

Enjoy murals along Happy Valley Road

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The West Valley Arts Council (WVAC) in partnership with the City of Peoria, selected 16 West Valley teen apprentices to participate in the 2016 Galley 37 program.

Gallery 37 is the WVAC's award-winning youth arts apprenticeship program, pairing art apprentice's ages 15 to 18 years old, with professional artists to design, develop and install permanent pieces of public art for display in the West Valley. This program is led by an expert team of master artists who provide the necessary training and support in each phase of the project. Since 2001, more than 100 Valley students have participated in Gallery 37.

Gallery 37 began in Chicago, Ill., as a city beautification project of Block 37 that included the creation of a summer arts camp designed to revitalize the immediate community while providing job training and arts education to Chicago's youth. Since 1991, Gallery 37 has expanded to a nation-wide program to include more than 24 U.S. cities, as well as the UK and Australia.

Through this amazing program, a group of 16 talented young artists attended a seven-week program at Estrella Mountain Community College, earning each of them six college credits. During this time, they designed, conceptualized, and fabricated two vibrant murals to be installed along Happy Valley Road in Peoria, while learning valuable career and life skills.

Each mural holds a symbolic meaning to the land where they are installed.

The apprentices worked under the leadership of local master artist Belal Jammal.

WVAC Executive Director Bernadette Mills said, "We are amazed by the growth of the Gallery 37 program. Even in the program's 15th year, it was recognized by winning the Governor's Art Award. Since its inception, Gallery 37 has engaged local teens, given the cities and towns of the West Valley a sense of place and brought a greater sense of culture to the West Valley."

For additional information on Galley 37, visit the website at www.westvalleyarts.org, or watch the video created by the Gallery 37 student apprentices at www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmDCQ9hLzL8. You may also contact the West Valley Arts Council at 623-935-6384.

West Valley Arts Council

The West Valley Arts Council enriches the West Valley by growing a vibrant and connected arts and cultural community. For information on WVAC, Gallery 37, arts education programs, the West Valley Arts HQ, or to become a roster artist, affiliate, donor, or sponsor, visit www.westvalleyarts.org.