



### **Embracing Our Differences Receives Exemplary Project Award**

Embracing Our Differences recently received an \$8,000 “Exemplary Project Award” recognition award from The Goldin Foundation for Excellence in Education. The award will support various aspects of EOD’s year-round educational initiatives. The Goldin Foundation for Excellence in Education recognizes and rewards educators who have made outstanding contributions in their classrooms, schools and communities. The Foundation seeks to foster the respect for and appreciation of educators, and it also seeks to retain quality educators and attract others to the profession.

Sarah Wertheimer, President & CEO of Embracing Our Differences, noted that in 2024 alone, 2,048 educators and 55,357 students participated in the organization’s annual exhibition and educational programs, affirming Embracing Our Differences as one of the largest educational initiatives in southwest Florida.

“Supporting educators and students is at the core of our mission,” said Wertheimer. “We are deeply grateful for The Goldin Foundation’s commitment to education and its support of our efforts to make a lasting impact on the lives of students and educators in our region.”

The funds will support Embracing Our Differences’ ongoing teacher workshops and intensives, helping local educators develop skills, strategies, and resources focused on arts appreciation and character development. It will also help fund such EOD initiatives as its annual reading days, exhibit field trips for students, and high school Coexistence Clubs.

Harriet Goldin, president of the Goldin Foundation for Excellence in Education, notes: “Embracing Our Differences’ creative and innovative programming continues to provide activities throughout the school year that are designed to use visual arts and creative writing as catalysts to create awareness of differences and promote inclusion, kindness, and respect. The organization has made valuable

contributions and has a positive impact on students, teachers, and the broader community. There is great potential for other school districts and community partners to adapt and become involved in this project. We look forward to sharing information about EOD's Exemplary Project with educators throughout the United States and other locations."

For 22 years, Embracing Our Differences has delighted viewers with its annual outdoor display of 50 billboard-sized works of art and accompanying quotations. This high-profile art exhibition draws on the passion and perception of artists, students, and writers, to create powerful statements of inclusion, kindness and respect. The scale and impact of this open-air art show has continued to grow, attracting more than 4.8 million visitors since its inception. EOD's annual exhibition is the heart of a year-round program of activities using art as a catalyst to create awareness and promote kindness.

Embracing Our Differences' 2025 exhibition runs Jan. 19-April 13 in Bayfront Park, Sarasota; and March 1-March 31 in Poynter Park, St. Petersburg.

For more information about Embracing Our Differences, call 941-404-5710, or visit [www.embracingourdifferences.org](http://www.embracingourdifferences.org).