

MEDIA CONTACTS

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Embracing Our Differences Receives Grant from the Sarasota Kiwanis Foundation

The \$2,000 grant will help fund the organization's annual Bucket Fillers Reading Day.

(August 3, 2022) Sarah Wertheimer, the executive director of Embracing Our Differences, recently announced that the organization has received a \$2,000 grant from the Sarasota Kiwanis Foundation. The grant will help support the organization's annual Bucket Fillers Reading Day. The "Bucket Fillers" series of books, written by the nationally acclaimed author and Venice resident, Carol McCloud, teach children the value of kindness. In November 2021, more than 8,200 students in 455 pre-kindergarten to third grade classes in Sarasota and Manatee counties participated in the initiative.

"A 'bucket filler' is somebody who spreads positive vibes and good cheer," says Wertheimer. "The Sarasota Kiwanis Foundation fulfills this mission every day in its profound commitment to making our community a better place to be for children and adults. We are very grateful to them for this generous grant." The Sarasota Kiwanis Club is celebrating its 100th anniversary and is marking the milestone by granting \$100,000 to nonprofits serving the Sarasota County area.

Wertheimer explains that EOD's ongoing arts education programs "represent the most important aspect of our efforts – reaching and impacting the lives of thousands of

students and teachers locally and around the world.” She explains that, since 2004, more than 529,000 students have participated, including 52,274 students and 1,808 teachers during the 2021-2022 school year alone.

EOD partners with local educators and arts organizations to create a variety of educational programs, including free school field trips to EOD’s annual outdoor exhibit and two reading day programs for pre-k through third grade students in Sarasota and Manatee counties. Programs created for high school students include docent training as part of the Coexistence Club experience and the Unity Day program, a full-day workshop that promotes empathy and respect through team building activities. Teacher workshops that provide area educators with skills, strategies and resources relating to arts appreciation, character building and diversity education are also offered.

For 19 years, Embracing Our Differences has drawn on the passion and perception of artists, students, writers, and others to create powerful statements of diversity and acceptance in its annual outdoor public art exhibition consisting of 50 billboard-sized works of art and accompanying quotes. The scale and impact of this outdoor exhibition has continued to grow, attracting more than 4 million visitors since its inception. This exhibit is the heart of a year-round program of activities designed to use art as a catalyst to create awareness and promote diversity. **Next year’s Bayfront Park exhibit runs January 18-March 12, 2023. In addition, for the first time, the exhibit will also be displayed at Butler Park in North Port, March 22-April 19, 2023; and at State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, April 26-May 29, 2023.**

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.