030,” said Jennifer Evins, president and CEO of United Arts. “Existing cultural organizations must restore and expand staff and outreach programs to stay relevant and reach new audiences; at the same time, United Arts must be intentional to cultivate and strengthen emerging multicultural organizations that serve underrepresented cultures. We have much work to do to continue to reduce barriers for organizations and people to experience the arts.”

Over the next few months, Evins said that United Arts will be working with diverse cultural organizations to provide the technical support they need to be eligible for these unrestricted operating dollars.

“We are thrilled that United Arts of Central Florida has been awarded this prestigious grant,” said Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings. “This will take our community to a whole new level by helping to support the diversity and growth of arts in the region and create opportunities for up-and-coming talent.”

United Arts has a diverse Board of Directors with BIPOC representation of 42%. United Arts is dedicated to ensuring that its grants program engages volunteer review panels that are reflective of Central Florida’s diversity as well.

The grant funds will be expended by November 30, 2023. NEA subgranting funds will be awarded to eligible organizations and restricted to salary support; fees and stipends for artists and contractual personnel for day-to-day operations; facilities costs; rent and utilities and health and safety supplies.

For more information on the NEA's American Rescue Plan grants, including the full list of local arts agencies funded in this announcement, visit www.arts.gov/COVID-19/the-american-rescue-plan.

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 the more than 75 local arts, science and history organizations it supports. It does this by providing direct support through grants and contracts for services, collaborative fundraising, arts education opportunities, advocacy, and technical and administrative assistance. Since 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$170 million in Central Florida's arts and culture.

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

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