



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mural Unveiling on the Lower East Side

New Mural for New Playground

In Lower East Side School Campus

Mural Dedication: Thursday, August 27 at 1 pm
333 East 4th Street, New York, NY 10009

LOWER EAST SIDE, NY – In partnership with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and PS 15 The Roberto Clemente School campus, Groundswell inspired stewardship of the environment in youth artists through the artistic transformation of the East Village school campus playground. The mural depicts the Habits of the Mind educational philosophy, which describes sixteen intellectual habits to solve a problem such as persistence, creativity, and interdependence.

This mural, “The Power of Flourishing Minds,” will be unveiled Thursday, August 27 at 1 pm.

The Groundswell team, working with Lead Artist Angel Garcia and Assistant Artist Jessica Angel, researched, designed, and fabricated this mural as part of Groundswell’s flagship program, the Summer Leadership Institute. “The youth involved had a huge voice during this project,” Claire Haviland, one of the participants on the mural, said about the process. “It has made a significant impact on the responsibility we feel we hold as young people and members of our community.”

Installed across two walls in the playground, the mural design reflects upon the values highlighted in the PS 15 The Roberto Clemente School’s Habit of the Mind philosophy. These values are juxtaposed with imagery celebrating the environmental stewardship mission provided by TPL. The central image of one wall is a figure with arms outstretched, emphasizing the young people’s vision of the idea of reaching for your goals. Vines and leaves hold the images together, to further reflect upon the idea of nature and the concept behind unity, interconnection, and network. The second wall aims to inspire both young and old alike to strive for success, using vibrant images such as a nest composed of hands, a Phoenix bird, and a turtle with a maze for a shell.

“To ensure healthy development in our students, PS 15 uses the Habits of the Mind curriculum, which encourages youth to practice sixteen pragmatic every-day values. With the creation of this inspiring new mural, we can bring these habits to the community,” said Irene Sanchez, Principal of PS 15 The Roberto Clemente School.

“Throughout the mural-making process, the youth engaged nature as a tool for learning, inspiration, and creativity,” said TPL Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer William Rogers. “They have become ambassadors for environmental stewardship through this collaboration, and ‘The Power of Flourishing Minds’ will ensure healthy, livable communities for generations to come.”

“At Groundswell, we believe that art is a tool for making lasting change in a community,” said Groundswell Executive Director Rob Krulak. “This mural is an engaging roadmap to the Habit of the Mind curriculum practiced by the committed teachers and staff at PS 15, and promises to serve as a touchstone for the school and its students as they explore their potential.”

“The Power of Flourishing Minds” inspires both students and teachers, young and old to strive for success through the empowering vision of Habits of the Mind.

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Major financial support for Groundswell's 2015 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI) is contributed by Altman Foundation, Brooklyn Community Foundation, Charles Lawrence Keith and Clara Miller Foundation, David Rockefeller Fund, Ethel & W. George Kennedy Family Foundation, Lambent Foundation, M & T Bank, Nathan & Fannye Shafran Fund, Pinkerton Foundation, and Tikkun Olam Foundation, in addition to numerous individuals.

SLI is made possible in part by public funds administered by the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development Summer Youth Employment Program, New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, New York City Council Member Brad Lander, and New York City Council Member Stephen Levin.

Groundswell is grateful to the Office of the Mayor of New York City and the Office of the Manhattan Borough President.

Lead scholarship support is provided by AmWINS and Construction Risk Partners.

Special thanks to New York City Council Member Rosie Mendez for her contributions to the PS 15 campus playground, and all those who helped on the community painting day.

About Groundswell

Groundswell, New York City's leading organization dedicated to community public art, brings together youth, artists, and community partners, to make public art that advances social change, for a more just and equitable world. Our projects beautify neighborhoods, engage youth in societal and personal transformation, and give expression to ideas and perspectives that are underrepresented in the public dialogue. www.groundswell.nyc

About Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land works to protect the places people care about and to create close-to-home parks—particularly in and near cities, where 80 percent of Americans live. Our goal is to ensure that every child has easy access to a safe place to play in nature. We also conserve working farms, ranches,

and forests; lands of historical and cultural importance; rivers, streams, coasts, and watersheds; and other special places where people can experience nature close at hand. <http://www.tpl.org/>

About PS 15 The Roberto Clemente School

At PS 15 The Roberto Clemente School, staff takes the time to get to know each child personally. Students receive individualized instruction tailored to their needs. PS 15 The Roberto Clemente School welcomes diversity, talent, and a passion for learning. Staff work hard to motivate young learners to explore the world around them. <http://www.ps15.org/Home>