

Orange County Advocacy Alert #1

Orange County Proposed Budget Maintains Funding for the Arts



Many thanks to the Orange County Commission, especially Mayor Rich Crotty, for preserving United Arts' recommended allocation in the proposed FY08-09 Orange County budget on Monday evening.

Our elected leaders face extraordinarily complex decisions this year, as they weigh rising costs and decreased revenue with the county's growing needs. To their credit, they've acknowledged that arts and culture provide a positive economic impact through jobs and expenditures by the cultural community and spending by audiences. The 2007 *Arts and Economic Prosperity Study* by Americans for the Arts showed total cultural sector expenditures of \$140 million in Orange County, which generated \$11.6 million in revenue to state and local governments. Moreover, our museums, galleries, performing arts organizations and thousands of local artists inspire the vibrant environment and creative workforce that attracts new businesses like the Burnham Institute, staffs our multi-million dollar parks and entertainment industry and draws 50 million plus visitors to the area each year. Our arts and cultural institutions are an essential part of the fabric that makes Central Florida so special and that will help it weather these difficult financial times.

United Arts plays a fundamental role in ensuring the health and vitality of the arts and cultural community. Support from Orange County, our other government partners, businesses, foundations and individual donors helps us provide over \$5.1 million in grants and designations to local arts and culture organizations and artists, 581,000 student cultural experiences and many other programs and services.

Even if you live outside the county, please take a moment to send an email to our Orange County officials to thank them for valuing our wonderfully diverse cultural community and for supporting United Arts.

Mayor Rich Crotty:

mayor@ocfl.net

Commissioner Teresa Jacobs: district1@ocfl.net

Commissioner Fred Brummer: district2@ocfl.net

Commissioner Mildred Fernandez: district3@ocfl.net

Commissioner Linda Stewart: district4@ocfl.net

Commissioner Bill Segal: district5@ocfl.net

Commissioner Tiffany Moore Russell: district6@ocfl.net

County Administrator Ajit Lalchandani:

countyadmin@ocfl.net

As always, thank you for your advocacy efforts. Your voice *does* make a difference!

Margot H. Knight
President & CEO
United Arts of Central Florida

Minda Logan
Director of Grants & Government Affairs

