

TAMPA BAY NEWSWIRE

Embracing Our Differences Partners with the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect to Bring “Letters from Anne & Martin” to Manatee County Schools

September 21, 2019

The play will be presented to more than 3,200 students at five Manatee high schools, September 25-27. An evening performance, open to the public, is at the Manatee Performing Arts Center on Thursday, September 26.

(Sarasota, FL) Embracing Our Differences has partnered with the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect, the Manatee County Bar Association, the Manatee Community Foundation, The Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee and the Boxer Diversity Initiative to bring “Letters from Anne & Martin” to more than 3,200 students at five Manatee County high schools, September 25-27. An evening performance, open to the public, is Thursday, September 26, 7 p.m., at the Manatee Performing Arts Center, 502 Third Avenue West, Bradenton. Tickets are \$20 general admission; \$35 preferred seating; and \$10 children and students with ID. Tickets are available online at manateeperformingartscenter.com.

Created by the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect, this compelling interactive theater program was developed from excerpts from “The Diary of Anne Frank” and “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” The performance combines the iconic voices of Anne Frank and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and evokes the timeless message of hope for peace and a more united world.

“The Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect shares Embracing Our Differences’ sentiments of wanting to create a kinder and more just world,” says Sarah Wertheimer, executive director. “We’re honored to partner with them.” She explains that EOD held a

three-hour teacher workshop in Manatee County in August, presenting educators with three lesson plans to use before and after the performances.

This unique adaptation illustrates that Martin Luther King and Anne Frank were born during the same year and, although they lived on continents 5,000 miles apart and suffered fates in different decades, they still shared parallel experiences living in the shadow of hatred and prejudice. "The performance reminds audiences that injustice still exists," says Wertheimer. "It also promotes constructive ideas on how to confront intolerance and discrimination today."

Since 2004, EOD's international, juried exhibition celebrating the theme of "enriching lives through diversity and inclusion," showcases the art and words of thousands of artists and writers from around the world, including hundreds of area-based students and educators. Also crucial to the organization's mission are its ongoing education initiatives. Presented in partnership with the regional school districts and nationally recognized educators, these programs positively impact the lives of thousands of area teachers and students every year. These include annual workshops and retreats that provide arts and diversity curricula for area educators, bi-county reading initiatives, free bus transportation for students and teachers to visit area cultural venues, and student service clubs in high schools. With 950 teachers and 43,000 students participating in the organization's exhibit and educational programs in 2019 alone, Embracing Our Differences continues to lead as one of the largest education programs in southwest Florida.

Embracing Our Differences' annual juried international art exhibit returns to Sarasota's Bayfront Park, January 18 through April 5. **A call for art and quote submissions for the 2020 exhibit is ongoing through October 8.**

For more information about Embracing Our Differences, call 941-404-5710, or visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.

About Embracing Our Differences

Embracing Our Differences is a not-for-profit organization that uses the transformational power of art and education to celebrate and promote the diversity of the human family. It accomplishes this through an annual, large-scale outdoor juried art exhibition and a comprehensive series of educational initiatives, programs and resources designed for teachers and students. Visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.