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'Diversity in Technology' mural Aurora's largest public art project aim: Inspire youth

On August 31, 2021 / By admin



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Renowned national muralist and Aurora resident, Rafael Blanco, works on Aurora's largest single public art project in history, Saturday, Aug. 28. "Diversity in Technology" is 52 feet x 36 feet on the former Aurora National Bank building, 105 E. Galena Boulevard, one of the tallest buildings in downtown Aurora. Jason Crane/The Voice

The "Diversity in Technology" mural is the largest single public art project in Aurora's history.

Renowned national muralist and Aurora resident, Rafael Blanco, recently began work on a compelling 52 foot x 36 foot mural and most of the details were completed Saturday, Aug. 28.

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

The design features a young black female (above) in a thought cloud of technology and expresses Aurora's cultural diversity and growing technology industry.

Black females and all minorities are disproportionally 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.

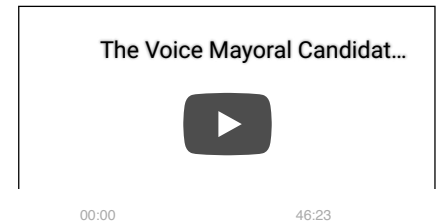
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Jen Evans, Public Art director for the city of Aurora government, left, gives U. S. Congressman Bill Foster, center, a tour of murals being created in downtown Aurora Saturday. Muralist Sam Cervantes, right, takes a break from his artwork to speak to Foster in the City parking lot at 14 Middle Avenue. The art community united when 30 muralists participated in the event downtown. In addition to walls, utility boxes received artistic attention. Cervantes has created several murals, including “Hope Wings Aurora” in downtown Aurora at La France Bakery, 118 E. Galena Boulevard. Cervantes will be part of a group recreating the somewhat controversial “Think” mural which he helped create in 1991 on the side of a grocery store at Claim and Union Streets, by painting a replica at this year’s “On the Wall” Hip Hop Festival, Saturday, Sept. 26 at 119 Middle Avenue in Aurora. *Jason Crane/The Voice*

A native of Alicante (Spain), Rafael Blanco is a contemporary artist fascinated with identity, human expression, diversity and inclusion as a primary focus in his work. Trained as a classical studio painter, Blanco has been, since 2014, making a transition to public art, especially to large-scale murals.

He has painted murals across the Country from California to Maryland. Currently, he works as assistant professor at Elmhurst University, where he teaches drawing, painting, and art history. He lives in Aurora.

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

— *City of Aurora government*

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