

The Elkhart Truth

Outdoor art exhibit celebrates diversity

Elkhart first city in Indiana to host 'Embracing Our Differences' display

TRUTH STAFF
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ELKHART — Like a microcosm of the nation as a whole, Elkhart is a melting pot of nationalities, cultures and ethnicities, city officials said Friday in announcing plans for an outdoor art exhibit.

In celebration of this diversity, the Elkhart Parks and Recreation Department is bringing a piece of the "Embracing Our Differences" movement from Florida to Michiana, they said.

The centerpiece of Embracing Our Differences is a juried, outdoor art exhibit featuring billboard-size images created by local, national and international artists, writers and students reflecting their interpretations of the theme "enriching lives through diversity."

Beginning Friday, pieces from the annual exhibit will be on display at Elkhart's Island Park as part of the city's 40th annual Rhapsody Arts and Music Festival.

At the conclusion of Rhapsody, the pieces will be displayed at Elkhart's Central Park through July 1.

Mayor Tim Neese said he hopes the display's prominent location during signature events — such as Rhapsody and the Elkhart Jazz Festival — will promote kindness, equality, and mutual respect within the community and also highlight the city's diversity and inclusion to visitors.

Elkhart is the first Indiana community to host the exhibit and will be the only location, outside of Sarasota, Florida, to feature the display in 2019, the mayor said.

Embracing Our Differences is a not-for-profit organization based in Sarasota that uses the power of art and education to expand consciousness and open the heart to celebrate the diversity of the human family, according to the mayor.

Since its inception in 2004, the annual art exhibit has attracted more than 2.9 million visitors to Sarasota's Bayfront Park. This year's exhibit attracted 11,791 entries from 111 countries and 44 states. Of the almost 12,000 entries, 45 were chosen as this year's exhibit.

More information is available at www.EmbracingOurDifferences.org.