

ArtWorks unveils latest project

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HUNTINGTON -- A group of teenagers involved in a program known for creating public art displays unveiled their latest project Wednesday.

The cast paper mural entitled, "A Journey Through Huntington," is the first indoor public art display for ArtWorks, a program for at-risk youths 11 to 17 who live in public housing communities. The program is sponsored by the Huntington Museum of Art and Huntington Housing Authority.

The mural was unveiled during a brief ceremony at the Huntington Banks Building at 919 5th Ave. The bank, which is a community partner with the museum and housing authority, requested to hang the piece in its lobby, said Bryan Stepp, market president for Huntington Banks.

The mural features several landmarks of Huntington, including the Cabell County Courthouse, Old Main, Keith-Albee and East Huntington Bridge. Students took more than 800 digital pictures of the landmarks, selected the ones they wanted to use, then created a collage that became the foundation for their mural, said Kevin Lyles, a professor of art at Rio Grande University who oversaw the project.

"I've never gotten to work with inner-city kids, so it was a cultural experience for me," Lyles said. "They were extremely hard workers who provided insight about Huntington that I didn't have."



Now in its seventh year, ArtWorks is a success because it instills life-skills training through art, said Tim White, who oversees the program.

A lot of the kids work especially well with their hands, he said. "This program involves team building and problem-solving, all of which are skills that can be transferred into adulthood," he said.

The mural is ArtWorks' 13th public art project. Previous projects include a mosaic at Ritter Park, a decorative arch in Guyandotte, and a collection of colorful murals on the building on the corner of 4th Avenue and 8th Street in downtown Huntington.