Cheers: Don't Miss A Beat keeps kids from missing the arts

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Too often, arts education is the first program cut by a cash-conscious school district even though many students thrive by being involved in theater, music and painting.

That’s why the Jacksonville-based nonprofit Don’t Miss a Beat is doing such valuable work by bringing the arts to children who would otherwise have few avenues to learn about them. Founded by local jazz musician Ulysses Owens Jr, Don’t Miss A Beat offers an extensive arts program for kids as well as after-school initiatives and summer camp.

The students get ample opportunities to express their artistic interests, from putting on recitals and plays to exhibiting their art and talking with successful artists and performers who are visiting Jacksonville.

It’s an amazing endeavor that deserves to be hailed.

For details on Don’t Miss A Beat, go to www.dontmissabeat.org

GIRLS ROCK!

Let’s applaud the campus of Keiser University for recently hosting “Girls Rock” — a day camp to encourage and inspire Duval middle-school girls who are interested in pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

During the camp, the students learned about forensic investigation, occupational therapy, microbiology and other careers through hands-on activities led by Keiser University faculty members and Tavianna Billingslea of the Duval school district.

Camps like “Girls Rock” can make a huge difference in encouraging young girls to seek careers in science and technology, which are fields that have been traditionally dominated by males. Keiser University and Billingslea deserve “Cheers.”

GREAT GESTURE

Times-Union reader Fred Morris wanted to share a wonderful moment that happened while he and his wife were eating at a Waffle House on Beach Boulevard.

His two sons are captains in the Navy, and he was wearing a Polish naval cap he had received as a gift from one son.
A man approached and asked Morris about the cap. After thanking Morris and his wife for having two sons serving our country, the man handed some money to a server.

“I assumed (that) maybe he was giving her a tip for serving him,” Morris wrote in an email. “(It) turned out that he paid the breakfast bill for me and my wife. I never got a chance to thank him for his gracious, patriotic gesture.”

Morris added that he and his wife are “very happy and proud” to be citizens in a Navy city like Jacksonville.