

Schools

South Lakes Students Share Designs For Upcoming Art Installation

South Lakes students presented the final two designs for a piece of public art that will be installed at the Reston Hyatt Regency in April.

By Michael O'Connell, Patch Staff
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South Lakes sophomore David Raw holds up one of the two maquettes under review as a possible piece of public artwork to be installed at Reston Town Center in April. (Michael O'Connell | Patch)



RESTON, VA -- A group of South Lakes High School students presented their final designs to a panel of community leaders Wednesday, Feb. 5, for an installation they are fabricating in their art class. The two models or "maquettes" students shared, which are about 12 inches wide and 9 inches high each, showcased photos and artwork in a lenticular design that provides a changing perspective as viewers pass by.

"It's a spectacular opportunity for our art community, especially since in the past we really haven't been receiving the opportunity to express our visual development," said sophomore Laura Echeverri, one of the art students working on the project. "And it's really exciting for us to really be involved in our community and just show it what type of department we are."

Wednesday's presentation was an opportunity for students in SLHS art teacher Marco Rando's class to solicit feedback on the project from representatives of the Reston Town Center Association, Boston Properties, the Reston Town Center Design Review Board, and members of Public Art Reston's Public Art Committee. The final, life-sized installation, is expected to be installed in April at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at Reston Town Center, just in time for the [Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival](#).

Boston Properties is supplying funding for the project, while Hyatt is providing power for it and a location in Hyatt Park. Power Services, Inc. will do all of the required electrical work, as students are working to integrate lighting features into the final design.

"The high quality of thought and effort that went into the maquettes reflect the ambition and determination of the students to create something truly impactful," said Robert Goudie, RTCA's executive director. "It's as rewarding for us as it is for the students to be a part of this."

The art installation is being done as part of SLHS' STEAM program (science, technology, engineering, art and math), which looks to give students a project-base learning (PBL) experience in a variety of subjects.

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"I want to see more of this kind of thing in education," said Rando, about his students' work on the project. "And that's what I'm doing here. I want to make this happen for more students to get more of an experience from doing something for their community, so they have that greater tie to their community, so that they have a love for the arts. They have a voice. I want their voice to be heard."

Anne Delaney, executive director of Public Art Reston, was one of the experts providing feedback to the students on Wednesday. She's been following their work on this project since early in the process.

"The students from what they presented a few weeks ago to what you see here is really well thought of, and they're part of an educational process that they're exploring different ways of showing artwork, of involving as many students as possible and their artwork is very impressive and very mature," she said.

Delaney also praised the experience projects like this provide students that they don't always receive in a standard educational setting.

"You have to deal with others, negotiate, agree on an aesthetic, and then resolve problems and real life is resolving problems and also working with people who have different expertise," she said. "What's also wonderful here is that we have architects, engineers and artists who come to talk to the students. They're really exposed to professionals that they may not be exposed to within the class setting together."

This won't be the first piece of public artwork students have produced for the Reston community. The STEAM Public Art Club, which meets in Rando's classroom, created [Spectrum](#), a sculpture installed last July on the Lake Thoreau Spillway.