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To: mark@hcued.com
Subject: News Release - Make It Your Own Mural Fest Announces Final Lineup of Artists, Locations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Aug. 31, 2020

Make It Your Own Mural Fest Announces Final Lineup of Artists, Locations

FORT WAYNE, Ind. – The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, in collaboration with Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, Inc., announced today the 11 artists participating in Make It Your Own Mural Fest, happening September 8-18 across Northeast Indiana’s 11 counties.

The regional mural festival concept, the first of its kind in the state, is an innovative, creative activation of the Make It Your Own brand intended to enhance the region’s efforts to drive talent attraction, talent retention and tourism by investing in quality of place assets and public art.

Kate Virag, vice president of marketing and strategic communications at the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, said Mural Fest was created to achieve several goals.

“We designed Mural Fest with several specific outcomes in mind. First, Mural Fest will amplify Northeast Indiana’s quality of place, supporting our region’s talent attraction and retention goals. Additionally, this initiative highlights the unique attributes of our communities, creating

opportunities for residents and visitors to engage and experience Northeast Indiana through public art, driving social media and media exposure for the region. The initiative also offers mentorship opportunities for emerging regional artists, which should catalyze future public art creation. This important element of the regional branding strategy will make Northeast Indiana nationally known and position it in a positive, forward-thinking light,” Virag said.

Elaine Bedel, secretary and CEO of the Indiana Destination Development Corporation (IDDC), said the state recognizes the strong connection quality of life initiatives like Mural Fest can have on economic growth.

“The goal of the IDDC is to tell Indiana’s authentic story to attract and retain business, talent, students and visitors to our great state. That’s why I continue to seek out new ways the state can partner with and lift up the work of our regions and local communities,” said Bedel. “Make It Your Own Mural Fest is an incredible example of how innovation and creativity, even during the historic challenges of COVID-19, can bring countless new opportunities, attention and individuals to a community through investment in quality of place.”

Dan Ross, vice president of community development for Arts United, said public art creates a unique attachment to the community and can be a catalyst for future growth.

“Arts United is passionate about the development of vibrant communities throughout Northeast Indiana. Through partnerships like Make It Your Own Mural Fest, we achieve positive outcomes for the region’s economy, workforce, schools, neighborhoods and families,” said Ross. “Even during these challenging times due to COVID-19, it’s important we continue to support artists, explore new ideas and interests, experience diverse cultures and be inspired by our community’s resilience.”

Over 11 days, the 11 artists listed below will each install a high-quality mural—one in each of the 11 counties of Northeast Indiana. The links below include more detail about the artist and the mural wall location.

Adams County | Geneva

- Artist | [Zach Medler](#)
- Hometown | Noblesville, IN
- Location | [411 E. Line St., Geneva, IN 46740](#)

Allen County | Fort Wayne

- Artist | [Key Detail](#)
- Hometown | Minsk, Belarus
- Location | [201 W. Wayne St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802](#)

DeKalb County | Garrett

- Artist | [Ricco Diamante](#)
- Hometown | Defiance, OH
- Location | [City Hall, 130 S. Randolph St., Garrett, IN 46738](#)

Huntington County | Huntington

- Artist | [America Carrillo](#)
- Hometown | Huntington, IN
- Location | [35 W. Market St., Huntington, IN 46750](#)

Kosciusko County | Warsaw

- Artist | [Tim Parsley](#)
- Hometown | Fort Wayne, IN
- Location | [212 S. Buffalo St., Warsaw, IN 46580](#)

LaGrange County | LaGrange

- Artist | [Amy Buchs](#)
- Hometown | Waterloo, IN
- Location | [202 N. Detroit St., LaGrange, IN 46761](#)

Noble County | Albion

- Artist | [Tobias Studios](#)
- Hometown | Fort Wayne, IN
- Location | [122 N. Orange St., Albion, IN 46701](#)

Steuben County | Angola

- Artist | [Justin Suarez](#)
- Hometown | Rochester, NY
- Location | [900 N. Wayne St., Angola, IN 46703](#)

Wabash County | North Manchester

- Artist | [Claudio "Remix 1" Rico](#)
- Hometown | Wichita, KS
- Location | [214 E. Main St., North Manchester, IN 46962](#)

Wells County | Bluffton

- Artist | [David Rice](#)
- Hometown | Portland, OR
- Location | [122 W. Market St., Bluffton, IN 46714](#)

Whitley County | Columbia City

- Artist | [Shawn Dunwoody](#)
- Hometown | Rochester, NY
- Location | [116 W. Van Buren St., Columbia City, IN 46725](#)

Alex Hall, founder of Art This Way and owner of AH Public Spaces Consulting, said that although it was challenging for the selection committees in each county to choose just 11 designs from the talented pool of applicants, the muralists selected represent a diverse and eclectic mix of artistic aesthetic.

"The Make It Your Own Mural Fest artists embraced each county's story to create a mural that was authentic and genuine," said Hall. "We are pleased to welcome highly sought-after artists such as internationally-renowned muralists Key Detail of Belarus, to multi-disciplinary creatives like Shawn Dunwoody, of Rochester, New York. We also have prolific and experienced regional artists participating, and a few are even installing murals in their own hometown. We're thankful these artists are sharing their talent and contributing to Make It Your Own Mural Fest."

Mural Fest will also feature participation from [12 aspiring artists](#) as part of the Mentorship Program. The Mentorship Program will provide hands-on learning and valuable experience installing a large-scale mural project. From preparing materials to installation, each mentee will help their assigned artists with the mural installation.

Small artist Meet and Greet Events are happening throughout the region, and more information can be found on the [Mural Fest website](#). All events require social distancing, masks and other COVID-19 safety best practices.

Make It Your Own Mural Fest is supported through sponsorships or grants from 3Rivers Federal Credit Union, Ruoff Mortgage, Ambassador Enterprises, Flagstar Bank, NIPSCO and the NiSource Foundation, Farmers & Merchants State Bank, Cole Foundation, Fort Wayne Public Art Commission through the City of Fort Wayne, Canterbury School, Avangrid Foundation, MacAllister Rentals, Hagerman Construction, Downtown Improvement District and media sponsor WPTA. Activities are also made possible in part by Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. and the Indiana Arts Commission, which receives support from the State of Indiana and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Members of the media are encouraged to schedule time to interview artists on location during Mural Fest. To schedule an interview, please contact Kate Virag kate@neindiana.com or 260-414-2431. Please visit this [Dropbox link](#) for promotional photos and video.

To learn more, visit the website at www.NEIMuralFestival.com.

About the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership

The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership's mission is to build, market and sell Northeast Indiana to increase business investment. Founded in 2006, the private partnership strives to build a globally competitive region. The Partnership's Vision 2030 framework supports collaborative regional efforts to increase per capita income, population growth and educational attainment by focusing on business attraction, talent attraction and talent development. The Partnership represents 11 member counties: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells and Whitley. For more information, visit www.neindiana.com.

About Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne

Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. is a non-profit united arts fund and local arts agency that serves the communities of northeast Indiana by fueling the momentum of more than 70 arts, culture and quality of life initiatives each year. Arts United's strategic investments position arts and culture organizations to achieve higher levels of excellence and quality, to improve access to the arts for all community members and to support regional priorities for growth and development. For more information, visit www.artsunited.org.

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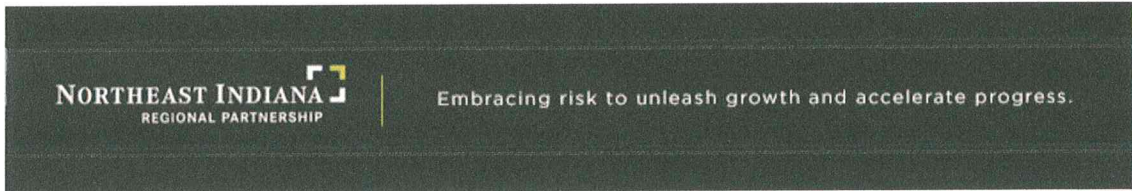
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