

# New 'Diversity in Technology' mural in Aurora aims to empower youth



Aurora's "Diversity in Technology" mural is the largest single public art project in Aurora's history. ( *Courtesy of City of Aurora* )

Submitted by City of Aurora

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Aurora's commitment to equity, inclusion, and technology is the focal point of a new downtown mural.

Renowned national muralist and Aurora resident Rafael Blanco began work on a compelling 52- by 36-inch mural Thursday and will complete it by Sunday evening, with most of the details completed on Saturday, Aug. 28.

The legacy mural is located at the former Aurora National Bank building, 105 E. Galena Blvd, one of the tallest buildings in downtown Aurora.

Featuring a young Black female in a thought cloud of technology, the project is appropriately titled "Diversity in Technology" and expresses Aurora's cultural diversity and growing technology industry.

Black females -- and all minorities -- are disproportionately underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, the traditional STEM fields.

Blanco's goal features a realistic portrait in hopes of inspiring Aurora's youth to change the narrative and dream without limitations.

A native of Alicante (Spain), Rafael Blanco is a contemporary artist fascinated with identity, human expression, and diversity and inclusion as a primary focus in his work.

Trained as a classical studio painter, Blanco has been, since 2014, transitioning to public art, especially to large-scale murals. He has painted murals across the country from California to Maryland. The Aurora resident works as an assistant professor at Elmhurst University, where he teaches drawing, painting, and art history.

The Diversity in Technology mural is primarily funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and sponsorship from Aurora Downtown.

The ideal times to see the painting of the new diversity mural in Aurora, go between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 27; 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 28; and 9 a.m. and noon Sunday, Aug. 29, at 105 E. Galena Blvd. in Aurora.

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