

“our common humanity: Plainfield students displaying artwork on race, war”

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PLAINFIELD - Students at the Barack Obama Academy for Academic and Civic Development are exhibiting "Silhouettes in Black: How Do We Maintain our Humanity?"

The exhibit is part of the students' research on retaining humanity in times of violence, genocide, war and persecution, asking the question: Does history repeat itself?

The assignment is a collaboration of the students in the English/humanities class and the history class. The teachers, Elizabeth McIntosh and Norma Flores, assigned the projects.

McIntosh's class analyzed current national events that have brought worldwide attention to the questions of race, immigration and intolerance.

"I chose to write about the Black Lives Matter movement because I needed to not only examine white on black crime, but also black on black crime," Micah Jordan, a student in McIntosh's class, said in a news

release. "My silhouette and poem became a plea for people of color to unite, and a tribute to two fallen friends."

McIntosh said, "This unit evolved from student concern about the presidential race in the United States and the rise in violence. The lessons and topics that were presented have been very interesting and eye-opening for the students. They have been able to articulate their concerns and put their thoughts to paper."

Students in Flores' class learned about historic events such as the Holocaust, World War II and modern conflicts that include events in Syria, Europe and other parts of the world. Using primary sources, independent and guided research, the students are creating a newsreel for YouTube that will demonstrate the effect of World War II on multiple groups of people. They have chosen a video as the medium for the delivery of their presentation.



Students at Barack Obama Academy for Academic and Civic Development created "Silhouettes in Black: How Do We Maintain our Humanity?" for an assignment discussing race, war and other topics. The project is on display at the school. (Photo: ~Courtesy of Plainfield Public Schools)

Overall, the exhibit "Silhouettes in Black: How Do We Maintain Our Humanity" will include two mediums that will allow the students to report on messages and stories that will help them answer the questions posed by their teachers and create lively class discussion.

"Students are excited to work on this project and visually they see the end product," Flores said.

More than 20 students are participating in this exercise which will conclude with the video in a few more days. For now, their pieces in black are hanging on the wall as a reminder. "Black Silhouettes: How Do We Maintain Our Humanity?" is now on exhibit at the Barack Obama Academy for Academic and Civic Development at 1200 Myrtle Ave. Visitors are welcome to view the exhibit.

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