Art cements history lesson

Students create mosaic benches to celebrate bicentennial

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LAFAYETTE — With her fingers, Cenla teen Lesbian Campbells, 17, laid down a bit of history Tuesday.

With tiny pieces of tile broken up into thousands of pieces, Campbell and other students at the Acadiana Arts Council's Workforce Investment Act program are creating a mosaic of Louisiana concrete slabs that will become four benches on display around the city.

"We had an artist selected for this project," said Naomi Collette of the Acadiana Arts Council. "The idea of the project was to have working artists help the students to create public art pieces dealing with the Louisiana Purchase."

The benches will be unveiled during Festival International in April. Campbell said. "Students provide the artists with the clay to create public art pieces which will be displayed around the city," she said. "The project began in January and we will be doing two more public art programs this year."

David Fox, a teacher at Natchitoches High School, said the students had to study the history of Louisiana to determine what mosaic slabs they would use. "The project is designed to show the students the history of Louisiana," he said. "We are using public art to help the students learn more about Louisiana history."

The mosaic slabs will be unveiled on the steps of the Acadiana Arts Council building in Lafayette on April 9. "The program has been a huge success," Fox said. "The students have been working hard to create a public art piece that will be displayed around the city."

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