

Our Georgia Quilt

Bryna Bobick

Every year, the fifth grade students at Rosemont Elementary School in LaGrange, Georgia leave a “fifth grade art gift” to the school. The art gift serves as a way for students to say “thank you” for everything the teachers and staff have done for them.

When it came time to create this year’s gift, I spoke to Margaret Reneke, professor of drawing and painting at LaGrange College. I asked if the undergraduate art majors from LaGrange College would work with the fifth grade students to complete the gift, a collaborative painted quilt celebrating Georgia history. The project provided the undergraduate students at LaGrange College with a taste of real-world art education and a chance to interact with students in the community.

The Project Scenes from Georgia

After completing their unit of study on Georgia with homeroom teachers, fifth grade students worked together on a collaborative project of paintings, which formed a quilt made from tiles depicting scenes of Georgia.

Students studied Georgia history in social studies, so the painted quilt reinforced the topic and related the state standards for social studies to the national standards in visual arts.

Prior to the project, each student researched various aspects of Georgia and decided what scene they wanted to include in the quilt. The students did a series of sketches of the scenes



before the visit from the LaGrange College art majors.

With the help of the art majors, each student drew and painted a scene from Georgia on an 8 x 8" (20 x 20 cm) canvas. Some of the scenes included: sports teams, historic cities, famous Georgians, wildlife, and flowers native to Georgia. After all the scenes were completed, we glued them to a sheet of plywood to create the painted quilt.

Assessment

As the students progressed on their artworks, the LaGrange College students asked specific questions about each image. The questions included, “What is the focus of your quilt square?” “Where would you like to hang the quilt in Rosemont Elementary School?” and “What is your favor-

ite aspect of the quilt project?” This form of assessment allowed students to focus on the project and have an authentic experience with the college students.

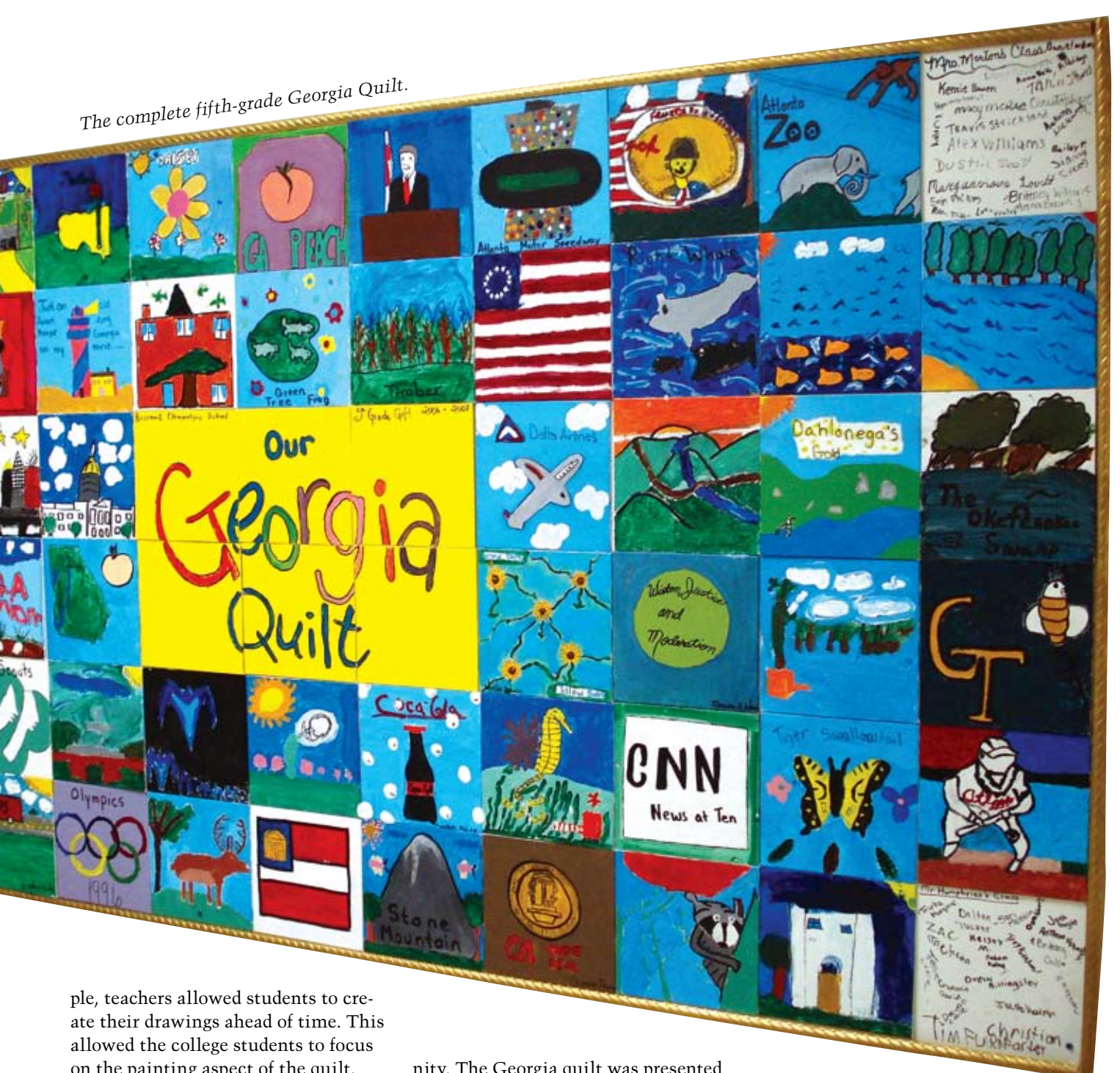
Considerations

Here are a few things to consider when forming partnerships between schools and colleges:

Planning the project: Classroom teachers, students, parents, school administrators, and representatives from the college should be included in the planning stages of the project. Respect everyone involved in the project.

Once the project is planned, write down specific things that will be done by each of the participants. For exam-

The complete fifth-grade Georgia Quilt.



ple, teachers allowed students to create their drawings ahead of time. This allowed the college students to focus on the painting aspect of the quilt.

Set a realistic timeframe: Keep in mind the dates of school-wide testing, field days, and field trips.

Funding: Determine ahead of time who is paying for the project. In this case, the fifth-grade parents paid for the art supplies and materials. Plan ahead when ordering supplies in case something you need is on backorder.

Schedule a show: Establish a time and date for the final work of art to be exhibited to the school and commu-

nity. The Georgia quilt was presented to the school during the fifth-grade graduation ceremony.

Be visible, available for questions about the project, and care about the partnership. I wanted to promote a meaningful collaboration with Rosemont Elementary School and build a strong relationship with the classroom teachers, administrators, and LaGrange College. 🐞

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NATIONAL STANDARD

Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art.

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