

## Tri-City Voice Coverage:

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By Miriam Mazliach

In celebration of "Art is Education" month, Newark Memorial High School held the grand opening of its student art gallery on Monday, March 23. Local dignitaries joined community members to honor the students' accomplishments and view their work.

The public can visit the gallery weekdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. through March 31.

"Look at what's right with our schools and don't always listen to the bad news," states Fine Arts teacher Linda Chittle. "The visual arts experience hones the creative thinking process in kids and builds unrivaled confidence and a sense of self."

A portion of the front office was remodeled, at no cost to the school, to include a gallery for rotating art shows.

Inside the gallery, neatly arranged student work displays a variety of mediums, ranging from ink to acrylics, ceramics and metals. Black-and-white drawings demonstrate texture by creating the impression of movement and direction using line, value and shape pattern repetitions. Adorning the walls, exquisite relief sculptures, meticulously crafted from copper and brass sheets of metal, give a nod to ancient civilizations. Glossy ceramic vases of various heights, shapes, and sizes are on display, as well as portraits of recognizable celebrities.

Leaving the gallery and continuing through the corridors, you reach the area known as the "400 wing." Large painted murals, in various stages of completion, seem to extend in all directions. Each student's mural will take almost an entire year to complete. Typically, it takes six months to draw the depiction onto the wall and then another six months to complete using acrylic paints. Those already completed in recent years are bold and colorful, reflecting the imaginative worlds in the minds of each young budding artist.

"Book of Love," a mural by senior Melissa Mendoza, reflects her love of fantasy drawing. "Before this class, I never drew anything. I didn't know I had talent," she says. "Mrs. Chittle always teaches life lessons and tells us to let go of negative voices and you can do anything."

In the past, each visual art teacher held a separate showing of class artwork. This is the first time they have collaborated on a show representing work from all of their classes. In addition to Chittle, teachers who comprise the Visual Arts department include Mark Narciso, Photography; Annemarie McElhattan, Fine Arts; Steve Klatt, Ceramics; and Adriane Bovone, Fine Arts. In keeping with the positive and creative energy seen at Newark Memorial High School's art gallery, don't overlook the beauty that art adds to our lives. To show your support of these