For Immediate Release

Portraits of Kindness

April 25, 2019 - Livermore, CA - Have you ever seen one of those pictures that reveal a 3-D image if you stare at it long enough? It’s called an autostereogram, and the trick is to stare at it long enough so that your eyes diverge and the hidden image is revealed. This type of art is fun and feels a bit like a secret has been unveiled when the hidden image appears right before your very eyes. This whimsical example underscores that art is about connection between artist and viewer. The ability to find meaning behind the brush strokes or pencil lines can be a personal and intense experience.

The Memory Project strives to create connections between artists around the world and children who face challenging conditions such as war, poverty, neglect, and other extreme circumstances. This charitable non-profit organization was started by Ben Schumaker in 2004 with the mission to give children at risk a gift that would be both a keepsake and a message of kindness. His organization takes digital portraits of children in orphanages in various countries, and matches them with artists - like those in Granada High School’s (GHS) Art Club - who are willing to facilitate the rendering of those photos into personal portraits in pencil, watercolor, or acrylic paint. The portraits are then returned to the children.

GHS Art Club co-president, Sofia Spasibenko, coordinated work between The Memory Project and GHS student artists to complete 30 portraits this year. She stated, “I have done The Memory Project for four years now, and every time the experience has been eye-opening. The process challenges us because we want to make the portraits look the best that they can for the children receiving them. I think a lot of our student artists are very humbled by the children we paint and we appreciate getting the opportunity to create a keepsake for them to cherish for the rest of their lives.”

Art teacher Laura Thournir proudly advises this club and knows that these student artists are contributing to the betterment of our world by using their talents. She also is grateful for The Livermore Rotary Club and the Granada Interact Club for their financial support and for making this project a reality.

While it may be said that a picture is worth a thousand words, Granada Art Club students know that one deed is worth ten thousand.

Photos of GHS Art Club with Memory Project artwork courtesy of LVJUSD
Granada High Art Club 2018-19

Logan Lewis
Jorja Burbane
Katie Wilson
Meghan Strong
Camille Laron
Lydia Fife
Angela Nguyen
Laura Flores
Baileigh Anderson
Erin Cavanaugh
Gracie Ackerman
Caitlin McCool
Ella DeCosta
Daria Orlova
Sierra Graham

Mae Noland
Cara Razma
Kaylie Lawsen
Vanessa Rodriguez
Sofia Spasibenko
Aruen McLullough
Taylor Anderson
Cheyenne Frey
Ronni Sharpe
Sophia Bass
Shivani Rao
Jessica Zogaric
Janyn Roldan
Alyanna Francisco
Jodi Bryant

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ABOUT LIVERMORE VALLEY JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

LVJUSD is an award-winning district that serves more than 13,900 students in transitional kindergarten through 12th grade at nine elementary campuses, two K-8 schools, three middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and two alternative schools. The LVJUSD features International Baccalaureate Programmes and a STEM pathway, TK-12. The mission of the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District is to ensure each student will graduate with the skills needed to contribute and thrive in a changing world. For more information about the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, please visit [www.livermoreschools.org](http://www.livermoreschools.org)

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS:
School Board President Craig Bueno, cbuenotrustee@lvjusd.org (925) 918-7345
Superintendent of Schools Kelly Bowers, Ed.D. kbowers@lvjusd.k12.ca.us (925) 606-3281
Director of Community Engagement Philomena Rambo, prambo@lvjusd.org (925) 960-2917