

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Embracing Our Differences Receives Substantial Grant

By [Scene](#)

The Florida Division of Cultural Affairs awarded Embracing Our Differences (EOD) a \$26,333 grant directed to empower EOD's celebrated educational outreach programs and its 2020 outdoor exhibit in Bayfront Park.

“Florida’s Division of Cultural Affairs shares our deep commitment to nurturing the values of diversity and inclusion in Florida,” says Sarah Wertheimer, executive director. “They know these values are the foundation of any truly democratic community—and it’s a foundation of hearts and minds, not bricks and mortar. They also recognize these values as key to enhancing the state’s vibrant cultural landscape. A change of heart in a developing mind means the difference between progress and prejudice. That’s an objective we both embrace.”

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.

Wertheimer says 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.