

# From caterpillars to butterflies to the District Attorney

## Quist students display art next year at Adams County Government Building

BY BELEN WARD  
BWARD@COLORADOCOMMUNITYMEDIA.COM

An art display by middle school artists meant to evoke life during COVID will transform into a traveling display at the Adams County District Attorney's office.

More than 200 Roger Quist Middle School students created a permanent art installation at the school of butterflies to represent a year of living like cocoons during a pandemic and emerging with resiliency by spreading their wings like butterflies.

The Adam County District Attorney's Office caught wind of the Quist Middle school display - Colorado Community Media reported on it - and reached out to the school to collaborate on an art installation to be displayed in the lobby of the district attorney's office.

"This idea was born out of the article you wrote and we saw it in our office- we were inspired by what we saw," said Chris Hopper Director of Communications 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office.

"We've all faced so many challenges during COVID, and we continue to face those challenges," Hopper said. "We thought it would be nice to connect with young people in our community that we serve in a sort of



Roger Quist Middle School students left, Johnathan Cooper, Jolina Harcourt, Justin Tristan Reader and Will Dean creating butterfly templates and creating art designs for the Adams County Government art installation. PHOTO BY BELEN WARD

a unique way."

The art exhibit will be a traveling exhibit and it will also be placed in the Adams County Government Office. Because it will travel, the teachers and students decided to make butterflies.

The student from sixth grade to eighth grade will make over 200 butterflies templates and will use colored markers to create the designs and patterns.

Taylor Marino, Quist Middle School Science teacher, said when Chris Hopper contacted them over the summer he pointed out a mental health initiative idea for them on how to celebrate the effort to help kids overcome COVID by creating art.

"To be able to have this displayed publicly, I think speaks to the resilience of our kids and the adults that they're working with us on this col-

laboration," said Marino.

Beth Marks-Berner, Quist Middle School English Language Arts teacher, said she was in France when she learned of the student's commission.

"I said yeah! The kids have been just so enthusiastic," Marks-Berner said.

The DA's office brings employees to the school every Thursday to sit with the students, and collaborate on the art project together.

"We have several employees who come almost every Thursday to take part in this project. We thought it would be good to just have the students and the adults interact together talking to each other while they're doing something- in essence-sort of therapeutic for all of them," said Hopper.

Marks-Berner said the year had been difficult for the students. She

does not know if her students lost any academics but they lost social skills.

"This is a nice way to be together with no pressure- hang with your friends- have snacks and listen to music," she said.

Hopper said the art installation will be displayed at the DA's office main atrium when complete and they talked to Adams County so it will be displayed in the county government center at some point as well.

"It gives the students some additional recognition for the hard work they've put in every Thursday for quite a while. It builds that relationship with people in our community, outside of the courthouse, and outside of the Department of Human Services office. It is unique and can be very therapeutic during very difficult times for a lot of people," said Hopper.

The students and staff are excited to share with the public the art that will go into these government buildings and are looking forward to the final product.

"The butterflies are a symbol for the metamorphosis process of change and some people would say rebirth," said Marino.

"The process of turning from a caterpillar into a butterfly and what that symbolizes for kids and adults alike. I think it's especially relevant now since we've been going through an exceptional amount of changes over the last several years. We are all caterpillars and butterflies."

## Court advocates honor donor Lembke

BY LYNN BARTELS  
SPECIAL TO COLORADO COMMUNITY MEDIA

A bronze sculpture titled "A Child's Dream Takes Shape" was presented to businessman Bob Lembke by an organization that advocates for abused and neglected children.

In the last decade, Lembke has donated more than \$460,000 to the CASA program in Adams and Broomfield counties. CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates, and the organization trains and supervises community volunteers to represent child victims of abuse and neglect who are currently in the judicial system.

Lembke was among the CASA supporters honored at a reception Dec. 14 in Westminster, hosted by CASA for Adams and Broomfield counties.

Board member Bob Grant, the former Adams County district attorney, presented the award to Lembke.

"Everyone in this room is here because we believe in the value a CASA

volunteer provides to a child, and the funds donated by Bob Lembke have allowed us to impact so many more children's lives," Grant said. "The impact he has had on kids in Adams and Broomfield counties is staggering. There aren't any words to say except 'Wow.'"

Lembke, who eschews the lime-light, broke up the moment when he responded that he has heard the word "wow" before in reference to him but not always in the best of light.

Among those in attendance were Adams County commissioners Eva Henry and Emma Pinter.

Studies show that children assigned a CASA volunteer are more likely to find a permanent home and succeed in school, and half as likely to re-enter the foster care system.

Over the past year, CASA volunteers in Adams and Broomfield counties have advocated for 635 children, the largest number in the state among the 18 CASA chapters.

## HOME

FROM PAGE 1

"This isn't just a problem in the

don't shoot your buddy when you're trying to qualify your weapon," she said.

The bill, however, fell short of requiring women to register for the

**aces**  
arvada center  
event space

A unique venue devoted to elevating your event experience

- Galas, wedding receptions, expos, conferences & more
- Exceptional food and beverage services
- Explore opportunities such as dinner and a show, and a tour of our breathtaking art galleries

SCAN ME



...ing women to register for the  
 military. It's a problem in our entire  
 draft. She said that all combat posi-  
 tions within the department of de-  
 fense opened up for women to serve,  
 and she said the country might not  
 be ready for that yet.  
 "That's a decision by our country,"  
 she said.

...ing women to register for the  
 draft. She said that all combat posi-  
 tions within the department of de-  
 fense opened up for women to serve,  
 and she said the country might not  
 be ready for that yet.  
 "That's a decision by our country,"  
 she said.