

RWJBarnabas Health & Middlesex County Collaboration Brings the Community Together Through Art

RWJBarnabas Health and Middlesex County embarks on a new journey.

 BY MIDDLESEX COUNTY CULTURE



Community Day: Members of the RWJ Hospital and AIMC teams, students from Middlesex Magnet and Paul Robeson schools, and Middlesex College help paint a mural for the upcoming Our Space project.

As part of a longstanding relationship between Middlesex County and [RWJBarnabas Health](#), the County has invested [\\$25 million](#) in workforce development, opening opportunities for [Middlesex County Magnet Schools](#) and [Middlesex College](#) students to pursue careers in healthcare in a real-world hospital setting. To build upon this unique relationship, the County and [Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital](#) are extending the scope of their strong partnership to include arts and culture, a universal language everyone can enjoy and celebrate.

The journey to bring the community inside the walls of Robert Wood Johnson Hospital started in December 2023 when the hospital contacted [Arts Institute of Middlesex County \(AIMC\)](#) about potential art installations, programs, services, and events. Hospital leaders knew firsthand how impactful visual arts can be in uplifting spirits within the hospital, having previously featured art by doctors, patients, and faculty members. After many discussions, polls, and extensive vetting, a collective decision was made to install a mural that would bring the culture and energy of the New Brunswick community into the hospital through artistic expression.

Finding the right artist to bring this vision to life was a critical step in the collaboration. The Arts Institute of Middlesex County enlisted Martryce Roach because of her experience with community engagement and her New Brunswick roots. She also had an RWJ connection as she was mentored by healthcare professionals from the hospital (grades 7 – 12). The mural design process was a collaborative effort informed by surveys that were filled out by nearly 200 hospital staff members, patients, and healthcare providers. New Brunswick Public School students at Paul Robeson Community School for the Arts, the East Brunswick Magnet School students, and Middlesex College students also provided their input through a series of workshops led by the artist.

A mural unveiling to celebrate this installation will take place in late October with collaborators from RWJBarnabas Health and Middlesex County, as well as members of the community.

THE ARTIST



MARTRYCE ROACH

*Artist – A professional who uses art as a platform to inspire social change.

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- Entrepreneur
 - Innovator
 - Change-maker
 - Advocate
-

“...a self-taught visual artist from New Brunswick, NJ, who introduced her work in 2014 at The House of Art in her hometown. Martryce incorporates elements of music, education, geometric shapes, and environment to construct surrealistic art stories that speak to human experiences and relationships, particularly as they relate to African American culture. With a Bachelor’s Degree in Public Health and Africana Studies and a Master’s Degree in Social Work, the context for a lot of this artist’s work is shaped by her passion for helping people.”

[Read More](#)

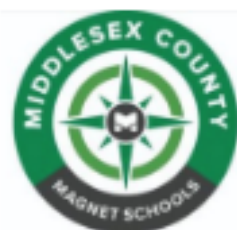
P O R T F O L I O



GROUNDWORK



Read about **Community Art Day**, phase two of this collaboration, [here](#).



COLLEGE READY.
CAREER READY.
LIFE READY.



RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

Robert Wood Johnson
University Hospital