

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Ribbon Cutting for New Public Art Project to be Held this Friday**

CUMBERLAND, MD—The Allegany Arts Council has announced a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the recently-completed mural entitled *Skipper's View*—the organization's most recent project in the **Public Art Across Maryland** program. The ceremony will take place Friday, March 24, 2023, at 2:00pm at 211 E. Market Street, Cumberland.

The Allegany Arts Council worked in collaboration with the **Allegany County Public School System Board of Education** and local artists, **Christopher P. Sloan, Arnold d'Epagnier** and **Bill Dunlap**, to create the 100', three-dimensional mural that will greet visitors at the gateway to Cumberland, and will serve as a vibrant and dynamic addition to the county's growing public art portfolio.

The Arts Council received \$20,000 in grant support from the Maryland State Arts Council for the mural, with an additional \$10,000 donation from local arts patron, **Sandi Saville**. The artist team spent more than two years designing, developing and installing the new work, which sits in a prominent area visible to bicyclists on the GAP Trail, riders on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, walkers, and passersby. The mural is also visible from I-68, making a bold statement for those driving through the city.

"Communities come alive when public art is present," said Allegany Arts Council Executive Director Julie Westendorff. "Public art celebrates community identity and culture, promotes civic engagement and pride, and activates spaces we often fail to see or notice."

During the process of development, the Arts Council conducted a public art input forum in which members of the community shared feedback about messages to convey and themes to explore, all of which were taken into consideration in the artists' final design concept.

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