

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MEDIA CONTACT:
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305-375-5829 / lillianh@miamidade.gov**MIAMI'S ARTS LEADERS CELEBRATE THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) WITH TWO-DAY SUMMIT*****The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs explores ways to make the
arts more accessible for people with disabilities.***

(Miami – September 17, 2015) – This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities. To celebrate this milestone, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, a national leader in arts accessibility, is presenting an ADA Silver Anniversary Summit with its partners, the Florida Access Coalition for the Arts (FLACA) and the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, where the summit will be held at 1300 Biscayne Blvd, Miami on Thursday, September 24 and Friday, September 25, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Led by local and national experts on accessibility in the arts, the Summit will explore how the arts and culture can best serve individuals with disabilities in Miami-Dade County. Panel sessions will focus on strategies and best practices for access and inclusion in quality cultural programs including ADA compliance, the benefits of universal design, programmatic access for performing arts organizations and museums, sensory-friendly programs, ASL, captioning and ways to enhance the creative experience for people with disabilities through innovative technologies.

Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez will address Summit participants on Thursday, September 24th. “Miami-Dade County, through its Department of Cultural Affairs, is committed to continuing to make excellent cultural services available to children and adults with disabilities and their families. I believe that culture is a vital part of our quality of life and accessible arts programs that include all audiences are essential for our County,” stated Mayor Gimenez.

In addition to providing valuable information on resources available to non-profit cultural organizations, including funding, ideas, technical assistance and programs, the ADA Silver Anniversary Summit will feature engaging performances by artists with disabilities and demonstrations of cutting-edge technology such as The Beam®, that combines remote mobility and video conferencing to allow users who are physically unable to travel to virtually visit cultural institutions.

Henry Evans, Founder of Robots for Humanity and Christa Cliver, Director of Education and Museum Business Development from Suitable Technologies will demonstrate The Beam® telepresence robot to show how remote presence technology extends the reach of cultural institutions. This exciting technology enables virtual entry to visitors with disabilities to provide self-guided remote exploration of museum collections and live performances from an individual's personal computer via the on-site Beam Device.

“For more than a decade, the Department has actively worked with key partners, including The Children’s Trust, on a number of access initiatives, with the objective of creating regional and national models of best practices for increasing participation in the arts by making cultural activities more accessible for our residents and visitors,” said Francine Andersen, Chief of Arts Education for the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs. “Miami-Dade County’s cultural community provides numerous outstanding arts opportunities for people of all abilities and we will continue to work on increasing access and inclusion for all.”

For [detailed schedule](http://www.miamidadearts.org/ada-silver-anniversary-summit-schedule) of the two-day summit visit our website <http://www.miamidadearts.org/ada-silver-anniversary-summit-schedule>.

For more information or to register for the free summit visit: <http://www.miamidadearts.org/content/ada-silver-anniversary-summit>.

Follow the ADA Silver Anniversary Summit on social media @MiamiDadeArts and using #MiamiArtsADA25.

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The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council develop cultural excellence, diversity and participation throughout Miami-Dade County by strategically creating and promoting opportunities for artists and cultural organizations, and our residents and visitors who are their audiences. The Department directs the Art in Public Places program and serves its board, the Art in Public Places Trust, commissioning, curating, maintaining and promoting the County’s art collection. The Department also manages, programs and operates the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center, a campus of state-of-the-art cultural facilities in Cutler Bay, as well as Miami-Dade County Auditorium, Joseph Caleb Auditorium and the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, all dedicated to presenting and supporting excellence in the arts for the entire community. Through staff, board and programmatic resources, the Department, the Council and the Trust promote, coordinate and support Miami-Dade County’s more than 1,000 not-for-profit cultural organizations as well as thousands of resident artists through grants, technical assistance, public information and interactive community planning. The Department receives funding through the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children’s Trust, the National Endowment for the Arts, the State of Florida through the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Other support and services are provided by TicketWeb for the Culture Shock Miami program, the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, the South Florida Cultural Consortium and the Tourist Development Council.

It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to comply with all of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. To request materials in accessible format, sign language interpreters, and/or any accommodation to participate in any Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs program or meeting, please contact Francine Andersen at 305-375-4634 culture@miamidade.gov at least five days in advance to initiate your request. TTY users may also call 711 (Florida Relay Service).