



Community Arts Mural in Asylum Hill

By Michelle R. McFarland

On July 16, 2016 Connecticut Center for Non-Violence and several organizations were on Niles Street to paint the impressive large-scale mural on the wall of the 224 Eco-Space adjacent to the Knox Community garden on 17 Niles Street.

The artwork created by Renowned Hartford-based artist Tao LaBossiere used the ideas expressed in several group discussions during the previous month to make the final design.

The theme of the work is based on the 6th Principle of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "The Universe is On The Side of Justice". It is the message that seventy people helped to paint.

Throughout the morning and into the early afternoon, painters of all ages worked diligently on the massive piece of art. Many of the artists including myself had limited experience painting, but in the end it did not matter. Everyone was supportive and positive during the process.

The Scales of Justice, water, stars and flowers were vibrantly colored and filled the space from beginning to end. The sound of Jazz filled the air as well as multiple conversations as the community artists made connections among themselves.

There were also presentations by ThinKing Youth Non Violence Leaders. They shared their personal experiences as a result of upholding Dr. King's principles as students attending Hartford Schools. Their training gives them the confidence to help other young people avoid using violence as a way to solve problems.

Connecticut Center for Nonviolence Executive Director, Victoria Christgau believes that big strong visual statements about the power of peace and nonviolence have a positive impact on the community. This project is a great example of the wonderful activities that take place in Hartford and especially in Asylum Hill. For detailed photos of the mural, and the planning sessions go to: <https://goo.gl/photos/vbvoC1G65SCHAhMo7> for more information on the Connecticut Center for Nonviolence go to <http://ctnonviolence.org/news-events/third-nonviolence-mural-going-224-ecospace-hartford/>