



May 14, 2026

Manuel Abarca IV
Jackson County Legislature
1st District Legislature
Chair of Jackson County Legislature

Chairman Abarca:

On behalf of Mattie Rhodes Center, we are requesting support for a proposed youth employment and community arts pilot, tentatively titled Jackson County Youth Works. This pilot, established by Cultural Arts Director Jenny Mendez, would provide paid summer work opportunities for youth in the Westside through mural and public art projects. The program combines youth employment, job training, mentorship, and community beautification, allowing young people to earn wages while gaining hands-on experience (from established adult artists) in the arts and community development.

The attached budget supports funding for artist payments, apprentice youth artists, mentors, project leadership, supplies, and related painting costs for the Mattie Rhodes Celebration of Youth Mural Project. The total request is \$50,000. This investment would help create economic opportunities for young people while producing public art that reflects the culture, history, and pride of the community. We believe this pilot can serve as a strong model for future youth employment and neighborhood beautification efforts across Jackson County.

Thank you for your consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this project further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Fierro".

John Fierro,
President/CEO

148 N. Topping Ave. Kansas City, MO 64123
816-471-2536

