

MEDIA CONTACTS

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

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

Embracing Our Differences Receives Tourist Development Cultural/Arts Grant

The \$71,909 grant will help fund the organization's 2024 exhibition season, which is scheduled to be displayed January 21 through April 14 in Sarasota's Bayfront Park.

(August 1, 2023) The Sarasota County Commission awarded Embracing Our Differences a \$71,909 Tourist Development Cultural/Arts grant to help fund its 2024 exhibition season, which runs January 21 through April 14 in Sarasota's Bayfront Park. For 20 years, Embracing Our Differences has drawn on the passion and perception of artists, writers, and students to create powerful statements of respect, kindness and acceptance in its annual outdoor public art exhibitions consisting of 50 billboard-sized works of art and accompanying quotations. 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.

Sarah Wertheimer is Embracing Our Differences' executive director. "Embracing Our Differences' annual outdoor exhibits bring transformative art and ideas into the open and make them visible for all to access. Millions of people, including visitors, have been deeply moved by the experience. Our annual exhibits are part of the tapestry that keeps Sarasota County on the map as a destination for cultural tourism. This generous grant is a powerful

vote of confidence for our important work and will help us continue reaching new audiences outside our immediate area.”

Wertheimer adds that the 2023 exhibits attracted 320,616 visitors, of which 41.5 percent were visitors from out of state; 16 percent came from counties in Florida outside of Sarasota County; and 3.5 percent were international tourists.

According to Wertheimer, the call for artworks and inspirational quotations for the 2023 exhibit resulted in 13,733 entries pouring in from 119 countries and 45 states. Students from 424 schools around the world submitted artwork or quotes to the juried exhibit; more than 65 percent of submissions were from students.

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 nonprofit 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.