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MDHHS, Vital Strategies announce September Recovery Month muralists following *Collective Healing through Art: Overdose Awareness Day Exhibition*

LANSING, Mich. – In honor of [Overdose Awareness Day](#) on Aug. 31, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and Vital Strategies partnered with the Downriver Council for the Arts to host the [Collective Healing through Art: Overdose Awareness Day Exhibition](#) featuring pieces from thirty 37 artists from around the state directly impacted by the overdose crisis, including pieces submitted posthumously by family members of artists lost to an overdose.

Part of this exhibit included a call for muralists and winners of the Recovery Month murals were announced on Aug. 31. The Recovery Month murals were made possible through a partnership with City Walls Detroit, MDHHS and Vital Strategies. The murals will symbolize the impact of the drug overdose crisis, while promoting the message that recovery is possible for everyone. Since 2017, City Walls Detroit has facilitated the creation of 87 murals across the City of Detroit covering over 120,000 square feet of wall space. It is anticipated that murals will be complete at the end of September.

The winners are:

- [Fel'le](#), a Detroit-based artist, will paint the Detroit Association of Black Organizations at 12000 Grand River Avenue in Detroit.
- [Muralmatics](#), a Lansing-based artist, will paint the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence at 2400 E McNichols Road in Detroit.
- Winning Team, a Detroit-based artist, will paint the Detroit Recovery Project at 400 Cortland Street in Highland Park.

In 2019, more than 2,300 individuals died from a drug overdose in Michigan, and of those, 75% were opioid-involved overdoses. Around the world, communities gather on International Overdose Awareness Day to broaden awareness of the overdose crisis, mourn those lost and challenge the stigma associated with substance use disorders and overdose.

“The drug overdose crisis does not just impact people who use drugs. It impacts their families, their friends and our communities,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health at MDHHS. “This exhibition brought those most

impacted by this crisis to the forefront and showcased their stories to help promote healing.”

“We’re proud to support this timely exhibit on International Overdose Awareness Day, to share the power of art against the surging crisis in Michigan and across the United States,” said Daliah Heller, director of drug use initiatives at Vital Strategies. “The collective storytelling of the featured Michigan artists is an opportunity to honor those lost and to offer dignity, empowerment and collective healing for all of us touched by the ongoing overdose crisis.”

Collective Healing through Art will run in-person and online through Sept. 18. To learn more about the exhibit, visit downriverarts.org.

For more information and resources, visit Michigan.gov/Opioids.

About Vital Strategies

Vital Strategies is a global health organization that believes every person should be protected by a strong public health system. In November 2018, Bloomberg Philanthropies announced a \$50 million investment to address the country’s overdose crisis. The initiative—a first-of-its-kind partnership between Vital Strategies, Pew Charitable Trusts, CDC Foundation, and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health—is helping up to 10 states implement solutions over three years to strengthen and scale up evidence-based, data-driven interventions to reduce risks of overdose and save lives.

For more information visit vitalstrategies.org.

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