



A Mural for Our Friends

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All art is meant to inspire a reaction from its viewers. This work of art is no exception. The painting itself is a flag covering an apple. The flag represents our country hugging the city of New York, as symbolized by the "Big Apple." The point is that we, as a nation, will stand by the city of New York at its time of need after the September 11th tragedy. We set out to make people feel better about a horrible time in our history.

The Impact of "Mural for Our Friends" On the School and the Community

When we were asked to complete a large mural reflecting on the tragedy of September 11th, we were at first overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. How was it possible for us to provide our school and community with an artwork that would be uplifting, while at the same time providing solace? After much consideration we decided on a design which we felt accomplished both.

The feedback that we received from the faculty, students and community was filled with enormous gratitude for our having undertaking this large project, and there was a strong emotional response to its content. The response indicated that the work gave the school and community a real sense of unity and pride in America. In addition, many stated that the mural provided a bridge between the victims and those not directly affected.

It would seem the creation of this mural gave the community of students, as well as the artists, a sense of empowerment that is not usually felt by teenagers in our society. We are so pleased that we were able to share our talents and affect the school and community in a positive way.

Reactions from our school community to "A Mural for Our Friends":

D. Alexander (Grade 11)

"The mural that was put up by a couple of North Brunswick students had a big effect on me. It makes me think about the attacks in New York City on September 11th. The message that I believe the mural is stating is that the apple represents New York City, and the flag represents the United States. The flag is hugging the apple as if the U.S., the people, are supporting the Big Apple (NY). I feel very proud that our school is showing support for our country."

J. Anglin (Grade 11)

"At first I did not know truly understand the whole concept of our mural, but after gaining a little knowledge about the painting it became clear. The fact that our painting shows that New York is

not alone after the events of September 11th and the we support them in every way. IT shows that we will continue to be their protective shield and not let anyone break up apart. We are all family waving and standing proud and tall.

A. Ashamole (Grade 10)

"I think it was a good thing that the mural was made. It shows that it will take more than a devastating blow to knock out the United States. It makes people remember the World Trade Center and the people who perished in them."

P. Awad (Grade 10)

"The mural makes me think of the day and the days following September 11. The apple, being wrapped by the flag, reminds me of how the nation surrounded and aided New York. Even though it took something bad to happen in order for the U.S. to stand together, I think it is great that the U.S. stood together. This makes me have a great sense of pride in our country, because it reveals the importance of one city to the rest of the nation."

N. Awan (Grade 12)

"I think that the painting of the mural is definitely kind, generous, and supportive. It shows that the township of North Brunswick took part of the events of September 11, 2001 into its own hands and will be there for anything that is needed. The idea of one U.S. flag hugging the apple (New York City) is quite creative, representative, and symbolic. I was personally affected by that day for my dad was in one of the buildings, but thankfully was able to escape safely. However, it is very comforting to know that North Brunswick is patriotic enough to think of an idea like this. I congratulate those artists that took the time and effort to paint it."

C. Ayoub (Grade 9)

"When I look at the piece of artwork it reminds me that we as a nation are united and shall stand together as a nation. It also gives a sign of peace and hope for future tragedies. I think that it has made us much stronger in putting a piece of artwork and shows that we support the people's families that have died."

C. Balint (Grade 12)

"I believe the painting is very inspirational. Everyday when I come to school I am reminded of the tragedy that this country went through. However, it also reminds me of how lucky I am to live in such a wonderful country."

K. Bates (Grade 11)

"The mural represents the United States and its current state. Although New York (the Big Apple) was hit hard and received deep wounds, America was and still is behind them one hundred percent. Everyone in the country was greatly affected by the attacks of September 11 and the people who were lost will forever be remembered. Although this was an attempt to strip us of our courage, strength and unity, it did the complete opposite. The attacks brought our nation much closer as we all watched rescue workers, police and firemen rise out of the dust on our televisions. The mural is a reminder of what happened and our strength because of it."

K. Blanco (Grade 9)

"The flag wrapping around the apple represents a lot. I think that it shows that the whole country is behind New York, the big apple. The mural represents that New York is a part of the U.S., so the country is affected also. The mural is a great thing to have to remind everyone what is happening in our country at this point in time. It makes me feel proud that our country reacts well to these tragedies."

V. Boodram (Grade 12)

"This piece of art was a great way to show our school's support toward all the victims of the World Trade Center tragedy. The flag is hugging the big apple just as every citizen of the USA has their

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arms readily open to comfort fellow citizens in times of tragedy. It shows our togetherness and will stand up against anything as a country.”

S. Brown (Grade 9)

“I am very proud to have the mural outside NBTHS. Having that mural outside the school symbolized and shows that our school is very patriotic. It shows that we as a nation are showing our love and support for one another. By placing the mural outside the school is showing and proving to others that nothing as bad as 9/11 could break us down, but it only made us stronger.

H. Call (Grade 9)

“I think it represents September 11th very well. It gives the school a patriotic look. It also gives our school a symbol of our nation. I think it is a very patriotic thing to do for our school and our country.”

D. Campbell (Grade 11)

“Seeing the mural makes me have mixed emotions. September 11th was a tragedy and the mural shows respect for the situation. So many people around the world were affected by it, especially America. The mural shows that people think of New York differently and show more respect. It also shows how much it affected New York and how the American people are coming together to fight the terrorists and protect NY and the rest of America as best they can.”

D. Catanese (Grade 12)

“I believe that they painting of a flag hugging the apple on our window is a wonderful idea. A great deal of people were affected by what happened by September 11th, either personally or spiritually. Using a painting is an ideal way of showing our love and support for New York and those affected by the tragedy. This is a rough time and it is very important to show love and unity to our fellow Americans.”

N. Chamoun (Grade 12)

“After September 11th, I believe that the nation got a wake up call. The horrible events made us all realize the importance of coming together as a country and lending a helping hand. The bravery of the people involved in the tragedy was astonishing. It showed us, as Americans, how strong we are. Showing our support with the mural is a great idea. This is a time of cooperation, patriotism and strength. Though the tragedy was horrible, shocking and unbelievable, we have truly done good things with our emotions. That is exemplified in the beautiful mural in our hallway”

N. Chedid (Grade 12)

“While the mural was being painted, I wondered what it was for. Now that it is complete, its message comes across clearly. It is a message of support, compassion, strength and unity. A tribute to all those involved in the World Trade Center disaster, and to our country as a whole. In the mural, the flag embraces a big apple, which is a symbol of New York City. In the past year, the whole country has done the same for New Yorkers and all others involved in any way. Truly, we all supported each other. Nobody was unaffected by the tragedy. Although I am still angry about the sick, cruel wasting of so many innocent, unsuspecting lives and still feel for the family, friends, siblings, spouses, parents and children of the victims who are caught in this terrible nightmare, I know that the people of our country have handled disaster as well as possible, and better than expected by others. While the terrorists expected to break our spirit and our country, they only succeeded in strengthening us. What did not kill us made us stronger and more unified, and gave all of us, who have taken security for granted, a new view on life and those around us.

M. Chinery (Grade 9)

“I think the mural of the flag symbolizes patriotism. It shows that we care for those who lost family members. It was a good idea to put the apple in the middle because that symbolized the Big Apple. It shows that the U.S. is loyal to those in New York. People can destroy our buildings, but not our pride.”

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B. Clifford (Guidance Counselor)

"Even after nine months of seeing red, white and blue, your work has quite an impact. I initially thought that the apple dealt with education, but whether that or N.Y.C., the gathering together of Americans to reach a goal or support a cause is still inspirational. Thanks for reminding us of these values."

T. Crowder (Grade 12)

"I thought it was a good representation of what happened. We are a strong country and we are going to fight back against terrorism. We as a student body are showing what we can do at a young age to show patriotism to our school and to our nation. This picture proves we as an entire nation, as one whole and as one people are tough, strong and we bounce back."

B. Daian (Grade 10)

"It makes me feel good that our school is showing their love to all those people that lost their life in September 11. Watching that flag makes me feel like New York City is always alive in people's hearts."

S. Davis (Grade 9)

"When I first spotted our mural in school, I really felt that our school and especially our township was bonding together. We all came together to support the victims of 9/11 and to raise the spirits of every citizen in this country. To me, the apple in our mural represents New York City or 'the Big Apple', and since NYC is the heart of our nation, the mural represents the USA hugging and comforting New York City and the victims of 9/11. So therefore, our mural represents all of the patriotic and spiritfult citizens coming together to help console and rebuilt our country."

J. DePhillip (Grade 9)

"This flag painted on the school is one of the nicest things I have ever seen. To walk or drive to the school and see this painted right on the school really makes people think about our country and really feel the pride. Though the painting does not show a WTC picture, you do see the big apple and thing about New York. If this painting was anywhere else, it wouldn't matter. It's the fact that you drive to the school to see this giant American flag covering the apple representing New York."

S. Desikan (Grade 9)

"The mural has sparked a sense of national pride and unity around our school. Its relation to September 11th has caused many people, including myself, to stop and think about the tragedy. It has given me a new outlook on what occurred and how our nation has dealt with it. It shows me how much our nation has banded together to overcome this crisis. The unity present in our nation has finally been shown. I appreciate the thought that has gone into this mural. It shows that our country will support New York to recover from all that it has been through."

J. Diaz (Grade 9)

"The picture of the apple and the flag reminds me of September 11. The idea for drawing and painting this apple and flag was great. Every time I look at this picture it makes me feel good about being an American."

R. Dominguez (Grade 9)

"The mural in the front of the school with an apple covered with an American flag is very beautiful. I think the mural was a great idea and I think it was an idea that represented the 9/11/01 tragedy. Other things were done in the school are good ideas but I think this was the best idea because it represents. It's beautiful and it's a great way to also thank the heroes of 9/11/01."

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A. Donnelly (Grade 11)

"When I first saw the mural I thought it was a flag wrapped around a heart. I think that the actual image (the flag wrapped around the apple) would get the same reaction out of people. When people see the flag wrapped around the apple they will remember the events of September 11th. Hopefully when people see the image it will give them hope for the future, seeing how New York has overcome this tragedy.

J. Drew (Grade 9)

"The mural that was painted on the front of the school is very patriotic. It was a great idea to have the United States flag around an apple to symbolize the country as a whole supporting the city of New York. In New York's time of need the country helped it in every way possible. Painting the mural is a very patriotic thing to do and I appreciate the time taken to paint it."

T. Facchini (Grade 9)

"The American flag with the apple touches many people in different ways. The events of September 11, 2001 made all the people in our nation come together. The American flag means a couple of important things to me. For one, it makes me feel a sense of pride in my country knowing that I live here. Also, the flag represents the unity between people, and how we dealt with our crisis. Finally, the flag makes me remember the day that the American flag was pulled from the rubble and was very much in tact. That scene was played over and over and showed that we will stand strong under any conditions, just like that American flag. The apple represents the Big Apple, or New York. It is included with the flag to show our support to New York. All in all, the mural is a great piece of art that touches people in many ways and shows our support for our country and everyone in it."

A. Faroqui (Grade 12)

"September 11, 2001 changed our country forever. However, within all this tragedy a solid bond has been created. We as a country have to support each other and stand behind our country. The message represented by the painting shows just how well our country has come together. United we stand against terrorism and all other evils of this world. And whenever people are in need we will help them as if they really were our brothers and sisters."

Z. Flaks (Grade 9)

"When I look at the mural, it makes me feel a sense of pride for my country. I pass the mural at least two times a day, and when I do, I think of all the people that were involved in the September 11th tragedy. Seeing the mural reminds me of the great country that I live in. I think that mural shows the support that the United States of America is showing New York or "the Big Apple" right now. IT shows how much everyone cares and how much I care. The mural represents support, caring and love for all the people that were affected by September 11th."

E. Folger (Grade 9)

"The mural symbolizes how our country will stand by New York and all the people involved in September 11th. It makes me feel proud to see our flag and the apple. It reminds us of how we all have to stay strong and get through this tragedy . That we have support from everyone to aid us in getting past this. I think the mural was a good idea because it shows how we care about what happened, it displays our pride for our country, and it shows how we are all working to get through this together."

T. Gillespie (Grade 12)

"The true beauty of the mural lies far deeper than its physically appealing looks. The message of patriotism and service which is represents is a simple but sweet reminder of the many good things that the United States truly stands for. Not one of us was not affected by the events of September 11th. Thankfully through all the pain something greater emerged. As Americans we became more aware of the needs of those around us and of the deep, undeniable bond that holds us all together."

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S. Given (English Teacher)

"The amount of time and effort spent on the project is evident in the final product. The mural is a solid addition to our school's environment. At night, the lovely light of the hallway shines behind the mural and causes the apple and the flag to virtually 'pop' out of the front of the school."

M. Golaprisco (Grade 10)

"I think that this mural represents the courage of all of the firefighters and policemen that risked their lives to save others from losing theirs. The mural also shows that this is an event that no one will forget and having this mural in the school makes me feel good about our country. I think that the idea is creative and will make a lot of people remember the courageous effort that people possessed on September 11th."

D. Gray (Grade 9)

"When I first saw the mural painted on my school window, it almost made me cry. It made me reflect on what happened on September 11, 2001. It made me think about how much our country has united. When I look at the mural of the flag hugging the "Big Apple" it made me feel better knowing that we all came together to help each other feel better. I am so thankful that our school has decided to paint the mural on our school because I never want to forget the day when we all united together and really made the United States of America stronger than ever before."

D. Griffin (Grade 10)

"The first thing that comes to my mind is the people that died in that tragedy; also, the families that live on without them. The September 11th tragedy makes me cherish life a lot more. You can leave from this world real easy. It also makes me look more into completing my goals because you never know when it is your time."

N. Hare (Grade 11)

"The mural that is painted from the inside of NBTHS so that others on the outside can see is painted beautifully and has meaning. Representing America and New York, NBTHS is supportive of the September 11th tragedy. It is obvious what the mural is painted of. And its meaning to me represents the apple of New York with the American flag over it stating that New York is still a part of the United States and will continue to be fruitful."

W. Hercek (English Teacher)

"It is a vivid reminder. As soon as you drive up to the school early morning, the mural pops out at you. We need this reminder and we need to remember. The idea of the flag embracing the apple is a comforting and warm idea. I'm glad and feel good to know that our school decided to express our feeling using artistic expression."

J. Hille (Grade 11)

"Before my school's Big Apple mural was finished I didn't quite understand the concept or the reasoning behind it. But as the mural drew closer to its completion the significance was crystal clear. The mural itself is creative. It depicts the support and patriotism that our country expressed during the 9/11 tragedy and that we continue to express today. This mural is not only a painted picture of our country's strength but a memorial and a constant reminder of those who died and risked their lives on such a sorrowful day. This serves not only to remind us of the negative effects of the 9/11 tragedy but of all the unity and nationalism that we now express in hopes to keep the foundation and the center of our country alive."

K. Hirrschoff (Music Teacher)

"First of all, the mural makes me very proud that three students from NBTHS have created such beautiful artwork from such a devastating act. I believe it is extremely important that students as well as adults never forget this act of terrorism and always remember how sacred our freedoms are. For those students who cannot verbalize their thoughts about September 11th, the mural

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may help calm fears and open them up to discuss their uneasiness and uncertainty for our future.”

“The mural that was painted on the building was thoughtful and it shows our true feelings about what happened on 9/11. It shows the structure of the U.S. and the power that we have as a nation. We will stay united as long as we stand. They can not destroy us by one act.”

D. Juliano (Grade 12)

“I think that the painting was a great idea. It shows that our school supports New York during its time of tragedy. It also shows that we care and want to help the victims and their families stay strong. I think the mural gives everyone a good feeling of security and warmth. It reminds me of what happened on September 11, 2001 and I think that being reminded of that is important.”

J. Lee (Grade 12)

“The mural triggers emotions felt during September 11th. It is a way to keep the memory of New York City alive. 9/11 stirred up patriotism in everyone and its also made citizens of the United States realize how much we take for granted. This tragedy affected all our lives and hopefully this mural will be a constant reminder of the diverse community of the United States of America.”

A. Lucena (Grade 12)

“I think it’s a nice idea with a simple painting that is symbolic and done in remembrance of the lives lost. The flag embraces the apple just as the country has embraces New York, and just as the world has embraces America. It shows the compassion and strength that we have now more than ever.”

J. Martin (Grade 11)

“I was kind of surprised at first to see the mural on front of our school because I had no idea they planned on doing one. I think it was a really good idea to put this mural up, and it enables me to have much more pride in our school.”

S. Mendha (Grade 11)

“At the beginning when I first saw this mural it made no sense to me. All I saw was a flag of America and something in the middle that looked like a heart. But then if you go outside and see it, then this shows a lot. It shows an apple covered by the flag of our country. When I understood the mural, it meant a lot. I shows that we will always care about the country and things that happens.”

J. Moon (Grade 12)

“I first saw the painting when it was just a sketch. When I saw the image, even in its infantile stages, I knew it contained a powerful message. It serves as a reminder to all of us of the horrifying tragedy of September 11th but it also reminds us how the country has united to help those that have been affected and to help make reparations to a wounded New York.”

L. Novak (Grade 11)

“The mural in the window is extremely thoughtful and it helps remind us of September 11th and the lives that were lost. It also shows the resolve of the American people by symbolizing the nation coming together. Whenever I see this work or art, I am reminded of just how blessed I am and how lucky I am to live in a country so great as ours.”

A. Paek (Grade 12)

“The artists did an excellent job expressing how the students of NBTHS felt after the horrible tragedy of the September 11th attack. As I walk down the staircase everyday, I think of the families and friend who have lost their love ones through the tragedy, especially the victims of

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North Brunswick. We, as Americans, will never forget the victims of September 11th tragedy and our hearts will always be with the city of New York as well as Washington D.C.”

M. Pilande (Grade 11)

“Upon seeing the mural that is located on Stairway A, it sends a powerful message to me. I know that our school is behind the city of New York in whatever occurs because we have the visuals to show for it. September 11th had definitely changed my life and many others. In addition, this also shows that America is coming closer together, with an increased amount of patriotism. I give the utmost thanks to all of the volunteers, firefighters, and police officers who work, protect and serve our country. May respect for them has never been so great as it is today.”

N. Sturm Pinalies (Grade 12)

“I’m just happy now that we are taking steps forward to improve our society and as a nation, we have become more united.”

A. Ponder (Grade 12)

“I think the mural is an excellent representation of how our country has come together during this time of terrorism. Our hearts are open to the families who were affected and also to the many people, firefighters, policemen and the other heroes of the United States. The mural represents NBTHS’s unity and love for our country.”

D. Reager (Grade 12)

“The mural is an excellent representation of how our nation is uniting and rallying behind New York City. Even in the face of adversity the flag will stay and New York City will continue to function as one of the greatest cities in the world. The mural allows the artist to express their pride in our country and support everyone in our country. Reactions are expected to an event of the magnitude of the destruction of the World Trade Center. It is wonderful that our school and our artists were able to react in such a meaningful way.”

J. Romeo (Grade 12)

“The mural is a great representation of what once was and can now be prevented through unification. It is a silent message stating how strong this country could be when unified and resilient.”

L. Ruppert (Grade 9)

“There’s only so much that we as teenagers can do and a mural was a perfect idea.”

S. Saini (Grade 12)

“The efforts of the students in our school, who have worked to make a beautiful mural, were worth it in that it represents a united and hopeful America coming together to help reconstruct a wounded New York. Work such as this should not go unlooked and appreciated, but rather people should realize that in any way, young bright students also have the capability to change our world for the better, not so much being rewarded, but recognized.”

M. Salim (Grade 11)

“The mural represents the way America united after such a devastating event. The flag, the country, serves as a bandage, a remedy, for a broken and injured city. The nation is what hold the city together and keeps it from falling apart. The September 11th occurrence was a test for the citizens of America. As a Muslim, it is clear to see the though discrimination is an everlasting aspect of lift, it has not yet taken its toll and erected a barrier separating us from each other. The many ethnicity’s and cultures of the globe hold the U.S. together as a uniform group. Now, America will move on and learn from this, becoming stronger than before.”

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A. Scaramuzzo (Grade 11)

"The mural symbolizes the unity and love of our nation. All though we are all different people with different religions, ideas and beliefs, we are all an American people. The mural represents the loving care the nation has to one of its greatest cities. It is also a remembrance for the thousands of people buried in the sands of the towers so that they won't die in vain."

D. Schanen (Grade 9)

"The picture is comforting to students and teachers who knew people in the trade center. I appreciate the mural because it shows how much our country has come together. The mural is very important for the school and the town."

S. Shah (Grade 11)

"The happenings of September 11th have been tragic, breathtaking, and caused huge amounts of anger and sorrow. These emotions have overtaken many. Some react by facilitating the recuperation of the city. This mural is facilitating the recovery by showing our pride not only as a school, but as a community. The mural has a significant meaning which not only says that we are proud to be American but also that we support each other in our time of need."

T. Shea (Grade 12)

"I think that this painting beautifully represents the feeling that myself and many others have about the situation. It is a solid, symbolic representation of what makes this country great. To see the warmth and embracement in which the entire country has taken on really has made me proud to be a citizen of this country. I now feel the desire to lend a helping hand to any brothers and sisters across the nation when they are in a time of need. This feeling is encompassed in this mural.

H. Sheikh (Grade 9)

"Without any doubt, the mural that has been painted in front of the NBTHS is a true piece of art. It was created to make the victims of the September 11th tragedy feel better about themselves. The mural represents the devotion and pride that our school has. To be honest, when I see the piece of work everyday my reaction is amazement at the pride our school has and how much stronger the United States has become as a nation, and as individuals.

D. Smutko (Social Studies Teacher)

"I always admire the flag as I enter the parking lot at NBTHS. Recent events have made patriotism an everyday topic in our lives. The mural at NBTHS is symbolic of the patriotism that we in North Brunswick feel for those who have sacrificed for us, as well as those who currently serve. The mural shows our love for NYC, the Big Apple, but also the apple represents education. Teachers and students have changed their attitudes and lifestyles since 9/11. Education about current events and religious issues is a helpful way to combat ignorance and discrimination. The mural tells everyone enter NBTHS that we are proud Americans and welcome the opportunity to grow and learn as a community and as a nation."

T. Tillmane (Grade 9)

"The mural symbolizes the courage that New York has. It symbolizes not only how strong New York is, but it shows how the U.S. is as a whole. When I look at the mural, I see strength. I see the courage that we will have to overcome all the sadness that September 11th brought. The mural is very patriotic which is important during fragile times.

Z. Vitelli (Grade 9)

"I thought the picture on the front of the school shows love. Reaching out to New Yorkers and saying American is here for them. They know that it does not only affect them and the families of the thousands and thousands of victims. I think the flag gives a lot of meaning to the viewers.

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R. Walczak (Grade 11)

"The Big Apple mural at North Brunswick Township High School makes me think about many things. It looks as if the message that is trying to come across is that the whole country supports New York. The apple symbolizes New York and the flag wrapping around it symbolizes the support from the whole country. Also, the apple can symbolize the support from schools."

M. Watts (Grade 12)

"When I look at the painting, it brings back both good and bad memories. It brings back the memory of my father. If he had been two minutes late for the PATH train he would not be alive today. He almost missed the last train carrying passengers who would survive. It also brings back the good memory of my uncle who is a NYC firefighter. Looking at the painting gives me such pride and glory to know I am living in a country where I can live freely."

B. Wolfson (Grade 12)

"The mural symbolizes hope; this may sound trite but its true. Next year, I will be living in New York, attending college. I am in awe of the support given to New York as a whole. The mural represents this support and hope to rebuild ourselves as a nation."

J. Yoo (Grade 12)

"This painting carries a powerful message about our nation and state of New York. Even though we lost so many things from this incident, we also gained many things. All of us were affected greatly and we realized how much we care about each other in this country. I truly respect those firefighters, volunteers, and other workers that worked so hard to repair New York City. I think we are stronger than ever and unified together after this incident."

K. Yuen (Grade 12)

"I feel that the mural's message is particularly effective with its symbolism of a flag hugging the big apple. It really is extremely important to have something like this to remind us all of the sheer tragedy as well as acts of awe inspiring courage that affected the entire nation so dramatically on September 11th. The mural is perhaps artistic expression at its best; bringing unity, meaning and remembrance to all who pass by it in our daily routines."

N. Zhang (Grade 9)

"I think that the mural is a good thing. I see it everyday on the bus while coming and leaving school. It inspires me and I recollect the turmoil following the attacks. Especially since I moved here the day after, that period of time holds extra significance to me."

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