



Colorful banners featuring local people line several blocks of Delmar Boulevard. They are the work of W. Patrick Schuchard and School of Art painting students.

New banners bring Delmar neighborhood 'into the loop'

You may already have noticed them, the striking yellow banners streaming down Delmar just east of University City's Loop. And perhaps you've recognized a few of the faces that adorn them — the waitress from a nearby Thai restaurant, the mechanic from a local auto repair shop, the neighborhood dry cleaner.

"It's our own version of the Loop's 'Walk of Fame,'" said W. Patrick Schuchard, E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor for Community Collaboration at the School of Art. Over the summer Schuchard created 32 of the 7-foot banners, each bearing a colorful portrait of a local resident, with the help of three seniors — his son Alex Schuchard, J.C. Steinbrunner and Eric Wicker, all painting majors in the School of Art.

The banners, hung on streetlights along the half-mile section of Delmar between Skinker Boulevard and DeBaliviere Avenue, were installed over the last few weeks by Bi-State Development Agency as part of an Arts in Transit program designed to help revitalize the area surrounding the Delmar and Forest

Park MetroLink stations. A Missouri Arts Council grant also helped fund the project.

"We wanted to engage the community, the people who live and work in the area," Schuchard said.

"We spent a few days in mid-July going from shop to shop, hanging out, taking photographs and talking to people," he continued. "One of the nicest things about the project was how we were able to involve people who otherwise might not ever have had formal portraits made — business owners, residents, MetroLink riders and even a couple of homeless guys. Ideally, after a year or so, I'd like to replace the banners with a new group and give the old ones to the people who modeled for them."

Schuchard, who earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from Washington University in 1973, has taught at the art school and the School of Architecture in various capacities since 1977. He became an associate professor at the School of Art in 1993 and was named to the E. Desmond Lee Professorship this year.

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Lofts

Partnership yields 'hub' for art activity

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America provided all the rehabilitation financing. The building and a nearby parking lot were donated by the University.

"This is really a unique initiative for an art school," Schuchard said. "I think it will help make St. Louis a more

desirable place for young artists to live and start their careers. It will also give the school a real presence in a thriving arts district and should become a locus for artistic activity in St. Louis."

Said David Darnell, president of Bank of America Midwest: "Our equity investment in University Lofts is part of our continuing commitment to the revitalization of downtown. With its rich mix of residential and cultural life, University Lofts will help create a 24-hour downtown, which is essential to building a strong center city."

John Dubinsky, chairman of the RHCDA Board of Directors, also expressed enthusiasm for the project. "RHCDA is proud to have had the opportunity to work with Bank of America, Washington University and its School of Art to make Pat Schuchard's dream a reality," Dubinsky said. "University Lofts is a concrete illustration of what RHCDA has achieved in the past and hopes to achieve in the future — improving the economic and social well-being of our communities and the people who live in them."