

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Steffen Thomas Museum of Art  
(STMA)

Amelia Schwartz  
Marketing Associate  
706-342-7557  
706-342-4348 (fax)

[aschwartz@steffenthomas.org](mailto:aschwartz@steffenthomas.org)



*Putnam High School students along with art teacher, Paige Barlow (far right), local artist Peter Muzyka and STMA Lead Artist, Karen Strelecki (far left), admire the final product of their art project – a handsome tile mural mounted on plywood.*

## Putnam County High School and STMA Celebrate Completion of Student Art Project

BUCKHEAD - The young artists of **Putnam County High School** were honored on Friday, May 21st, when their beautiful, large tile mural mounted on plywood was unveiled and installed.

The students participated in **OP Art: Opportunities for Employment and Empowerment through the Visual Arts**, a **Steffen Thomas Museum Arts Outreach Program**. This was the second year of a three-year project designed to introduce students in the tri-county Lake Oconee area to careers in the visual arts and the importance of ecological responsibility.

The sessions began last fall with a mixed group of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students from art teacher Paige Barlow's classes. Working professionals, including an architect, potter, T-shirt and textile designers, and a graphic artist spoke about their careers in the visual arts. Lee Glenn, a representative from Georgia Power, discussed water conservation and the nature of the water cycle.

STMA then conducted 16 weekly in-school art workshops with the students. Under the instruction of STMA Lead Artist, Karen Strelecki, assisted by local artist, Peter Muzyka, students painted illustrations of careers in the visual arts on recycled ceramic tiles.

During a ceremony at the school on February 17<sup>th</sup>, all the students received Certificates of Participation. Awards were presented for the most outstanding pieces selected by a jury of local artists. All the tiles were exhibited at the school and at the museum.

A small group of students, working with professional artists, then used the prize-winning selections as the inspiration for a large tile mural showing the visual artists at work in the offices and studios of a large city. The final product, displayed in a beautiful frame built by Ricky Moore of GA Power, was unveiled at the school on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

STMA is most grateful to the following sponsors for making this event possible: Bank of Madison; Central Georgia EMC; David Crawford, CPA; DreamTeam Technologies, Inc.; Frances Wood Wilson Foundation; Georgia Power – A Southern Company; Georgia Power Foundation; Hidden Treasures Furniture NHT Movers; HouseSmart; Jim Boyd and Associates; Madison Studios; Morgan County Citizen; R.E.M./Athens, LLC; Smith Communications, Inc; Vanishing Rural Georgia Art; Walmart; Whidby Jewelers; and Yellowbook.

The Steffen Thomas Museum of Art, located at 4200 Bethany Road in Buckhead, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 AM to 4 PM. For more information and directions, please call 706-342-7557 or visit [www.steffenthomas.org](http://www.steffenthomas.org).

