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Editor's Note: Photo ops in front of the exhibit will be at 10 a.m. at the Children's Board, 1002 E. Palm, Ave., Tampa, followed by a program in the Board room.

Public Reception for Potter Elementary Students' Giving Garden' Exhibit Will Be at 10 a.m. Jan. 31 at the Children's Board of Hillsborough County



TAMPA, FL – For students in an art class at Potter Elementary School in East Tampa, learning about growing vegetables became more than ideas for an art project. Thanks to the Children's Board of Hillsborough County KidzCreate Gallery of Art, they turned an unforgettable visit to Sweetwater Organic Community Farm in October into a handmade word and art exhibit on public display.

The Potter students will celebrate the public display of their exhibit, "The Giving Garden," at the Children's Board, 1002 E. Palm Ave., Tampa at 10 a.m., Monday, Jan. 31. It is the first showing of the exhibit and a step toward future public display at St. Joseph's Children's Hospital.

The exhibit is the culmination of two artists and an author working closely with the students for several months. KidzCreate Gallery director Paula Allen worked with the students in creating a handmade, organic farm-inspired art piece expressing the feelings, colors and words from their farm experience. In addition, artist Diana Leavengood photographed the students and captured their experiences at the farm and in the classroom. Author Ricky Roberts III helped the children write about their time on the farm.

KidzCreate Gallery director Paula Allen said the students were all encouraged to keep a journal about their unique experience, and even learned how to grow their own garden when they returned to the classroom. She worked with the students in creating a handmade, organic farm-inspired art piece expressing the feelings, colors and words from their farm experience.

“A garden always gives back when you invest your time and energy,” Allen said. “Children grow, learn, and change in similar ways when we invest, encourage and believe in them. The Children’s Board continually invests in helping children in our community be the best they can be. This art collaborative is an example of how the Children’s Board brings children and their community together through the beauty of art.”

The Children’s Board KidzCreate Gallery of Art showcases children’s art and raises awareness about critical issues. Exhibits also travel to key county buildings, businesses, libraries and other venues and are viewed by approximately 2 million people annually. KidzCreate develops partnerships with local businesses to provide art supplies and art therapy experiences for young people.

The Children’s Board of Hillsborough County serves as the leading voice and advocate for children and families in our community. The board is the only organization of its kind in Hillsborough County that generates revenue to help children and families. The Children’s Board is recognized nationally for its contributions to best practices in policies and programs aiding children and families. Citizens may visit www.childrensboard.org to learn more about the board’s programs.

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