

Bryant Adult Alternative High School



These landscapes were created by students from Bryant Adult Alternative High School as part of the Phillips Mentor Teacher Program. This cross-curricular project was developed by art teacher Rachel Albert and Missy Haney who teaches English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).



Through a six-week series of innovative lessons, the project connected students' analysis of Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party* to a challenging ESOL curriculum as well as to their own lives and cultures. After researching and writing about Renoir's painting and his cultural setting, students interpreted the painting and created their own work representing a social gathering of family and friends from their countries of origin including Afghanistan, Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, and Pakistan.

Ms. Albert and Ms. Haney observed that studying the history and context of *Luncheon of the Boating Party* generated discussion about each student's culture. They also noted that many of the students had never taken an art class or even made a work of art. By creating art, students learned how to express themselves visually while improving their spoken English, comprehension and writing skills.



Missy Haney knew from an early age that she wanted to be a teacher. She received her bachelor's degree in early childhood education and French from the University of Richmond and a Master's of Arts teaching of reading from the University of Virginia (UVA). In 1995, the UVA's Curry School of Education Foundation named Missy the Outstanding Secondary School Teacher of the year.

Missy has taught ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) in Fairfax County for the past twenty-five years, beginning with what turned out to be a 20-year stay at J.E.B. Stuart High School. During the summers Missy has taught ESL (English as a Second Language) in Arlington County and ESL and French at the Potomac School Summer Programs. Students from around the world have inspired her over the years.



Missy has supervised a number of student teachers, mentored new teachers and is currently the Lead Mentor at Bryant. This position, through the Great Beginnings Mentor Program in Fairfax, supports new teachers and mentors and plays an important role in keeping high quality educators in the teaching profession.

Rachel Albert received her Master's degree in art therapy and has been working in Fairfax County Public Schools as both an art teacher and an art therapist for seven years. Through a year-long stay in Israel, she had the opportunity to facilitate therapeutic art making in a variety of settings, while interacting with the clients and patients in Hebrew. These ranged from a pediatric cancer clinic, in a facility for adults with Down syndrome residents, to an elementary school with new immigrants to Israel. Rachel learned first-hand how creating art can help people across cultures and skill levels.



Upon returning to the United States, Rachel worked at a special education high school for students with emotional disabilities, teaching adolescents how to express themselves in appropriate and creative ways. Now living in Northern Virginia with her husband and one-year-old daughter, this is Rachel's first year at Bryant, where she is the only art teacher. Rachel is inspired by her students' daily dedication to learning against the odds.