

Rutherford County Student Artists Shine in MTSU's Todd Hall Exhibition

Features Blackman Middle and Central Magnet School Artwork Through
Friday, April 11, 2025

The **MTSU Department of Art and Design** is proud to showcase outstanding student artwork from **Rutherford County Schools** in a special exhibition in the corridors of **Todd Hall** on the MTSU campus. Representing the creative talents of middle and high school students, the exhibition features work from **Blackman Middle School** and **Central Magnet School**.

This collaborative showcase is part of the department's ongoing community engagement efforts. It offers an invaluable opportunity for young artists to present their work in a university setting — a unique and formative experience for students at this stage in their artistic journeys.

Danny Freeman, senior visual arts educator at **Central Magnet School**, brings a wealth of experience to his students. His curriculum emphasizes deep technical skill and conceptual development across all levels of visual art, including AP Studio Art. At Central, students are challenged to pursue personal voices while mastering traditional and contemporary techniques.

Meanwhile, at **Blackman Middle School**, art teacher **Deena Cruz** fosters a supportive and vibrant environment for early creative growth. Through daily instruction and extracurricular opportunities like Art Club, Ms. Cruz empowers students to experiment and take pride in their artistic expression. Two of her students recently earned regional recognition at Nashville's Parthenon as part of the Middle Tennessee Regional Student Art Exhibition. **Cruz and Freeman are alums of the MTSU Department of Art and Design.**

Find the exhibits across two gallery areas within **Todd Hall**:

- **Gallery 200**, located along the corridors adjacent to the Department of Art and Design's Art Education study spaces, features artwork from Blackman Middle and Central Magnet students.
- **The Showcase Gallery**, found on the first floor of Todd Hall leading to the building's main elevator, offers a prominent space for additional works by Central Magnet students.

This program is made possible through the continued partnership between the MTSU Department of Art and Design and **Rutherford County Schools**, thanks to **Dr. Lindsay Halford**, the district's Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator. Dr. Halford's leadership has been instrumental in advancing meaningful arts experiences and cross-institutional collaboration throughout the region.

Don't miss this inspiring glimpse into the next generation of artists and the power of arts education.