



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2018.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

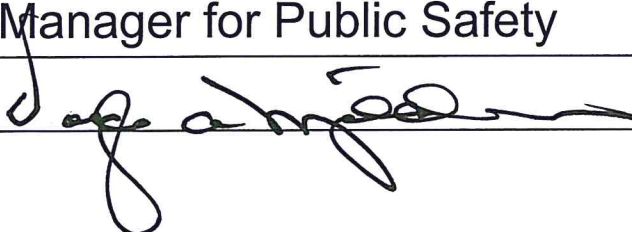
PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: The Refugee Project
Program Category: Health and Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Victoria Davis
Title: Management Specialist
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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Douglas Middleton
Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety
Signature: 

1. Program Overview

From May 18 to Aug. 25, 2017, Virginia Holocaust Museum visitors saw an exhibit of work by Mills E. Godwin High School students titled, "The Refugee Project." The work was the culmination of a process designed to deepen the students' understanding and ultimately, their ability to communicate through art.

The Refugee Project began in fall 2016 when a Henrico County Public Schools art teacher contacted the Virginia Holocaust Museum (VHM) with a project proposal. By collaborating with the museum, the teacher sought to provide students at Godwin High School with both historical and contemporary context vital to the understanding of the current refugee crisis. The goal of the project was to humanize a world issue while creating connections within our lives and communities. Through further collaboration with the Commonwealth Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement program, students created the art for the exhibit. The work is based on conversations students had with former refugees who live in the Henrico community and aims to raise awareness about the refugee crisis in the world and how it effects our community.

2. Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

It is more important than ever for students to understand art as a lens to raise awareness about community and world issues. As a cultural tool, art helps humanize and actualize the emotions of social issues.

3. How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The project, a collaboration with an important community organization, was intended as an innovative way to encourage constructive conversations and help break down fears other people

have about refugees. The project incorporates innovative partnerships among school, educational and community agencies to advance knowledge, understanding and dialogue. While unique, it can be replicated with few costs by other localities.

4. How Program Was Carried Out

Godwin High School students in Advanced Art IV & V and Advanced Placement Drawing and 2-D art classes, worked in collaboration with the VHM and the Commonwealth Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement program to create art that raises awareness about the refugee crisis in the world and community. The idea began in September 2016 when the art teacher contacted the Virginia Holocaust Museum education director and asked if the museum would be interested in collaborating on a project concerning the current refugee crisis.

One of the objectives for the project was to examine the refugee crisis during WWII and the Holocaust and create a human connection to the current refugee crisis. Contacting the Virginia Holocaust Museum was the obvious choice to connect history, humanity, and human rights. The museum expressed interest in the project and the idea started to take form. In January 2017, the VHM education director visited the Advanced Art classes and gave a presentation about WWII refugees and the Holocaust. That same week, the director of Commonwealth Catholic Charities' Refugee Resettlement Program also gave a presentation, explaining what it means to be a refugee. She described the rigorous screening process refugees go through to be accepted into the United States and then resettled into a community in the Richmond, Virginia, area.

Students then took a field trip to the Virginia Holocaust Museum where they toured the museum and had the unique experience of meeting former refugees that live in Central Virginia. The former refugees related their stories of moving from countries such as Iraq, Iran, Bhutan and Sudan. The

students then had an opportunity to break into discussion groups of five to seven and speak intimately with former refugees about their experiences.

Upon returning to school, students got to work sketching about what they heard and experienced when speaking with the refugees. To supplement their museum visit and provide additional context to their conversations with refugees, students also conducted research on refugees' home countries.

The project began to take on new importance as students prepared for the museum trip. Days before, the president had announced a new travel ban. Although the project was not created because of the travel ban, the project became more relevant and personal when meeting and talking at the museum with former refugees.

As global connections accelerate, it is important to help students connect with people in the communities about world issues such as the refugee crisis. The conversations, while difficult, are crucial. For Godwin's students, speaking to refugees living in their communities helped to create a personal connection by putting human faces to situations that often seem distant.

OBJECTIVES:

Objectives were educational and designed to deepen students' understanding.

- After a class presentation from the Virginia Holocaust Museum and the organization Refugee Resettlement, students will prepare for a class trip to the museum, where they will listen to, discuss, and analyze stories from refugees living locally.
- During a group activity at the Virginia Holocaust Museum, students will listen to stories from refugees that live in Central Virginia and will write reflective statements about their museum experience.

- After a class trip to the museum, students will create artwork that displays a visual narrative, based on the stories and experiences they heard from local refugees.
- Students will participate in a museum tour and will analyze the connections between the refugee crisis of World War II and today's refugee crisis, using visuals, discussion, and written prompts.
- Before and after the class trip, students will conduct research about the home countries of Richmond-area refugees, to gain a better understanding of reasons behind the ongoing refugee problem.

5. Financing and Staffing

There were no additional costs for Henrico County Public Schools. Current class materials were used to create the artwork from our standard operating budget. Godwin high school students and teachers framed most of the artwork with matte board, or the students framed their own work. The students printed and mounted all the artist statements and name tags for the exhibit.

6. Program Results

Students gained a deeper understanding of a complex issue by fostering connections with people whose stories are often not heard. It is from those conversations that students drew inspiration for the artwork.

Not only did their experiences expand their understanding of a world issue, but the students made a personal connection when they met and spoke with the former refugees who live in the Richmond area. The VHM hosted an exhibit of work by Godwin students titled, "The Refugee

Project.” The exhibit was May 18 to Aug. 25, 2017. The artwork they created was viewed by visitors to the Virginia Holocaust Museum.

The opening reception of the exhibit was attended by students and families, teachers, members of the VHM, Holocaust survivors and members of Commonwealth Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program. Students had the opportunity to proudly show and discuss their artwork with a diverse audience, including some of the refugees whose stories inspired the imagery. It was a powerful and memorable night, with conversations about humanity, history, war, hope and perseverance permeating the exhibit hallway.

Perhaps the best measure of the program’s success is to view the artwork created through their interactions with museum and resettlement educators; through their research; through their site visit; and through their conversations with Richmond-area refugees.

7. Brief Summary

From May 18 to Aug. 25, 2017, Virginia Holocaust Museum visitors saw an exhibit of work by Mills E. Godwin High School students titled, “The Refugee Project.” The work was the culmination of a process designed to deepen the students’ understanding and ultimately, their ability to communicate through art.

Students took a field trip to the Virginia Holocaust Museum where they toured the museum and had the unique experience of meeting former refugees that live in Central Virginia. The former refugees related their stories of moving from countries such as Iraq, Iran, Bhutan and Sudan. The students then had an opportunity to break into discussion groups and speak intimately with former refugees about their experiences.

Upon returning to school, students began creating art about their experiences speaking with the refugees. Students also conducted research on refugees' home countries.

Students' experiences expanded their understanding of a world issue, and they made personal connections with former refugees. The students' artwork was celebrated at an opening reception attended by students and families, teachers, museum members, Holocaust survivors and members of Commonwealth Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program. Students had the opportunity to show and discuss their artwork with a diverse audience, including some of the refugees whose stories inspired the imagery.

Perhaps the best measure of the program's success is to view the art students created through their interactions with museum and resettlement educators; through their research; through their site visit; and through their conversations with Richmond-area refugees.

The Refugee Project: Students Making Community Connections with World Issues

Exhibit reception invitation:



THE REFUGEE PROJECT: Students Making Community Connections With World Issues

**OPENING RECEPTION
THURSDAY MAY 18, 2017
6 TO 8 PM**

**Virginia Holocaust Museum
2000 E. Cary St.
Richmond, Va 23222**

Please join us for the art exhibit opening of "The Refugee Project: Students Making Community Connections with World Issues". The project is a collaboration between Godwin High School students, the Virginia Holocaust Museum and Commonwealth Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program.

*For more information contact Megan Ferenczy; Director of Education at the Virginia Holocaust Museum
mferenczy@vaholocaust.org*

6:00 to 6:30

Private Reception for
participants involved
with the project

6:30 to 8:00 open to
the Public

Exhibiting at the
Virginia Holocaust
Museum

May 18 - August 25,
2017

Mills Godwin High School student stands in front of her artwork with the person whose story inspired it.



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