

Miami Dade College Hialeah Campus gets grant for cultural center

By Joey Flechas
The Miami Herald

Hialeah artists looking for a home for their work will soon have a place at the local campus of Miami Dade College.

The Hialeah Campus has been awarded an \$80,000 grant from the Knight Foundation to create the Hialeah Cultural Center, which campus leaders envision as a space to host galleries and community events.

The center will be a multipurpose room on the first floor of a parking garage that will break ground this summer. The building's construction is part of a larger project that the college has undertaken with state funds to build another classroom building.

Priscilla Suarez, assistant dean, said the grant money will be spent on construction and programming of the center.

Ana Maria Bradley-Hess, academic and student dean at the Hialeah Campus, said she feels it's the college's responsibility to create a hub for Hialeah-centric art and culture.

"It's integral to the mission of the institution to celebrate the culture and arts of the city," she said.

Suarez echoed Bradley-Hess, adding that in a city with no art museums, the center will fill an important niche for artists in the community and students who want to express themselves.

"Hialeah doesn't really have a cultural beacon that speaks to the community, that represents the arts of the area," Suarez said.

The center is expected to open in the fall of 2014. The college plans to have a launch event that will showcase student art and feature a public discussion on intellectual and artistic freedom.

Bradley-Hess said that a video featuring oral histories from Hialeah will be one of the center's first projects.

"It's beautiful to capture it before it's lost," she said.

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