

MEDIA CONTACTS

Sarah Wertheimer ▪ 941-404-5710 ▪ sarah@embracingourdifferences.org

Su Byron ▪ 941-726-8468 ▪ su@subyronenterprises.com

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.

(September 5, 2023) 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 2022, 8,648 books were provided to 8,182 students and 466 classrooms and early learning centers in Sarasota and Manatee counties during this initiative.

What's a "bucket filler?"

"The 'Bucket Filler' books use the concept of an invisible bucket to encourage positive behavior and warm hearts," says Wertheimer. "Each book shows children how rewarding it is to express kindness, appreciation, and love to others. The Sarasota Kiwanis Foundation is also passionate about making a difference for the children in our community. We are deeply grateful to them for their support of this program."

While Embracing Our Differences is best known for its annual international art exhibitions, the organization's year-round education initiatives include professional

development opportunities for educators, reading days, unity days, and other learning programs and events. Wertheimer says that these 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 587,000 students have participated, including 58,122 students and 1,981 teachers during the 2022-2023 school year alone.

For 20 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. In 2023, EOD presented two exhibitions in Sarasota County—one in North Port and one in the City of Sarasota. The exhibits attracted 320,616 people, bringing the total amount of exhibition visitors to more than 4.3 million since its launch in 2004. **Next year’s Sarasota exhibit runs January 21-April 14, 2024, in Bayfront Park.**

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.