

4-20-2016

Civitas Branching: Rededication Program Introductory Remarks

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Welcome ALL to this very special event.

- The dedication of the **The Civitas Branching Mosaic**, Which was created by members of the Holy Cross Community and College Hill community. And the dedication of the **Lungs of the Planet Mural made by the Montserrat Natural World Cluster**.
- You received information about both pieces as you entered today. I encourage you to read the handout to learn more background about these works of art.
- I THINK, It was Henry Ford that said “coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success!
- When people put away their differences and come together for a common purpose or goal, the outcome can be beautiful.
- That is exactly what happened in 2003, when members of the HC community and members of the College hill neighborhood, Came together with a shared purpose of creating a beautiful tile mosaic. The Mosaic is called civitas branching WHICH IS LATIN FOR COMMUNITY.

- Many people, students, neighbors, faculty, and staff worked side by side in the Millard Art Studio for weeks on this piece. They had a chance to get to know one another as people and not annoyances or adversaries.
- The hours spent together learning about one-another, our differences, but also the many things that we have in common grew into a relationships of mutual respect.
- Civitas Branching was designed by Mosaicist, Hillary Sloate who holds a MFA in Ceramics and now lives and teaches in Washington D.C. You will have a chance to hear from Hillary shortly.
- The mosaic was designed to represent the cooperation of members of the neighborhood and the College community.
- When Civitas Branching was completed in 2004, it was installed just across the St., on the outside of the College Hill Civic Association meeting place on Kendig St.
- A dedication occurred at that time. And all involved felt that it was a great project that brought College and community relations to a more positive level.

- In 2015, the Civic Association closed its doors and the bldg. Was donated to the Habitat for Humanity to be converted into a 4 bedroom home for a family
- I and others believed that Civitas Branching was central to the healing that occurred in our community over the years and we did not want to see the mosaic destroyed. And so we began to explore the process of moving it from Kendig St. And finding a suitable location for Civitas Branching here on campus.
- Several people in addition to me were involved in the process of saving Civitas Branching. Including, John Anderson retired prof. and former mayor of Worcester, Sue Hunt, from Office of Govt. Relations, Roger Hankins, Curator of the Cantor Gallery, and Scott Merrill Director of Facilities. Paul Irish and Jane Reynolds in SA.
- Which bring us to where we are today in the rededication of the mosaic.
- I would now like to introduce the designer of the mosaic Hillary Slote who when speaking of the mosaic says that it was really a pivotal project in developing her philosophy of using Mosaic as a community builder.

- After Hearing from Hillary Via video, you will hear from Lisa Villa class of 1990 and currently on staff at the College and who was a neighbor in College Hill during this period.
- Now it is my pleasure to introduce, Prof. Virginia Reggan. Distinguish Prof. of Humanities to offer remarks on the Lungs of the Planet project.

I invite all to visit the projects outside and enjoy the refreshments during the reception. A plaque describing Civitas Branching and dedication date will be mounted at a later time.