

June 30, 2019

Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 South Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis,

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. Hundreds of organizations throughout the state will leverage these matching grants to support artistic and cultural programs, educational outreach and efforts that bolster our tourism industry.

Thomas Armour Youth Ballet (TAYB) operates five neighborhood dance outreach centers and after school programs in Miami-Dade County. 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. We employ 60 people and provide a community hub in the neighborhoods we serve.

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.

Knowing that you have many issues you must weigh as the Governor of our state, we thank you for keeping the arts and culture grants programs of the Division of Cultural Affairs a priority this year, and in your 2020-21 budget and legislative session.

Sincerely,

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