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**Wesleyan artists lend their paintbrushes to create
365-foot-long mural in the Near East Side Neighborhood on Lancaster**

FORT WORTH, April 11 – “A Community of Harmony,” a massive mural depicting how people make and enjoy music together, will be unveiled on Wednesday, April 16, at 10 a.m. in Southeast Fort Worth at 1316 E. Lancaster Ave. on the side of the Rhythm Band Instruments building. The mural is hailed as one of the largest murals ever created in the United States for an economically disadvantaged municipal area. It is being given as a gift of love to the community to help foster the growth and improvement of the Near East Side neighborhood.

Three students from Texas Wesleyan University collaborated with a group of other area college students in assisting noted artist Ken Sutherland in painting the mural. Freshman art major Suzette Rangel, junior art major Melissa Rodriguez, and Wesleyan alumna Serena Shook worked since Oct. 2002 in the painting of the block-long work of art that stretches 365 feet long and 25 feet tall.

The mural’s musical theme is meant to foster a spirit of community and harmony. It is the presenters’ hope that the work of public art will bring joy and beauty to a community in

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need of development while promoting pride in the area’s heritage. The artists agreed that the mural’s effect on the neighborhood was instant.

“While we were painting, we received tons of positive feedback from the community,” Rangel said. “People walking or driving by would thank us for our work. It was really powerful to see the impact that we were making, and it was such a great learning experience for us. We learned how to work big scale and how to transfer a notebook paper-sized design onto the wall of a building. I am very happy with the finished product.”

In the 1930s and 1940s, the Southeast Fort Worth area was a religious and cultural hub of the African-American and musical communities. Big band and jazz greats like Lionel Hampton and “T-Bone” Walker performed there, and many other musicians performed and/or were raised in southeast Fort Worth neighborhoods.

Southeast Fort Worth Inc., the Near East Side Neighborhood Association and the Paulos Foundation sponsored the mural. For more information, contact Wesleyan artist Suzette Rangel at 682-472-9599 or visit the Community Harmony Web site at www.communityharmony.com.

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