



THE SUNRISE CITY  
**FORT PIERCE**  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
AND CITY COMMISSION *Florida*

May 18, 2020

Florida Department of State  
R.A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Sir/Madam:

It is my pleasure to submit this letter in support of the Manatee Observation and Education Center (MOEC), endorsing its grant application to the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs for general operating support for 2021-2022.

MOEC is a fixture in our community as St. Lucie County's first non-profit, environmental learning center – teaching, guiding and inspiring stewardship of the Indian River Lagoon and its fragile inhabitants, including the Florida manatee. With the visionary partnership of the Florida Inland Navigational District (FIND), Main Street Fort Pierce, City of Fort Pierce, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, Indian River State College and local business and community donors, MOEC became a cultural community gathering place and a catalyst for ecological education. Today, MOEC continues as an anchor in the economic revitalization of Fort Pierce, contributing to the local economy through cultural eco-tourism and attracting visitors from all of the world.

Funding from the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs will enhance MOEC's proven ability to engage our community in environmental education. MOEC has shown their dedication to environmental education, and stayed active even during the most challenging of times this year, with innovative online programming such as the Daily Manatee and Manatee Weekly, which were celebrated and shared widely for their fun and informative content during social distancing. Best of all, MOEC remains accessible to all who enjoy historic downtown Fort Pierce and its waterfront.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to express support for, and the desire to promote this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Linda Hudson  
Mayor