

FMPP Final Performance Report

Report Number/Period: *FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT April 30, 2016 (10/1/15 – 4/30/16)*
Date: Today's Date
Contact: Ana Morgenstern/ 786-468-2069/ amorgenstern@arshtcenter.org
Recipient Name: Performing Arts Center Trust, Inc.
Project Title: Arsht Center Farmers Market
Grant Number: 14-FMPPX-FL-0044
Project Location: Miami, FL
Total Awarded Budget: \$ 46,860

1) Objective: *State the objective (or each element of the objective, if more than one) and those activities associated with each as identified in the grant agreement.*

Objective #1: To create opportunities for direct producer-to-consumer sale of locally-produced and farmed products in stands to be placed along the public outdoor plaza of the Arsht Center in downtown Miami.

- The Center launched the farmers market on December 2014. Prior to that there were no direct producer-to-consumer options available to farmers in the Arts and Entertainment District of downtown Miami. Since then, hundreds flock to the outdoor market every Monday night. The Arsht Center Farmers Market is fully equipped with SNAP/EBT capabilities to accommodate low-income residents in adjacent areas.
- The farmers market thrived during the winter months and was slower during the summer months as the higher temperatures kept some customers at bay. In addition, farmers reported that there are also fewer crops during the Florida summer. For the final reporting period, the market saw an influx of traffic coming from the neighboring areas due to a change in visibility of the location, with more farmers' tents positioned near busy Biscayne Boulevard. Spotting the market as they drove or walked by was a major motivator in attendance, according to a survey conducted by the Center.
- The Arsht Center Farmers Market successfully connects producers to consumers in an area where there were no available opportunities prior to this one. The farmers market has attracted a broad cross section of Miami-Dade County residents, from SNAP users to residents in new urban developments.

Objective #2: To create an outreach and marketing platform to increase the exposure of farmers to a wide cross-section of the neighboring communities and Greater Miami-Dade County.

- The Center continued a comprehensive marketing strategy that started in October 2014 and has expanded to include digital platforms. As part of this strategy, the Center developed the creative images for the branding of the campaign to engage the public in the Farmers Market. Using the new images and branding, the Center added content to the webpage that promotes all dining and food options at the Center.
- The Center has added information about the Farmers Market to the bottom of its promotional show e-blasts that are sent to a database of 175,000 unique email addresses on a weekly basis. In

addition, the Center has worked with its on-site partner, the Café at Books & Books, which has included the Farmers Market in its promotional e-blasts that go out to over 5,000 local subscribers.

- The digital campaign for the Farmers Market includes the use of social media, leveraging over 110,000 combined followers that the Center has on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The marketing campaign has also experimented with cross-promotion with other shows and cross-promotion with other partners. The Center aims to grow the current base of weekly shoppers.
- In collaboration with the Miami Downtown Development Authority, the Arsht Center Farmers Market has also hosted community ambassadors who fielded questions from visitors and promoted the farmers market throughout other events in the downtown area.

2) Summary of Activities: *List each grant-funded activity that occurred during the previous six months of the project. "Activities" may be advertising, training, market start-up, recruitment, etc. Include significant contribution(s)/role(s) of project partners.*

Marketing: The Center has developed a comprehensive marketing strategy to engage the community in direct producer-to-consumer opportunities at the Arsht Center Farmers Market by implementing the following:

- Created a unique logo and design to promote the farmers market and placing signage in and around the farmers market to attract nearby residents and commuters along U.S. Highway 1 (Biscayne Boulevard), one of the busiest thoroughfares in Miami.
- Continued to maintain a social media promotional plan that included posts on three main social media channels – Twitter, Instagram and Facebook – that have over 110,000 subscribers combined. Cross-promoted the farmers market in social media with other shows. The Center also sent out e-blasts that promoted the farmers market and provided information about the market, the farmers and the times of availability.
- The Center added a standing calendar listing for the farmers market on its website. The prominence of the farmers market was raised once the Center incorporated it into its regular calendar listings, as many people use this tool to plan their visits to the Center.
- The Center has tagged the Farmers Market onto a variety of e-blasts that promote events and activities at the Center. These blasts are deployed on a weekly basis to 175,000 unique email addresses.
- The Center used special lighting on its outdoor carnival Deco Tower, which drew attention to the farmers market in the evenings. During the winter months as it got darker earlier, the Carnival Tower became visible for longer, drawing extra attention to the farmers market activity.
- The farmers market was promoted on the main website of the Miami Downtown Development Authority (DDA), which featured the special branded image the Center's marketing team designed to promote the farmers market. The co-promotion reached current residents and potential new residents of downtown Miami.

Outreach and Partnerships:

- The Center began to work with the DDA, which promoted the farmers market via its community ambassadors. The DDA's Ambassador Program offers additional "eyes and ears" on the ground of events in the downtown area and were a welcomed addition in the weekly offerings of the farmers market, as traffic was higher due to a larger crowd because of tourism.
- The Center continues to work side-by-side with its partner, the Café at Books and Books, a restaurant in the Center that shares space with the Farmers Market every Monday and cross-promotes the Farmers Market with its customer base that amounts to over 5,000 e-mail

subscribers. The café also buys directly from farmers at the Farmers Market, helping promote healthy eating of locally farmed produce.

- Chef Allen Susser of Café at Books and Books is a celebrity chef with followers in South Florida. He has supported the Arsht Center Farmers Market by featuring some of the produce sold directly by farmers, which has boosted the image and attendance to the Farmers Market.
- The Center's partnership with Claire Tomlin of The Market Company has helped the Center reach out to farmers who are seeking opportunities to sell and market their products. Through this partnership, the weekly Arsht Center Farmers Market has worked with 12 farmers and up to three local vendors each week.

Objective #3: To provide educational opportunities about locally-sourced healthy foods to young, underserved teens who attend AileyCamp Miami, a summer camp held at the Center.

- During this reporting period, the camp had already come to a conclusion. However, the Center continued to seek opportunities to provide educational workshops about the value of healthy nutrition and the benefits of buying locally sourced and farmed products. Through a partnership with the Café at Books & Books, the Center has supported Monday evening dinners that feature farm-to-table original recipes for a small group of patrons that dine outdoors surrounded by the stands in the farmers market. During these dinners some of the farmers, whose produce is featured in these vegetarian dinners with original recipes by Chef Allen Susser, come out and give small talks about the produce people are eating. Farmers also answer questions and the people who have been at those dinners get an insight to the process of buying local they may not have had before.

3) Performance: *Report measurable (quantitative) results/accomplishments of each project activity during the previous six months. Examples: # of new vendors trained, increase in weekly customers, increase in baseline sales. Discuss each in relation to the specific activities of your project.*

Baseline Information: *Provide "before and after" measurements. ("Baseline" data compared to current data). Regularly tracking key data (e.g. vendor/customer attendance and sales, jobs created, markets created, etc.) should be a standard practice for the project and communicated/discussed within the progress reports and final report.*

- To date (Apr. 30, 2016), the Farmers Market has been held 61 times since opening in December 1, 2014. Prior to that, there were no farmers markets in Miami's growing Arts and Entertainment District. The goal of establishing a new farmers market in an area that previously had none has been accomplished and sustained throughout the granting period. In addition to the market held weekly during this reporting period, the Center held a special fall Farmers Market during a day-long "Arts Launch" to its cultural season. This effort, which more than doubled our staff, security and housekeeping time, also increased marketing spending during this reporting period. The result was worth it: A total of 1,800 people visited the market and Center during the event, which also featured free performances, film screenings, and interactive arts experiences for children and architectural tours of the Center that incorporated the farmers market into the experience. This special effort significantly raised awareness of the market and local farmers, resulting in an uptick in

weekly attendance and shopper spending during this reporting period, according to anecdotal evidence gathered from farmers.

- Based on feedback by the farmers, the farmers market has been successful, with each visitor spending an average of \$9 in locally sourced products. The market attracts between 100-150 visitors every Monday evening. Farmers happily report that there are consistent buyers. This reporting period, they also saw an uptick in first-time consumers due to visibility from the Arts Launch event and a successful tourist season in Miami.
- Prior to the establishment of the farmers market, participating farmers had no direct access to the Arts and Entertainment District in downtown Miami. Through the Arsht Center Farmers Market, there are now between 10 and 15 farmers and local producers that participate weekly, being able to sell their products and reach a new consumer base. The new connection has added a line of business and new customers.
- The marketing strategy has raised awareness of the Arsht Center Farmers Market and of the importance of eating and buying locally sourced products through a variety of strategies. First, the Center designed and manages a landing webpage that promotes the market on the Center's popular website, which receives more than 1 million visitors a year. The website links back to some of the farmers' social media presence and tells their story. In addition, the Center includes information about the farmers market in its e-blasts that promote shows at the Center, reaching would-be customers. These e-blasts are sent to a database of over 90,000 unique e-mail addresses.
- The Center's marketing has been pushed to become more creative by partnering with other organizations that can reach a different customer base and the people that live near the farmers market. The initial push accomplished drawing crowds into the market, but in order to sustain those crowds marketing has gone into social media more deeply as a result of the customer base of the farmers market.
- The Center has continued to engage customers via social media, promoting the market and encouraging people to visit and buy local foodstuffs.
- The Center has also been able to support the farmers by connecting them with its on-site food vendor partners. On average, food service providers at the Center buy about 35 pounds of fresh produce directly from farmers each week. That amount has stayed consistent since the first report.
- The Center has launched a consumer satisfaction survey to establish a baseline of satisfaction over the offerings at the Farmers Market. About 40% of respondents live in the area, while 40% stated that they came to the neighborhood specifically for the farmers market. The majority of people were attracted to the market because of outdoor signage and curiosity about the foot traffic in the area. (This plaza had not been activated prior to the farmers market.) Slightly more than 30% of respondents stated they visited because of social media and 15% stated they visited because of mailers they received at their homes. Mailers were sent out to zip code areas adjacent to the Center as part of the marketing campaign.

4) Problems and Delays: *Note unexpected delays or problems for each activity. Explain what the organization did to resolve or address these issues.*

For the Center, the weather proved to be a challenge during a couple of weeks. Although the tents at the Farmers Market have improved significantly since their first layout, rain remains an obstacle for the market because of increased traffic, diminished amounts of pedestrians and the logistical

challenge of patching electricity and energy to the farmers market safely in the rain. The Arsht Center Farmers Market was cancelled a total of four times during this period due to rain. The Center continues to evaluate what is the best course of action when dealing with intemperate weather, while remaining safe.

During this period, the Center also continued to evaluate the location of the farmers market from the Thomson Plaza for the Arts to the adjacent corner on 13th Street and Biscayne Boulevard outside the main entrance of the Café at Books and Books on the Arsht Center campus. The difference between venues is the visibility that the market can get on an average day, with the corner on 13th Street and Biscayne Boulevard being more visible to commuters, although the space available there is smaller. The Plaza having less visibility from the street, but is larger and comfortably fits more farmers in one space. After conferring with the vendors, the Center decided to keep the market in the more visible corner with the possibility of moving it if more farmers join the market at any point. Finally, the last challenge has remained the marketing for the farmers market. Establishing awareness and brand recognition has remained a challenge throughout the entire grant period as people who reside in the downtown core are not necessarily used to having healthy options nearby. Because establishing a new market opportunity has required a huge investment in marketing efforts, the Center carried out a big push during this period, devoting the remainder of its grant dollars into maintaining the brand of the market and continuing to drive traffic to the farmers market. The Center created and distributed Arsht Center Farmers Market canvas shopping bags as part of the effort – a visible, walking ad for the market. The Center will continue to explore new ways to raise the market’s visibility and is committed to continuing this project, even though our grant funding has been totally expended.

5) Financial Summary: *Total amount spent during reporting period. Report any program income generated, if any, and how it was utilized. Note the reasons for budget revisions, if made, and when FMPP approval was granted.*

During this reporting period, the Center spent \$23,145.50. The bulk of the budget went to marketing efforts ramping up to get the word out and maintain the initial excitement about the farmers market. Marketing of the special “Arts Launch” farmers market drove costs up during this period, as did a series of planning meetings for the market’s presence during “Arts Launch” that required additional staff time. Security and housekeeping payments also rose as a result. A total of \$7,500 was dedicated to marketing, with a campaign that included ad purchases in local English and Spanish newspapers, such as the Miami Herald, El Nuevo Herald, Diario de las Americas and the weekly New Times. The campaign also utilized social media, maintenance of an online presence and promotional posts with partner organizations.