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High school students' collaboration demonstrates power of art - better together

By Pippa Fisher



The high school students work on 'Project We' Nov. 1 - a collaborative work organized by Carolyn Considine. Photo provided

at the Contra Costa County Department of Education. Ma wanted to organize a physical exhibit for their county building, which is where the painting will hang once it is stretched and framed.

"From my virtual gallery, Hanna, Beverly, and I picked artists whose work demonstrated our theme, The Art of Resilience," explains Considine adding that she wanted to share the message of the project broadly, so she invited a videographer friend to film the painting day. She says that this collaboration project is also a part of AC5's Arts Cafe program.

"My hope is to have the documentary shared on social media through AC5 and the California Arts Council," says Considine. "I would also love it to be seen as a pre-show at the now popular drive-in movies. It's important to have this message of cohesion from our youth especially during these divisive times."

Considine brought Lafayette Art Gallery Owner Jennifer Perlmutter in as a mentor to guide "Project We" as the students, most of whom did not know each other beforehand, set to work.

Considine, for whom this was a first collaborative effort, and the other artists were nervous about how it would work and what they could create together, but with Perlmutter's help and supervision, Considine says once the painting started they all got into a groove as one brushstroke was finished by the next person.

Over lunch the students started discussing various topics and how art is important in life.

"After lunch we were in tremendous synch and had fun painting together. At the closeout interviews for each artist, everyone clapped as our group mates finished expressing themselves."

Lessons learned, says Considine, are about the power of collaboration. "We are always better together!"

A local teen has embraced art during the pandemic as a powerful way to bring people together.

Campolindo High School sophomore Carolyn Considine organized the collaborative art project Nov. 1 at her Lafayette home, working with a group of high school artists to complete a painting on an 8 foot by 12 foot canvas. Considine chose to name the artwork "Project We."

"Given the divisiveness in the world these days, collaborative art can send the message that we succeed most in life when working with a 'we not me' mentality," explains Considine.

This is not the young artist's first experience organizing art. She explains that during the summer in the midst of the pandemic she organized a virtual high school art exhibition with over 100 works of art from youth artists across the county for the Arts and Culture Commission of Contra Costa County (AC5).

Following this virtual show, AC5 Commissioner Beverly Kumar put Considine in touch with Hanna Ma at

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