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Unveiling ceremony at local school for relocated and updated mural art paying tribute to Latin American culture

HAYWARD, Calif., Aug. 20, 2019—Congressman Eric Swalwell and Mayor Barbara Halliday will join Hayward Unified School District Superintendent Matt Wayne on Wednesday morning for a special mural unveiling ceremony at Eldridge Elementary School in Hayward.

The ceremony will take place from 10:15 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Aug. 21, at Eldridge Elementary, 26825 Eldridge Ave., and include remarks from mural sponsors and music by Eldridge School students.

Featured murals are the result of a five-year collaboration between the City of Hayward and Hayward Unified School District, and reflect the diverse cultural heritage of Eldridge School students and the greater Hayward community.

The Eldridge Elementary artwork is a replica and adaptation of a mural that previously adorned a building on Berry Avenue. In conjunction with the original artist, Suzanne Gayle, Eldridge School was identified as a suitable new home for a slightly modified version of the mural that would continue to pay tribute to Latin American culture.

The City's Mural Art Program was established in 2009 to address the issue of escalating graffiti and vandalism and in support of the City Council's Safe, Clean and Green community priorities. It entails the commissioning and installation of mural artwork on commercial buildings, schools, utility boxes, roadway walls and overpasses.

Thus far, more than 1,200 volunteers (including public schools, senior citizens and community organizations) have participated in more than 200 installations, including murals and tile mosaics.

The Eldridge Mural Project received seed funding through the Mural Art component of the City's Capital Improvement Program and additional support through the HUSD beautification project for site preparation and ongoing maintenance and repairs.

Artist Suzanne Gayle grew up in Memphis, Tenn., and graduated from Memphis University, moving to the Bay Area in 1987. She is a Hayward resident, and many of her large-scale works are located throughout the City and can be seen throughout the Bay Area. She owns Star Arts LLC, her commercial mural and art studio, and Purple Dolphin Arts, her studio for original graphic arts. In her art studio, Gayle serves as a mentor to students from Impact Academy of Arts & Technology, and teaches youth, young adults and teachers. She also works as an after-school art instructor at Golden Oaks Montessori, and has served as art instructor at HUSD's Stonebrae Elementary. She is a member of the City's Keep Hayward Clean and Green Task Force. In addition to large-scale murals, she also creates small-scale artworks such as original paintings, digital artworks and 3-D mixed-media sculptures.

The City's mural making process is open to every individual in Hayward—and artists with ideas are welcome. To find out how to request a mural, visit the City's website at <https://www.hayward-ca.gov/residents/arts-leisure/mural-program>.