Press Release

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62 Benches to Beautify Our Cities Cedar Rapids, IA and Iowa City, IA -

(March 1, 2009) - Ryan Ainsworth, Becca Buller, Dawn Clark, and Nicole Klein have put together an arts event entitled, "62 Benches," for the cities of Cedar Rapids and Iowa City to commemorate the flood of 2008. This event will take place on June 15, 2009 at both the Old Capital in Iowa City and Lindale Mall in Cedar Rapids from 10am until 1pm. Each city will have 31 benches for groups or teams to paint as a commemoration of the flood of 2008 and then will distribute the benches around the cities to beautify the communities. The entry fee to participate will be one article of new or gently-used clothing per person on each team. Clothing collection sites will have donation drop-offs at each location, as well as a blood mobile. Local food vendors will be available for lunch. This event will aid in the relief of those who lost their homes, businesses, and beautiful communities to the devastating flood hoping to provide a brighter future for the communities. For more information, visit http://wiki.uiowa.edu/display/uidea/Home.

"The 62 benches will help to bring color back into the environment that was washed away with all of the dirty flood water," stated Clark, excitedly.

Ainsworth, Buller, Clark, and Klein are all local artists working with the University of Iowa through the New Venture in the Arts course. They each bring an element from a different avenue of the performing arts, including dance, music, and theatre. With 62 Benches, the four artists wish to show the cities how they could incorporate the arts in a unique and unifying way to recapture the beauty and homes that were lost due to the flooding of the Cedar and Iowa rivers.

"62 Benches' is a great event to showcase public art, it brings art into the community at a visible level! It is also supporting the families and businesses within the cities of Iowa City and Cedar Rapids," said Jennison, Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance.

The team members of "62 Benches" are finalists in an event planning competition to create an event to commemorate the flood and its 31 foot crest during the summer of 2008. "62 Benches" was selected from a total of eleven participating teams in the Recreation Administration and New Ventures in the Arts courses offered through the University of Iowa.

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