

We Are OKA

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Coming Up at OKA

August 7th - Breakdance Class Luncheon/Reunion

August 20th - Artist 4 Ayuda Exhibition

September 7th - Youth Art Course Registration

September 11th - United Way Day of Caring in Hunting Park



SERVING THE LORD AND THE COMMUNITY

One Up, Two to Go

The mural created for the Hunting Park Community Garden was originally installed in 2008. 76 people were involved in the three part process of creating the mural - designing, painting, and installing. With the mural having to be reinstalled, the total amount of people involved became over 100.

The reinstalling part of the mural became a bigger priority in terms of the mural as a whole, because of the passing of Jeff Manson - Community Block Captain and Luis Hernandez - Community Garden Partner. They, as well as Andy Nolan - Community Garder, are who are represented on the mural. Manson and Hernandez were very important individuals to the community's safety and upkeep.

However, because of their passing, the care of the block could have easily been questioned. What would happen? Who would pick up where these wonderful men left off? Nolan of course would continue to do great works in the community, but could he do it alone?

Michaelanne Harriman, Community Arts Director, hopes that, "getting the mural back on will inspire the younger generation to take up the mantle." Taking up the mantle would involve caring for the community, taking care of the children, and indulging in other practical activities.

Now that the mural for the Garden is back up, the gang at the OKA House has become more focused on finishing the tiling for the mosaic to be displayed at Joy in the City and and finishing the design for the other half of the bridge mural.



From California to Philadelphia

Thanks to the referral by Dr. Nathan Corbitt of BuildaBridge International, OKA was recommended as a place to get community arts experience. A group of 12 individuals from Pasadena, California's First Presbyterian Church have offered to volunteer their time here at OKA. The leaders of the small group include a Professor at Fuller Seminary and a Pastor of Youth and Children at First Presbyterian Church.

This Californian group not only helps out at OKA in the afternoons, but it also assists UrbanPromise in Camden, NJ in the mornings.

The group believes that the art done at OKA and art in general can help in bringing people closer to God. The art that is being done doesn't necessarily have to preach God, but by providing a small scripture or by simply being around loving, caring people, the presence of God can be felt.

They are all very thankful to be a part of the activities going on at OKA that are to benefit the community. Back at Pasadena, they mentioned that there aren't many murals or mosaics around the community. Being a part of OKA at this time inspires them to take what they've experienced and learned back to their home and try to recreate the same things.

