

Realizing Youth Potential

Created by Araceli Mercado, Kristal Talmage and Annda Bearden

The three of us collaborated to create this mural. We met at Looking Glass New Roads School, our project supervisor. She inspired us to look past the obvious ideas we first came up with and gave us the support we needed to create something unique. Together, we sketched out a ton of different ideas before we landed on something that we really liked and felt we could connect with. This process helped us understand that your first idea may not be the best one. Collaboration and team discussion helped in curating our final image. We all created different parts of this sketch and together, we came up with a way to make all of the different pieces fit together in a cohesive way.

We illustrated the theme, realizing youth potential, in a number of ways. First, we focused on the background. We decided to go with an outer space background to represent the feeling of just floating and not knowing where to go or what to do next.

Next, we focused on the middle ground. The jagged piece of land shows the rocky and unstable past that many runaway and homeless youth have experienced. It also serves as minimal support for the tree that is growing on the ledge. The tree has no roots, which symbolizes self-reliance and resilience. Youth must find a way to grow and flourish in harsh conditions.

Lastly, we added two heads. These heads could be anybody. They show that with a good support systems through programs designed to help our specific situation, we can change our situation and future. The head that is on the left has the seeds of a better future in it and through support systems and positive peer to peer interactions, these seeds can grow and help to lay the ground work for a better future and help us all the realize our potential.