

Billboard-sized art to promote diversity in Manatee, officials say

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Colorful artwork bears messages promoting diversity as part of an outdoor display of 39 billboard-sized images, sponsored by the organization "Embracing our Differences." At Sarasota's Island Park last year, the outdoor art display attracted 277,000 visitors. The organization today sought help for a similar mission in Manatee County, and brought samples of some of the artwork that has been part of its exhibits.

- Story Photos



MANATEE -- Leaders of an organization that last year attracted 277,000 visitors to an outdoor display in Sarasota promoting tolerance and diversity today sought help for a similar effort in Manatee County.

Officials representing the project “Embracing Our Differences” told county leaders that they are planning a similar exhibit of 39 billboard-sized images next year at Bradenton’s Rossi Park.

They also hoped to reinforce their character education message through the school district by busing local youngsters from school to view the exhibit, and adding curriculum materials, workshops and retreats for teachers.

“We’re going to make this happen,” said Michael Shelton, executive director of the Sarasota-based organization called Coexistence Inc., which developed the project, during a meeting of county and school board officials at Manatee County School District headquarters in Bradenton.

The organization’s co-chair, Dennis McGillicuddy, told officials the idea is to use art as a way to emphasize the value of diversity and inclusion, and a way of standing up to hatred and prejudice.

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Read more here: <http://www.bradenton.com/2012/02/10/3863970/billboard-sized-art-to-promote.html#storylink=cpy>