

Art Partnership Creates Lasting Image

Police, youth and others join cause

A mural has brought together an unlikely bunch — police, street youth, an artist, social service agencies and city bureaus, all in an effort to create a lasting image in the heart of downtown Portland.

The scene depicts "people of all types and walks of life, coming together around a bonfire," explains William Park, the professional artist who brought the concept to life. "The bonfire represents strength and community," adds Portland Police Officer Betty Woodward who works out of Central Precinct. Both make clear that the concept for the artwork came from the young people who hang out in the area.

This is no ordinary mural, which is located on a wall by the MAX light rail turn around on Southwest 11th Avenue between Yamhill and Morrison streets.

When you go by to view the progress of the project you may see several young people working alongside the artist. These young people are often referred to as homeless or street youth, but when they are working on the mural, they are artists.

Woodward initiated the idea of a mural at this downtown location.

"I noticed lots of garbage, graffiti, drug paraphernalia and eventually tagging in this location," said Woodward.



Diversity is depicted on a mural wall by the MAX light-rail turn around on Southwest 11th Avenue.

"I thought it would be nice if the young people I work with in this area could have something of their own, something that gave them some ownership and pride in the area."

So she started making inquiries and formed a partnership with New Avenues for Youth and OutsideIn.

The agencies were able to get the word out about the project to interested youth. The mural's theme was determined entirely by the young people during a two-hour collaborative meeting. Once the theme was selected, Park went to work on the drawings that took about two

months to create.

After the drawings were complete, a presentation was made to the Regional Arts and Culture Council, which approves all public artwork, and the mural gained unanimous approval.

The number of young artists

working on the project varied from day-to-day, it could be one or two or as many as eight or nine. Each of the artists worked at the general construction of the mural, all under the guidance of Park, who added the finishing touches to the wall.

It is the hope of everyone in-

olved that having the mural in this location will stave off graffiti, trash and other problems.

"This enhances the area, which is one of the first things people see as they are coming and going from downtown Portland," said Woodward.

Disadvantaged Enter OHSU Medical School

Breaking down barriers

The first four students admitted to the Oregon Health & Sciences School of Medicine via the school's new post-baccalaureate diversity program are among a class of 120 first-year students.

The program, administered by School of Medicine faculty and students, is designed to identify historically underrepresented students like J. "Dodie" Salvador de la Cruz, 25, of Portland.

De la Cruz is among a subset of promising students who traditionally have faced socioeconomic,

educational and cultural barriers to medical, physician-assistant and other health-care schools.

Through the new program and other diversity projects, OHSU is committed to breaking down the barriers that keep disadvantaged students from becoming health care professionals.

"Our goal is to move closer to the day when our community of health-care professionals mirrors the demographics of our patients. We will pursue diversity of all types, including socioeconomic, cultural



J. 'Dodie' Salvador de la Cruz

and geographic," said Dr. Mark Richardson, dean of the OHSU School of Medicine.

De la Cruz came to Oregon from the Philippines at age 12. He graduated from La Salle High School in Milwaukie, receiving an academic scholarship to Willamette University where he earned his bachelor's in biology.

He then applied for and was accepted to the post-baccalaureate program, an intense, three-term program that helps prepare aspiring medical students through a rigorous math and science curriculum, academic advising and other support. Eight students were accepted into

last year's post-bac program. Four are first-year medical students at OHSU, one will enter the OHSU physician-assistant program, and the other three plan to pursue health-care education in other venues.

To be eligible, students must articulate the educational, economic or social disadvantages that have impacted their academic progress. They must further demonstrate a commitment to medicine and compassionate care.

For more information, contact Laurie Mecham, OHSU School of Medicine diversity-outreach manager, by email at mechaml@ohsu.edu.

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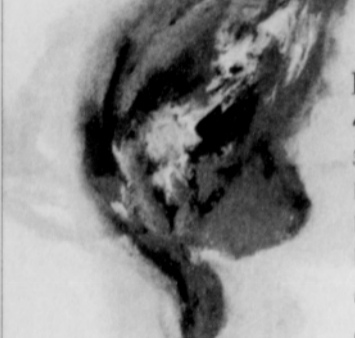
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