

## ARTS BRIEFS *October 24, 2019*

### Embracing Our Differences Receives \$40,000 grant



Gulf Coast Community Foundation recently awarded Embracing Our Differences a \$40,000 Arts Appreciation grant, which offers unrestricted funding in support of its artistic mission. According to Sarah Wertheimer, the organization's executive director, the grant will help fund the organization's 2020 outdoor exhibition celebrating diversity, which runs Jan. 18-April 5 at Bayfront Park in downtown Sarasota. The grant will also be directed to empower EOD's annual educational outreach programs and initiatives.

"Embracing Our Differences has a clear mission to promote diversity through the power of art and education," said Ms. Wertheimer. "Gulf Coast Community Foundation has supported our mission since the beginning – and we're deeply grateful. Their profound commitment has played a pivotal role in our growth and will empower us to celebrate the amazing spectrum of human potential in the years to come."

The grant will also provide vital resources for Embracing Our Differences' annual outreach initiatives, including its Make-A-Day-of-It! program, which provides free bus transportation for thousands of students and teachers to visit the outdoor exhibit and other arts and cultural venues. A portion of the grant will also be directed to EOD's annual teacher workshops and intensives, which provide area educators with skills, strategies and resources relating to arts appreciation, character building and diversity education.

"This grant opens up a universe of life changing possibilities for students and educators throughout the area. Students come away from our initiatives with practical, positive strategies. They learn to reject destructive attitudes and embrace the full potential of inclusion and diversity. Last year, more than 950 teachers and 43,000 students participated in our programs. With the support of the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, we can build on that in the school year ahead. It makes all the difference in the world," Ms. Wertheimer said.

Since 2004, EOD's outdoor art exhibit, celebrating the theme of "enriching lives through diversity," showcases the art and words of thousands of artists and writers from around the world, including hundreds of area-based students and educators. Embracing Our Differences' annual outdoor exhibits are the heart of a year-round program of activities designed to use art as a catalyst to create awareness and promote diversity.

For more information about Embracing Our Differences, call 941-404-5710 or visit [www.embracingourdifferences.org](http://www.embracingourdifferences.org).