"Blind Identity" Fednise Stark

CITY AS CANVAS
Student Artist in Residence Embedded in Shorewood Government and Identity, Race, Ethnicity and Diversity Conversations

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GOAL

To see how student artists can support the community and address critical issues by being embedded into city government.

Use asset-based community development and community-based participatory research approaches to art-making.

Specific to Shorewood High School - support their work on acknowledge and support diversity, race/ethnicity and identity.
RESEARCH

1. Meetings
   - Student Youth Organizations, Teacher, Administrator and Parent perspectives

2. Shadowing
   - Students
   - Feedback from teachers/staff

3. Teacher In-Service Day (January)
   - Turning point
DIVERSITY WORKGROUP

Action Areas

1. The Lived Experiences of African American Students at SHS
2. Raceworks - Teacher and Administration Professional Development
3. Recruitment of Diverse Staff (preferably from the local area)
4. Community and Parent Conversations (YWCA)
SHADOWING

- Our Student Liason: Shilei B.L.
  - Junior Class President
  - VP of Youth Rising Up

- Youth Rising Up
  - Black History Month curriculum and performance planning

SPACES

- Installations and Interventions in everyday spaces
- Foot traffic at SHS
- Who accesses what spaces and when
TEACHER IN-SERVICE

At Shorewood Intermediate School

Hearing the existence of conversations on race, but recognizing the need to help facilitate the continuation of and opportunities to apply such conversations in the everyday

**TURNING POINT**

Slips of paper with critical questions serve as an accumulation of the issues presented at the in-service
PLAN

Creative Generation

SLIPS OF PAPER
- Tool for continuation and action
- WPA mural site
- Time constraints = schedule of plan
- Written/Verbal results
Creative Refinement

What question do you wish someone would ask you (in regards to race and identity)?

What is one perception people have about you that is wrong?
"Are you comfortable with the race that you are?"
"Why do we as a society make it so difficult to talk about race?"
"What do you hate about being white?"
"I wish someone would ask me why I think music is a powerful force for promoting understanding and friendship across racial identities."

- Ken/Pablo Related Findings
- Rich Conversations
- One Audio File Collected
  - How is this meaningful?
- Attention to Specific/Significant Words in Responses
- Visual Journalism Class - Jeff Zimnies
OUR GIFT TO SHS

PHYSICALITY
- Documentation/Report
- Archive
- Ground to build upon
- Manifestation of current generation & present-day issues

SUGGESTIONS
- Ask! Ask frequently, ask fearlessly
- Engage! In activities and events that encourage learning of backgrounds and identities
- Consider! Take into consideration the questions gathered, and the sentiment for doing more
- Expand! Spread word about potential groups to educate community on identity
SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

- Is this model repeatable?

- Time!

- Objectives/expectations
  - Document, document, document
  - The importance of reflection as an art

- Co-Artist
  - Relationships first
  - Time! - recognizing each skill set

- Pull from other sources

"Inspiring conversation with Elena & Stefanie yesterday at the studio. In preparing for our upcoming show, we have been incredibly fortunate to have many interesting, talented people come into the work space and it's had a big impact on how things have evolved - these two are no exception. Plus, they have reminded me just how much my education space is blending with the studio space.

So, thank you."