

# Oakland student displays show pride in schools

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STAFF WRITER

Whether or not the groundhog sees his shadow Sunday, Feb. 2, county residents who would like to get a peek at how their tax dollars are being spent should venture out to Summit Place Mall.

Over 100 kiosks throughout the mall will feature Oakland County students at their best during "Public Schools... Public Pride."

Parents, grandparents and people who don't have children in the schools are encouraged to attend the day-long event, which is scheduled from noon to 5 p.m.

"Many of the residents of Oakland County no longer have children in our public schools and they hear a great deal through the media about what's right and wrong with our schools," said Hedy Blatt, director of fine arts and community relations for the Troy School District.

"This event allows the residents of Oakland County... to see first hand all the wonderful things that are going on in our schools," said Blatt, who played a unique role in organizing the event. "I am one of the few people who had had experience working with a major mall." Blatt added that she has worked

with Somerset Collection in Troy for school art shows.

In the days preceding the event, Summit Place, located on Telegraph at Elizabeth Lake Road, will offer patrons a chance to observe "stuffed students" in the halls. These life-size, soft-sculpture replicas of students and staff serve as a reminder of the upcoming event and the diversity in each of the 26 county school districts. They can be viewed now during regular mall hours.

Some 10,000 people are expected to come to the Waterford mall, compared to the more than 3,000 people who attended the first event at Oakland Schools facilities in Nov. 1995, according to Jennifer Davidson, Oakland Schools arts education and school improvement planning consultant.

"Public Schools... Michigan's Choice" featured success stories from people who attended Oakland County schools. This year's event will focus more on interactive demonstrations, according to Farmington resident Helen Prutow, a member of Oakland Schools Board of Education and former member of the Farmington Board of Education. It will also feature Oakland Community College and Oakland University.

"We wanted it bigger and better than last year," Prutow said. From performing visual arts to homework hotlines, kindergarten assessment to educational partnerships with industries, "The scope of this is just phenomenal," Davidson said.

In Troy, for example, the high school will feature partnerships with businesses which allow students to get hands on experience, a multi-media program at the middle school level, which teaches students to use several new technologies such as scanners, CD ROM, digital cameras and digital audio to produce a creative product, and at the elementary level, multi-age classes which combine instruction for first and second grade students.

Oakland Schools long range planning team will use the event as a kickoff for their 1997 discussions.

To help attract crowds, the stores at Summit Place will be having sales. One percent of total sales will be paid to the schools. It will be divided proportionately according to the number of people who attend from each district in relation to each district's enrollment, Davidson said. People will be asked to fill out enrollment cards as they enter the mall to help direct the funds.



STAFF PHOTO

**Take a look: David Glascock admires soft sculptures of students at Summit Place Mall, Telegraph at Elizabeth Lake roads. The display is a prelude to a Feb. 2 show of what is happening in area schools. View the display during regular mall hours.**

"We're collecting a data base of parents that support public education," Davidson said.

"I think it's very important to stand up and say we're proud of what's happening here," said

West Bloomfield parent Barb DeMarco, who is serving as a parent host at the event.

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