



Salisbury University's
PRESIDENTIAL CITIZEN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

PCS WHITEPAPER

LIGHT STREET BEAUTIFICATION MURAL

MAUREN KRAUSER, JUNIOR

KAILAH CALISKAN, JUNIOR

MIRANDA SURRETT, JUNIOR

JULIA DYER, JUNIOR

ZOE CLARKE, JUNIOR



MEET THE SCHOLARS



Mauren Krauser

Biology major with a minor in chemistry on the pre-dental track. Graduating in May of 2026. A member of the Salisbury University field hockey team and Beta Beta Beta Biological Honors Society.



Kailah Caliskan

Physical Education major with a degree in Culinary Arts. Graduating in May 2026.



Miranda Surret

Double major in Public Health and International Studies. Graduating in May of 2026. President of the Wesley Foundation and a member of Seagull Sports Network team.

MEET THE SCHOLARS



Julia Dyer

Health Science Major, with a Minor in Biology and Chemistry. On the pre-Vet track. Graduating in 2026.



Zoe Clarke

Accounting Major with a minor in French. Graduating in 2027. President of the Hillel of Salisbury University.

Light Street Beautification Mural

PCS PROJECT MISSION

Through visits to Light street and other community events, we talked to people in the community, both adults and children. During these events we gained personal testimonies from the communities. They were upset regarding aggressive driving and safety on Light street.

Light street is positioned in between the Newton Community Center (NCC) and the community garden/playground. Children fill the community center everyday, all year and are constantly running in between the NCC and garden/playground.

To aid in designing the asphalt art , we have collected drawings from the local community through block parties, back to school events, and trunk or treats. While collecting data, we asked parents what they thought about their OWN family coming to paint their OWN street, and they loved it.

Through these conversations we have found a high interest in implementing a speed bump in addition to the beautification project. Hopefully after our mural we will implement a speed bump and mural legislation as well to further aid the communities desire for safety.

BRANDON BELL

Brandon Bell is the owner of We Are Limitless Studios. You can see many of his murals featured around the City and Town of Salisbury. He began working with us in 2024, taking the reins on the design. On paint day, he then sketched the design on the ground and let us tape and paint away.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

As new PCS scholars in 2023, we formed a group around a project that a past scholar was unable to complete. This group and project has now evolved into a mural that is actually being painted on the street.

We collaborated with a past scholar, Mellissa Florez, to gain more information and insight on what her thoughts were while creating the project.

Inspired by her ideas and research done at the NCC by the 2021 PCS cohort, we made them our own. We did this through countless ideas, design drafts, and community and professional input. Brandon Bell was integral in creating the finalized design. He used a drawing from the chalk data, Melissa's separated spaces, and the slogan from the NCC. The larger than life flower brings a sense of surrealism that evokes a reaction from the viewer.

Light Street Beautification Mural

DESIGN STAGES

Back in 2023, Melissa was working on collecting data for her mural. She had ideas surrounding community, bright colors, and involving the NCC. In 2024 we met with Melissa to discuss the design and she came up with the idea of broken up spaces, almost like the Downtown Salisbury logo! (Picture 1)

One of the ideas was to add different images into each square. We soon realized, this was going to be way too busy. Kailah created a version in color and presented it to the Public Art Committee (PAC). (Picture 2) Susan Holt was another integral community partner that told us we needed to step the design up. We agreed, and decided it was the perfect timing to collaborate with Brandon.

Brandon created this beautiful piece that breaks monotony of drivers, calling attention to kids on a busy street. (Picture 3) It hits all aspects, incorporating a community members drawing, NCC slogan, and the Camden community garden. The PAC, Mayor, and community all approved that this was an acceptable beautification piece on their street. The smiles on their faces when they see the mural proves it!



Light Street Beautification Mural

OUR MURAL DESIGN

Quality time was spent in the community, promoting the street mural idea and gaining community buy in. We provided many opportunities for the adults and kids to exhibit their own artistic ability/ideas for the mural.

We collected countless drawings and chalk art from the events and used the common theme of garden, bees and bright colors to inspire our mural design.

We worked with Brandon Bell, the owner of We Are Limitless Studios, to create this amazing design of honey combs, bees, and flowers with the NCC logo of “A Place To Grow”. The logo fit perfectly with our design idea and we were thrilled with the outcome of the design.

THE PAINT PROCESS

The community will be painting the mural in a paint by number style. The street will be shut down for the duration of the prep, painting, and then drying. The paint takes 2-3 hours to dry for light traffic and then we will add a clear sealant. The extra paint and materials will be stored at the NCC for any touch ups or repainting needed.



Light Street Beautification Mural



RESEARCH & EVIDENCE

Street murals are more than just decoration, they're proven tools for traffic calming and community connection. According to Bloomberg Philanthropies' Asphalt Art Initiative, cities that implemented street art saw a 50% reduction in crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists and a 27% decrease in total crashes overall (2022). These statistics show that public art can save lives.

Asphalt art disrupts the monotony of gray roadways and signals to drivers that they're entering a community space, not just a cut through street. Bright colors, unexpected patterns, and bold shapes increase driver awareness and slow down vehicle speeds without the need for traditional infrastructure like stop signs or speed cameras.

Our mural on Light Street follows in this growing national movement. Located between the Newton Community Center and the community garden/playground, it is strategically placed to alert drivers to the presence of children and families. Through this research, we knew we weren't just painting for beauty, we were creating an evidence based, community driven traffic calming solution.



Light Street Beautification Mural

A MURAL WAS BORN

We planned for a mural, a project picked up from a previous PCS scholar who was unable to finish her project. We wanted to finish it, help the community, and make the street safer for everyone.

But how to start? Did the community still want this? Was interest on the project still there? and, if it was, what should we put on the street? What represents the community?

We had to see the community for the answers to those questions. So to begin, we ventured out.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

First, we had to see if the same

excitement in the mural was there. We set out to many community events, including the Back To School Night event at Pinehurst Elementary where we met Erika Schlorb, the Newton Community center Block Party and many others. We also gathered info about the process and researched paint options and methods.

MEETING WITH MAYOR TAYLOR

As a part of the approval process for our street mural, our PCS group had the chance to meet with Mayor Randy Taylor. During this meeting we had the chance to go over the location details for the mural, the mural design, and event logistics. We left the meeting with Mayor Taylor's approval of our street mural.



Light Street Beautification Mural



PAINT ON THE PAVEMENT

The day begun with setting up the city barricades. Brandon Bell then sketched the design that was displayed via his “MetaQuest” VR. He was able to trace the design seamlessly and it was incredible to watch. We then taped off the design, leaving only the hexagons open. By the time we finished taping, the community had begun to show up. Mayor Taylor was the first person from the community to show up and put paint on the street!



Once the hexagons were painted, we pulled up the tape and re-taped the letters to continue to aid the painting. Some kids painted outside of the lines, but we simply went back and painted over the mistakes! Due to stock issues we used two different paint suppliers, and through our process we realized that our paints had two different dry times. This required us to let the mural dry overnight and add the sealant the next day. At the end of the day Brandon used his talent to add in the details to the flowers, he also used his personal spray paint to clean up some parts of the mural.



Early next morning we returned and put the sealant on. We let that dry and then the barricades came down later that day. Later in the week Kailah and Rachel Manning debuted the finalized mural on WBOC.

Light Street Beautification Mural

THINGS WE WOULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY:

- Not use Amazon paint (oil based).
- Purchase VandlGuard Non-Sacrificial Anti-Graffiti Coating as the sealant.
- Purchased gloves, smocks, and shoe covers to protect clothing and skin.

THINGS WE WOULD KEEP THE SAME:

- Use the Sherwin Williams H&C COLORTOP Water-Based Solid Color Concrete Stain.
- Paint the simpler designs first and then progress to the more complex designs later in the day.
- Mineral Spirits is good for removing unwanted paint outside the mural.
- Using plastic tarps to keep the surrounding road covered and clean.



Light Street Beautification Mural



FUTURE GOALS

While the mural serves as an immediate and creative solution to calm traffic, our long term vision includes installing a permanent speed bump on Light Street. During our community conversations, parents consistently voiced concern about cars ignoring the speed limit, especially when children run between the Newton Community Center and the garden/playground.

The mural may catch a driver's eye, but a speed bump physically enforces slower speeds, providing an added layer of protection.

Beyond physical safety, our mural and proposed speed bump aim to build a stronger sense of community pride. When families take part in transforming their street, they feel more connected to their neighborhood and invested in its future. Our hope is that Light Street becomes not only safer but also a symbol of what's possible when art, advocacy, and community come together.



SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Materials:

- Orange, black, white, blue, yellow, green, purple, Sherwin Williams H&C COLORTOP Water-Based Solid Color Concrete Stain.
- VandlGuard Non-Sacrificial Anti-Graffiti Coating
- Paint rollers and roller heads (small and big)
- Paint brushes (varying sizes)
- Paint trays
- Scotch Rough Surface Extra Strength Painters Tape
- Plastic protective sheets
- Gloves

1. Tape out the hexagons– tape over the places that should remain concrete and the more complex pieces like the flowers, bees and words.
2. Using rollers and brushes, paint in the hexagons (keeping the colors the same as the original design)
3. Once the main hexagons were completely painted, we began to peel off the tape that covers up the bees, flowers, and letters.
4. Then, older kids worked on the more detail parts of the mural (flowers, bees, and letters).
5. Once all the colors have been filled in, we removed all the tape covering the bare concrete.
6. Clean up any edges or imperfections using mineral spirits.
7. Once the concrete paint has fully dried, apply a thin coat of sealant and allow it to dry for 30-40 mins and then apply another layer.
8. Repeat this process for 2-3 layers

REFERENCES

Schwartz, S. (2022, April). Asphalt Art Safety Study.

<https://asphaltart.bloomberg.org>

Blake, L.; Cioccio, Z.; Cooper, J.; Evans, L.; Gischel, T.; Green, J.; Habib, M.; Leon, H.; Planner, A.; Towers, J. "Newton Street Community Center: A Needs-Based Assessment Ensuring Beneficial Programs." Salisbury University, 2020.

Brewitt, Peter. (2014). Slowing down streets with art under your feet. Fast Company, 8/29/2014. <https://www.fastcompany.com/3035022/slowing-down-streets-with-art-under-your-feet/>

Maus, J. (2022, April 20). New research says street paintings have promising safety impacts. BikePortland. <https://bikeportland.org/2022/04/20/new-research-says-street-paintings-have-promising-safety-impacts-352481>

Nunno, R. (2021, January 28). Why art matters: Street murals bolster community and re-imagine transportation. Environmental and Energy Study Institute. <https://www.eesi.org/articles/view/why-art-matters-street-murals-bolster-community-and-re-imagine-transportation#:~:contentReference>

THANK YOU!

Mauren, Kailah, Miranda, Julia and Zoe would like to extend our appreciation to the following people who have given significant time and energy to support our Presidential Citizen Scholars Capstone Project over the past three semesters. Thank you for your support and guidance!

COMMUNITY LEADERS

Rachel Manning (City of Salisbury Community Relations Manager)

D’Shawn Doughty (Salisbury City Council President)

Brandon Bell (We Are Limitless Studios)

Mayor Randy Taylor (Mayor of Salisbury)

Susan Holt (City of Salisbury Public Arts Committee)

Mark DeLancey (Executive Director of PFLAG)

Allen Swiger (City of Salisbury Arts, Business, and Culture Department Director)

SU CAMPUS LEADERS

Sara Heim (Assistant Director, ShoreCorps)

President Lepre (Salisbury University President)

Judith McClure (Academic Program Specialist, ShoreCorps)

Maarten Pereboom (Dean of Fulton School of Liberal Arts)

Dr. Alexander Pope (Assistant Professor of Secondary and Physical Education & PACE Director)

Michael Scott (Dean of Henson School)

Megan Outten (Energy Policy & Strategic Engagement Professional)

Ryan Weaver (Lecturer, IDIS & Coordinator, Presidential Citizen Scholars Program)



The Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) is a resource center where the SU community, local government, nonprofit and public groups can access knowledge and information. PACE draws on the interdisciplinary expertise of SU faculty, students, staff, and community partners. As a nonpartisan contributor, the Institute organizes projects and programs that are customized to fit the particular needs of the Eastern Shore community. For more information about PACE, visit www.salisbury.edu/pace (or email PACE@salisbury.edu).



The PCS Program prepares students to be community leaders through civic scholarship and community action. Over three semesters, Scholars meet with members of the community to identify and research an issue that will culminate in a Capstone Project. Scholars are supported through Salisbury University's Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) and the Office of the President. SU's highest purpose is "to empower students with knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to lifelong learning and active citizenship in a democratic society." This elite program builds on SU's highest purpose by offering students of all majors and disciplines the opportunity to engage in the life of the community, develop habits of democratic citizenship, and become experienced civic leaders. The PCS Program operates under the direction and guidance of Ryan Weaver, PACE/IDIS Lecturer (rvweaver@salisbury.edu).