



Carlos Gimenez, Mayor

Cultural Affairs
111 NW 1st Street • Suite 625
Miami, FL 33128-1994
T 305-375-4634 F 305-375-3068
miamidadearts.org

miamidade.gov

CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL

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Mitchell Bierman, Esq.
Mireille Chancy-Gonzalez
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April 24, 2015

The Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor
Miami-Dade County
111 N.W. 1st Street
Miami, Florida 33128

Dear Mayor Gimenez,

On behalf of the Cultural Affairs Council, I am writing to you regarding the coming year's budget for the Department of Cultural Affairs. First and foremost, I am asking for your support to ensure that the gap of \$1,724,000 needed simply to sustain our grants and programs budget be funded.

Second and just as important, I respectfully request that you consider the additional needs of the Department and our growing cultural community in your 2015-2016 budget. At the annual planning and budget meeting of our volunteer Council in February of this year, we unanimously voted to support the following items that are essential to the survival and success of building a great cultural life for our County:

- The total funding for our grants programs this year is less than what it was in 2005-2006. To keep up with the growth in our cultural groups who employ more than 30,000 cultural workers, the launch of new cultural facilities and the necessity to keep programs affordable and accessible, it is critical that we continue to allocate resources to make meaningful grant investments in this high-yielding part of our economy.
- The facilities being operated by our department (i.e., African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, Caleb Auditorium, Miami-Dade County Auditorium and South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center) are successful beyond our most optimistic projections. However, this very success necessitates having the resources to address record-setting use and double-digit increases in audience attendance – expected to be more than 200,000 people this year.

Our Council conservatively estimates that an additional \$10 million is what it will take to begin to get us to the grants funding levels of ten years ago and address the increased costs of more quality programs, better facilities with higher operating costs, and greater demands from audiences throughout the County for arts opportunities that can be enjoyed by the 13.5 million families and kids who attend cultural events each year.

I will work to schedule an appointment with you as soon as possible so that we can discuss these requests and I can more fully describe the real benefits that we are receiving by cultivating one of the most diverse and dynamic new cultural centers in the world. I continue to appreciate your extraordinary leadership on behalf of the arts and your vision for the future of our County as a place where our residents can prosper and grow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adolfo Henriques', is written over the typed name.

Adolfo Henriques
Chair
Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs Council