

## Culverhouses give \$100,000 to Embracing Our Differences

- By Observer Staff
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Hugh Culverhouse Jr. and Embracing Our Differences President and CEO Sarah Wertheimer. Courtesy image

Embracing Our Differences has received a \$100,000 gift from Hugh and Eliza Culverhouse Jr. following changes in Sarasota County's grant qualifications left the organization ineligible for funding because of its format as an annual outdoor exhibition that is freely accessible in a public park with no ticketing system.

The donation will support Embracing Our Differences' educational initiatives, including field trips, professional development workshops, the annual Reading Day program and curriculum development. It will also help fund the 2025 outdoor exhibition at Bayfront Park in Sarasota, which features docent-led tours conducted by local high school students. Also benefitting from the contribution is the Make-A-Day Of It! program, which provides an opportunity for thousands of students to visit the exhibition and extend their experience with cultural partners.

"In these challenging times, when our mission of kindness, respect and inclusion is more essential than ever, we face unprecedented obstacles," said Embracing Our Differences President and CEO Sarah Wertheimer. "This gift is an absolute game-changer, providing us with critical resources to continue our vital work and ensure that kindness, respect, and inclusion continue to flourish in our community."

Hugh Culverhouse Jr. is CEO of Palmer Ranch Holdings, leading the development of the 15,000-acre master-planned community for nearly three decades. He has donated \$72 million to various community causes, higher education, mental health and social welfare initiatives. Eliza Culverhouse is a longtime arts advocate who has donated millions to arts programs over the years, including Embracing Our Differences.

The Embracing Our Differences exhibition is on display at Bayfront Park in Sarasota through April 13, and will be featured at Poynter Park in St. Petersburg March 1-31. Since its inception in 2004, the nonprofit has attracted approximately 420,000 visitors annually and hosted 15,000 students on school field trips last year. For more information or to contribute, visit [EmbracingOurDifferences.org](https://www.EmbracingOurDifferences.org).