



DIVERSE IN CULTURE
UNIFIED IN MISSION

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Unique senior project provides calm for students



Anastasia Cherimnov stands in front of her completed mural with a student from Nellie Muir Elementary School.

[Woodburn, Ore.] The Woodburn School District requires every graduating student to complete a senior project that improves their community and the condition of others. All projects have merit, but Anastasia Cherimnov completed one that benefits disabled students at Nellie Muir Elementary School.

Some children have a difficult time with all the stimulus that surrounds them in elementary school. Like many schools, Nellie Muir has a room for students who are overstimulated or have sensory needs where they can calm themselves and refocus on learning. However, Nellie Muir's Sensory Room was out of date with chipped and pockmarked white painted walls and nothing soothing on which the children could focus.

Nellie Muir Principal Jeff Taylor contacted Woodburn Academy of Arts, Sciences and Technology Principal Geri Federico to see if she had a senior with artistic talent who would be willing to paint a

mural to calm children in need. Federico knew immediately who to approach – Anastasia Cherimnov, who had artistic talent and a sensitivity that would resonate well with children.

“Anastasia is a very talented, creative and reflective person,” said Principal Federico. “This mural for students at Nellie Muir will be part of her legacy. I hope that she will bring her own children in to see what she created.”

The mural covering the entire wall depicts a park with leafy trees and a flowing stream. Mountains and blue sky can be seen in the background. For young children, this park-like setting is associated with happy emotions and has a calming effect.

“What were just solid, off-white, poorly conditioned walls have been transformed to a serene, beautiful, mural to help our students to focus, reconnect and get ready for class,” said Principal Jeff Taylor. “Anastasia’s work speaks for itself.”

Anastasia says that painting a mural had been a dream of here, and she was grateful for the opportunity.

"I am very happy that it made a huge impact with the children, and hope they will find a peaceful state of mind in the sensory room," she said. "I would like to thank everybody who supported me through this process."

Anastasia will graduate this year. She plans to attend a local community college to train as a pharmacy technician and possibly continue her studies further.

“I’m very excited to see what life has in store for me,” she said.

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The Woodburn School District provides a world-class education to approximately 5,700 students. Woodburn has rigorous academic programs such as all-day kindergarten, dual language programs in English and Russian or Spanish, Advanced Placement, and the International Baccalaureate Diploma. For more information about Woodburn School District, visit www.woodburnsd.org or like us on Facebook (WSD103).

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