



Painting their dreams

Camp Kenyon J. Scudder students create a 45-foot mural

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By Tammy Marashlian

Thirty girls being held at a Saugus probation camp painted themselves a brighter future and unveiled it Friday.

Their audience of education leaders and a county supervisor was convinced by their vision.

"We walk around much more enthused about what is to come in the future," said Pauline Starks, director of Camp Kenyon J. Scudder in Saugus, a Los Angeles County juvenile probation camp for girls with mental health needs.

The girls painted a colorful 45-foot wall mural dubbed the "Wall of Hope," which includes a hodgepodge of inspirational words and displays of nature.

"These ladies worked hard and were committed to getting this project completed," Starks said. "I hope this continues because these girls have really turned themselves around."



Youth First artist-in-residence Michael Massenburg introduces the Wall of Hope mural on Friday at Camp Scudder. The 45-foot wall mural was created under his direction in a dining hall by the students of Camp Scudder.

The Wall of Hope is the Los Angeles County Arts Commission's first mural project in a probation camp.

The girls spent the last 14 weeks working with artist-in-residence Michael Massenburg of Theatre of Hearts/Youth First, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization.

Massenburg, an artist for 20 years, taught the girls how to imagine their paths of success.

Meeting twice a week, the teenagers learned the basics of painting, art history and the significance of art.



A Camp Scudder student signs her name to the mural she helped to create.

They also learned how to work together as a team to make the mural a reality.

"It showed them there is no doubt they have the ability to be a positive member of the community," said Camp Scudder teacher Charlie Phelps.

The unveiling brought education leaders and Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, who congratulated the girls as they celebrated their creation.

"This is self-esteem being developed, and it's wonderful," said Donald Long, regional manager for the Los Angeles County Probation Department, as he looked at the mural in the dining hall.

Students at Camp Scudder turned their visions of the future into a 45-foot wall mural inside a dining hall at the camp.

