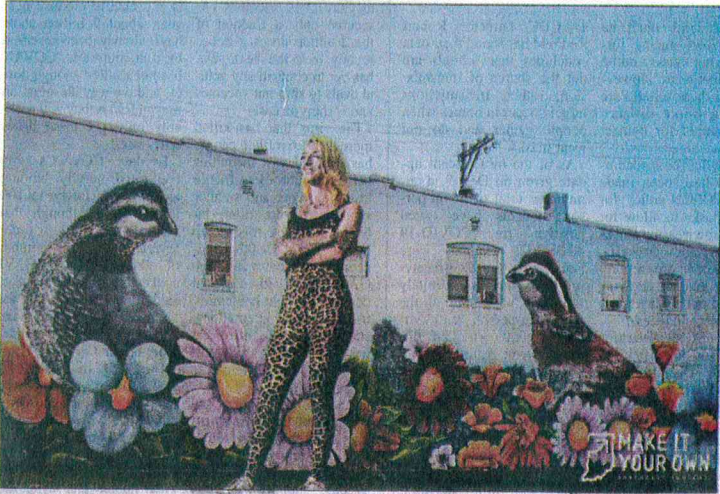


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Photos provided by America Carrillo

America Carrillo stands before one of her works completed in Huntington over the summer. Carrillo recently announced her "Yes You Can" upcoming mural project. Huntington County residents can send her their "limiting beliefs" on paper or through email to be turned into a piece of art. Carrillo said she wants everyone to go far for their passion while understanding their self-worth.

## Huntington muralist sets eyes on new project

By ANGELA SARTIANO  
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When it comes to art, there are many forms of media used to produce a feeling or a message. This could be a feeling of hope, pride or a sense of self-worth.

Huntington County local resident and mural artist America Carrillo wants to promote positivity by allowing others to share their dreams with her while also collaborating on a community based mural art project called "Yes You Can."

"It's a message I try to spread frequently. People talk to me often about their dreams. The number one thing I hear people say is I'd love to do this, but I can't. That makes me feel like I should inspire other people because it is a mindset. The 'Yes You Can' project is bringing that mindset to our city," Carrillo said.

About three years ago, Carrillo became interested in mural painting.



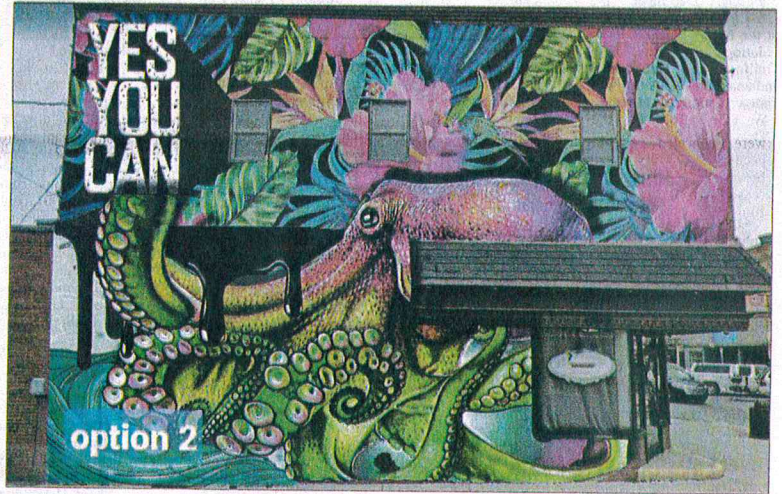
The tropical toucan is one design option local residents can vote on.

ing. She was creating artwork on a small scale and knew she wanted to create something bigger. In order to fine hone her artistic abilities, she shadowed established mural artists around the country while collaborating on various projects.

"I've painted in 13 different states

and in three different countries as of right now. My latest mission is to bring mural art or public art to the smaller cities that don't have as much as a bigger city would. I think it's really important to bring a community

See MURALS, page A4



Photos provided by America Carrillo

Another design option to be voted on includes an octopus.

### MURALS

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together and for increasing tourism for the city, especially a smaller city. We need more people spending in our city and public art is a fantastic way to do that. That's my biggest mission right now," Carrillo said.

In order to participate in this project, Carrillo is inviting students from Huntington North High School to shadow her. She is looking for volunteers, but her main focus is working with the youth in the Huntington County area to grow their talent for art as well as promoting self-confidence and self-assurance. Carrillo would like for local residents to send her their limiting beliefs on paper or through her social media for her to collage the pieces of paper into the final design of the mural.

"I'm going to be setting up a meet for us to do. They can send it to me in an email. They can send it to me on social media. They could meet me while I'm outside painting and bring me their papers. On site, I'll have these pieces of paper to go, so if anybody walks past me and talks to me, I'm going to offer them the opportunity to do this. Obviously, not everyone can go out due to COVID-19. I want to make



This flamingo is also an option to be voted on.

this available to everyone through email, through social media and through my website," Carrillo said.

In the near future, Carrillo said she will give a presentation to the high school students on why public art is important in the community and later invite them to join her in the project. She will create a schedule with a list of students who'd like to participate. Though we are facing a national pandemic, Carrillo said COVID-19 isn't completely deterring her plans, but she will be taking proper precautions when working with everyone.

"We'll definitely be taking precautions and I've defi-

nately already planned on having masks on site that have our logo on them so we can make sure we're being safe. It does affect my plans a bit because we shouldn't be meeting in large groups. There will be precautions to comply with CDC regulations and I'd like to create masks that say 'Yes You Can.' We have these precautions on site so everyone's being really safe," Carrillo said.

As far as Carrillo is concerned, life hasn't stopped because of the pandemic. Her goal is to create a space in Huntington where everyone can grow together. In order to enrich the culture

of the community, she wants to inspire others with her art and hope for those who have high-reaching goals.

"I would like to say that life is not canceled. We can come together in the community. We can provide our own inspiration and this is the most important time for us to come together. I'm excited to collaborate with the city and create something we're all involved in."

Carrillo has a website at <https://www.artbyamerica.com/yesyoucan> where local residents can vote on their mural design. Contact Carrillo on her Facebook for any additional questions. Donations are welcome.