

## MEDIA CONTACT

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### **Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative Receives Major Grant From the Community Foundation of Sarasota County**

*The group received a \$25,000 Equity and Access Grant for its Arts & Racial Justice Panel series, which brings artists, and arts and civic leaders together for conversations about inclusion and diversity in the arts.*

(Sarasota-Manatee, FL; January 15, 2021) Michèle Des Verney Redwine, the president and founder of the Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative (SBAC), announced that the nonprofit was recently awarded a major grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. According to Redwine, the \$25,000 Equity and Access Grant through the Dallas and Elizabeth Dort Charitable Fund at the Community Foundation will support SBAC's Arts & Racial Justice Panel series, a free, virtual program bringing artists, and arts and civic leaders together for conversations about inclusion and diversity in the regional arts community. The Community Foundation's Equity and Access Grant supports projects promoting equity and access to regional populations that face systemic barriers.

"We're honored to receive such tremendous support and solidarity from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County," says Redwine. "Diversity is the basis and

substance for building a healthy community. The time is ripe to boldly explore the issues of racial justice and inclusion in our regional arts and cultural landscape. What are we doing right? Where do we fall short? The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is on the front lines of examining these questions—and then working with area groups to implement transformative solutions to real-life challenges.”

Redwine explains that SBAC is staging four Arts & Racial Justice Panel events in 2021: January 25 (visual arts); March 1 (performing arts/theater); April 19 (media/literary); May 10 (education). These events will be presented in a webinar format via the Zoom platform.

The first event, “Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Visual Arts,” is Monday, January 25, 5-6:30 p.m. The discussion moderator is Charlayne Hunter-Gault, a leading civil rights activist, journalist and former foreign correspondent for National Public Radio, CNN, and the Public Broadcasting Service. Panel members include Gale Fulton-Ross, a renowned artist and arts advocate; Steven High, executive director of The Ringling; Katherine Pill, curator of contemporary art at the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg; and Anne-Marie Russell, executive director of Sarasota Art Museum. This free event is offered via the Zoom platform and registration is required at [www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org](http://www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org) by January 20.

*For more information about the Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative, visit [www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org](http://www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org).*

**About the Community Foundation of Sarasota County:**

The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is a public charity founded in 1979 by the Southwest Florida Estate Planning Council as a resource for caring individuals and the causes they support, enabling them to make a charitable impact on the community. With assets of \$421

million in more than 1,500 charitable funds, the Community Foundation awarded grants and scholarships totaling \$48.9 million dollars last year in the areas of education, the arts, health and human services, civic engagement, animal welfare and the environment. Since its founding, the Community Foundation has been able to grant more than \$323 million to area nonprofit organizations to our community thanks to the generosity of charitable individuals, families, and businesses. For more information, visit [www.CFSarasota.org](http://www.CFSarasota.org) or call (941) 955-3000.

### **About the Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative**

The Suncoast Black Arts Collaborative is a nonprofit organization in Sarasota-Manatee, FL. Its mission is to advocate for greater exposure to African-American artists and artists of African descent throughout the greater Sarasota-Manatee region and to provide educational forums and symposia to expose area residents, visitors, students, and others to the work of these artists.

Visit [www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org](http://www.suncoastblackartscollaborative.org).