



**National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)
Challenge America Grant
City of Port St. Lucie – Mural at Minsky Gym Public Art Project**



Background:

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) serves as an Independent Federal Agency that offers funding and support for projects exhibiting artistic excellence. The Challenge America Grant is one grant offered to municipalities intended to offer support primarily for projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations – those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. The City of Port St. Lucie has been approved for a \$10,000 Challenge America grant to support the creation of a mural outside Minsky Gym depicting PSL’s vision to be a City for All People. Overall, the National Endowment for the Arts has approved 1,187 grants totaling \$27.3 million in the first round of fiscal year 2020 funding to support arts projects across the country. Port St. Lucie is one of 145 Challenge America grants included in this announcement.

Project Purpose:

The purpose of the project is to create a mural on the wall of the 8,000-square foot Robert E. Minsky Gym to celebrate the City's diversity and provide an opportunity for the community to experience art. The mural will be placed on the exterior wall that faces Southwest Darwin Boulevard. The project site itself is centrally located in the community, adjacent to Windmill Park Elementary School, Whispering Pines Park and Treasure Coast High School. The project site also falls within Census Tract 3821.13, which has lower median household incomes (\$53,489 compared to \$57,652 nationally) and higher poverty (16.6 in relation to 14.6% across the United States). The area is home to significant Hispanic (25.7%) and Black (24.9%) populations. There is no public art in the neighborhood. A mural on Minsky Gym will be visible from a main thoroughfare and provide an opportunity for an underserved community to experience art.

Input Early:

Following the announcement of the City receiving Challenge Grant funding to support a mural at Minsky Gym, staff obtained input early on what to include in the Call to Artist and what the mural should consider incorporating. Planning and Zoning staff attended and presented at the City's Diversity Team meeting held on November 18, 2020 for input by the members. Input received included the mural displaying different sport activities and recreational elements such as a park backdrop. Also, as part of the 2021 Citizen Summit held on March 6, 2021 at Winterlakes Park, residents were informed of the future mural to be placed on the Minsky Gymnasium wall. Residents who stopped at the designated table were posed the question "What Makes Port St. Lucie Diverse?" Responses were written on comment cards and submitted in a comment box. The responses were included in the Call to Artist Flyer for artists knowledge and consideration.

Call to Artist:

On April 1, 2021, a Call to Artist was made public requesting interested artists submit an application and submission packet for a "City for All People" themed mural. Submission requirements included (but not limited to): A detailed description of proposed mural piece, a mural concept as it relates to the theme "A City for all People," project timeline, resume and images of past work. Interested artists were required to incorporate a diverse group of persons such as different races, colors, ethnicities, age groups, all abilities within their mural concept. Artists were also highly encouraged to incorporate in their proposal recreational activities or elements as the mural will be located within a Parks and Recreation facility, children playing various recreational sports or activities, or a portrait-style concept with diverse group of persons.

The Call to Artist was closed on May 2, 2021 and a total of 18 artists answered the call.

Submissions Review and Ranking:

As part of the review of submission packets, a project review team was assembled. Representatives included a staff member from the City of Port St. Lucie Parks and Recreation Department, two staff members from the Planning and Zoning Department, staff member from the City Manager's Office, and the Executive Director for the St. Lucie Cultural Alliance. The purpose of the project review team was to consider the following for each: The ability to meet the identified theme, submitted mural concept and how well it incorporates a diverse group of persons, that all required submittal materials are provided, and ability to meet the specified completion deadline. Using the established ranking criteria below, the

18 submissions packets were individually ranked by each project review representatives and a total tally was done with an average score applied to each artist. The first-round ranking is also shown below:

Scoring Criteria for each Submission:

Past Work (50)
Mural Description & Concept (30)
Project Management (10)
Future Maintenance (5)
Local Artist (5)
TOTAL (100)

First Round Ranking:

	Artist or Artist Group Title	Average Score out of 100%
1	Eddie Mendieta	84.750
2	Brian Taylor/Shawn Logan	81.500
3	Craig McInnis	78.500
4	Kenny Maguire	76.500
5	Alyson McKee	72.500
5	Joseph Starkweather/Zach Bartel	72.500
7	Corey Morrow/Sarah LaPierre/Lisa Kaw	72.250
8	Nadia Utto	64.500
9	Georgeta Fondos	64.250
9	Ken Mullen	64.250
11	Christian Wong	63.250
11	Shannon P. Wiley	63.250
13	Briana Vega	61.500
14	Michael Alexander	58.750
15	Renata Rodrigues	57.000
16	Avi Ram	55.750
17	Robert St Van/Rory St Van	51.250
18	Orlando Hernandez	49.250

Following the first-round ranking, the top 4 ranked were shortlisted to provide a final draft mural concept. On July 1st, 2021, the Project Review Team met to review the top four ranked submissions in addition to provide concurrence on the final ranking. The Project Review Team final ranking can be seen below:

Project Review Team Final Ranking

	Artist or Artist Group Title
1	Eddie Mendieta
2	Kenny Maguire
3	Brian Taylor/Shawn Logan
4	Craig McInnis
5	Alyson McKee
5	Joseph Starkweather/Zach Bartel
7	Corey Morrow/Sarah LaPierre/Lisa Kaw
8	Nadia Utto
9	Georgeta Fondos
9	Ken Mullen
11	Christian Wong
11	Shannon P. Wiley
13	Briana Vega
14	Michael Alexander
15	Renata Rodrigues
16	Avi Ram
17	Robert St Van/Rory St Van
18	Orlando Hernandez

Public Art Advisory Board Recommendation:

On July 19, 2021, the Public Art Advisory Board voted to recommend a revised ranking of the top 4 artists as follows:

	Artist or Artist Group Title
1	Eddie Mendieta
2	Brian Taylor/Shawn Logan
3	Craig McInnis
4	Kenny Maguire

The top 4 ranked artist and submission packets will now be presented to the City Council for the selection of an artist and to move forward with a contract agreement. Following artist selection and contract agreement, a public workshop to gain citizen input on the mural project is anticipated to be held in Fall 2021.