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### 300 Free Public Events throughout Alameda County for 2016 Art IS Education Month in March

**Oakland CA – (February 25, 2016)** – The Alameda County Arts Commission and Alameda County Library are pleased to present 300 free arts events during the 2016 Art IS Education month of March. Art IS Education is an annual showcase of youth arts learning in March during National Arts Education Month. This year’s theme – “Creating Solutions” – empowers youth, families and communities to connect, inspire, and make positive change in their communities. The month-long showcase features 300 free arts events for youth and families at twelve Alameda County Library locations, including the Bookmobile and REACH.

In 2000, Art IS Education was founded by the Alameda County Office of Education and the Alameda County Arts Commission. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year that the Alameda County Library has partnered annually to bring these exciting art events to over 140,000 community members throughout Alameda County.

#### A Series of 300 Free Arts Events

The series of 300 arts events provides youth and families with a wide range of interactive arts learning opportunities through workshops, performances, exhibitions, and storytime activities. Workshops offer hands-on instruction for a broad range of art forms, including origami, jewelry, puppetry, knitting, watercolor painting, and digital photography. Interactive performances will include poetry nights and sing-alongs. All events are free and open to the public.

Youth and parents alike report that Art IS Education events have a positive impact on their lives, families, and communities:



Photo by Margo Weckslar, Albany Library Art Instructor

*“My daughter’s creativity explodes when she is in an environment like this! At her school, they don’t have any art. So we love this!”*  
- Mother of two children, ages 8 and 12

*“It was fun. This was my first time making art with my family!”*  
- Daughter, age 12

*“I learned how to sew finally! I made a three-legged dog. Next I’d like to make glove creatures.”* - Boy, age 12

*“The project made us appreciate our family and community. It reminded me we are lucky that we live here and that they have this at the Library.”* - Mother of daughter, age 7

#### Art IS Education Youth Art Exhibition

The Alameda County Arts Commission will present the Youth Art Exhibition inspired by the Art IS Education theme “Creating Solutions” at the County Administration Building as part of the Art In Public Spaces program. The exhibition features colorful cloth and paper quilts made by youth and seniors working together on intergenerational projects led by teaching artist Ellen Oppenheimer. The exhibition also includes the entries to the Annual Union City Recycling Art Contest which encourages youth to create an artwork that inspires a healthy environment. The exhibit is on display on the first and fifth floors of the Alameda County Administration Building at 1221 Oak St., Oakland, from March 1 – May 26.

**Art IS Education Proclamation**

During the regular public meeting of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, March 1, 10:45am, the Board President Scott Haggerty will proclaim March 2016 as Art IS Education Month. The public will be encouraged to visit the Youth Art Exhibition as part of the Arts Commission's Art In Public Spaces program in the County Administration Building at 1221 Oak St., Oakland.

**All events are free and open to the public.**

For more information call (510) 891-5716 and visit [www.aclibrary.org](http://www.aclibrary.org), [www.artiseducation.org](http://www.artiseducation.org), [www.acgov.org/arts](http://www.acgov.org/arts). Art IS Education is a project founded by the Alameda County Office of Education in partnership with the Alameda County Arts Commission.

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