

About Portraits of Hope

In 1995, Ed Massey and Bernie Massey founded Portraits of Hope, continuing their utilization of art and poignant visual imagery for large-scale projects of social consequence.

Developed initially as a creative therapy program for seriously ill and physically disabled children, the non-profit program has expanded to include a wide array of children and adults who participate with their schools, hospitals, after-school programs, and community institutions in high-profile, art, education, and creative therapy projects. These projects transform public landscapes and provide youngsters with an opportunity to point with pride and say, "I did that."

Portraits of Hope projects culminate in the visual transformation of public environments and have involved everything from blimps, buildings and tugboats to airplanes and NASCAR racecars. Garden in Transit in New York City and the Long Beach Airport Control Tower Project are current Portraits of Hope projects.

To date, tens of thousands of children and adults across the United States and abroad have been involved in Portraits of Hope educational and artistic activities and projects.

The Portraits of Hope program is aimed at brightening and enriching the lives of children and adults – many of who may be coping with adversity, hardship, emotional or physical trauma, or serious illness – through their participation in creative, high-profile, one-of-a-kind projects.

From its inception, Portraits of Hope has emphasized hands-on civic engagement opportunities for the broader public. Portraits of Hope's integrated elements are Goodwill, Art, Education, Health, Teamwork, Community Involvement, Achievement, Civic Responsibility and Visibility.

The symbol of the Portraits of Hope program is a flower in an array of vibrant colors. The flower is the universal icon of joy, life, beauty, hope, inspiration and healing – the heart of the Portraits of Hope message.

Education

Through their participation in Portraits of Hope, thousands of kids of all ages participate in educational sessions in which they learn about, discuss, and express themselves about important current affairs, community issues, individual and social responsibilities, goals and achievements, and -- the power of teamwork.

In school sessions, participating kids integrate their writing, oral and visual presentation skills to express themselves about those individual and societal issues most important to them. As a group, the students evaluate the importance of 14 contemporary issues inclusive of: the environment, education, senior care, national security, ethnic relations, healthcare, women's equality,

medical research, foreign aid, poverty, and animal rights. The students then design small-scale projects representing those issues they would choose to advance. The larger art collaborations -- creating the public works themselves -- are group efforts intended, in part, to demonstrate what people cooperating together are able to accomplish.

Hospital Sessions and Unique Painting Methods

For children and adults in hospitals, Portrait of Hope projects serve as creative therapy. People of all ages and medical and physical conditions have the opportunity to participate with family members, visitors, medical staff, and hospital and project volunteers.

Portraits of Hope has provided children and adults facing cancer, burn trauma, spinal injuries, HIV/AIDS, head and brain injuries, and other serious conditions with innovative, fun, and therapeutic activities that let them enjoy themselves at a time when they are undergoing often difficult treatments in hospitals and healthcare centers.

Specialized Portraits of Hope brushes and painting methods are incorporated in the program's projects including telescope paint brushes for children and adults with IVs or in wheelchairs, shoe brushes for children and adults with injured upper limbs or who cannot manipulate a brush in their hands, and flavored mouth brushes for those who paint with their mouths. Bedside visits are made to make sure that anyone who may wish to participate is able to do so.