

June 26, 2019

Senator Oscar Braynon II
606 NW 183rd Street
Miami Gardens, FL 33169

Dear Senator Braynon,

We are writing today to express our thanks for your support of funding for the State of Florida's Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs grants programs in the 2019-20 state budget.

Thomas Armour Youth Ballet (TAYB) operates a dance outreach center and after school program in your district, as well as in four other Miami-Dade County neighborhoods. Hundreds of children are in our summer camp programs right now, and we send this photo of a few of them expressing their appreciation. These kids are dancing three hours per day, learning ballet, tap, hip-hop, West African, Bollywood and Broadway dance styles. In addition, they are receiving reading and math instruction, art and music classes, field trips and social-emotional learning experiences.

TAYB earned a \$43,529 grant in the Culture and Museum grant category, which we will use to support the salaries of our faculty and staff. While this is only 29% of the funding for which we were recommended, it is still a significant portion of our budget, and an appreciated improvement over last year's allocation. We promise to steward this money carefully, and look forward to working together to further restore these Department of State programs in the coming year.

We'd love for you to visit us this summer at our Miami Gardens location. It's a great opportunity to see firsthand the value these cultural programs bring to our communities. You can reach me directly at (305) 609-6862. In the meantime, we appreciate all your work on behalf of Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. In particular, we thank you for keeping the arts and culture grants programs of the Division of Cultural Affairs a priority in the 2020 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Dennis Edwards
Vice-President/Treasurer Thomas Armour Youth Ballet
Board Member, Florida Cultural Alliance