

L. Gale Buckner, Commissioner  
Jim Shuler, Director  
Office of Communications



## DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

3408 Covington Highway ▪ Decatur, Georgia ▪ 30032-1513  
Telephone: (404) 508-7147 ▪ Fax: (404) 508-7341

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MAY 18, 2012**

**CONTACT:**

**Jim Shuler, Director**  
**DJJ Communications**  
**(404) 508-7238**  
[JimShuler@djj.state.ga.us](mailto:JimShuler@djj.state.ga.us)

### **DJJ's Eastman Youth Development Campus Unveils National Mural Project May 3<sup>RD</sup>**

(EASTMAN, GEORGIA) The Eastman YDC in Dodge County, Georgia is one of just ten juvenile detention facilities in the country selected to participate in this year's nationwide arts program called the 'Emanuel Project'. The motivational arts program offers a compelling mural project to provide youth in detention a unique hands-on opportunity to work with the nationally renowned painter, sculptor and muralist Emanuel Martinez, as he paints a 100-foot mural specially designed to enhance the DJJ's Youth Development Campus in Eastman.

"This program makes a powerful impact to improve the lives of incarcerated youth like those at Eastman YDC by helping students strengthen their communication skills, build self-esteem and bolster academic performance through a mural process," said Emanuel Project Program Founder Louisa Craft Jornayvaz. Known for her work as an advocate for at-risk youth, Jornayvaz says the Emanuel mural project is supported with art curriculum and art therapy programs, as well as research to help document the program's impact among committed youth.

"This is a tremendous gift for the youth here at our facility," said Neal Clark, principal at the Eastman YDC. "It's not only a great opportunity for our students to learn about the mural process, but even more, it's an honor for our students to work with Emanuel Martinez who is a great mentor and accomplished artist," said Clark.

Artist Emanuel Martinez began his own artistic career at age thirteen as a youth-at-risk at the facility for juvenile offenders where he painted his first mural. Two years later, after being incarcerated three times and winning statewide art competitions, Martinez established his reputation as an exceptionally talented artist.

With help from artist Bill Longley, Emanuel re-enrolled and graduated from school, winning two art scholarships. By age twenty-two, Emanuel had worked with the most significant muralist in the world, David A. Siqueros, completing three art works now part of the permanent collection of the National Museum of American Art Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Youth at Eastman YDC began working here side by side with Emanuel Martinez in mid-April, marking the start of this amazing mural project titled "The World is Our Classroom." The Eastman art students will work alongside Emanuel on the 10 x 100 foot mural to depict the importance of education and the many choices young people will encounter during their lives.

As muralist, painter and sculptor, Emanuel occupies outstanding status among national and internationally known artists. Since establishing a studio in 1968, Martinez has received national acclaim as a forerunner of the contemporary mural movement in the U.S. He has received prestigious awards for his design capabilities and for engaging young people in art projects requiring high standards of workmanship. Emanuel's "The World is Our Classroom" mural will be unveiled at Eastman YDC on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

"We're thrilled to be part of the Emanuel Project and grateful to the supporters of this innovative program," said DJJ Commissioner L. Gale Buckner. "It incorporates art into our education curriculum to reach youth who may not respond to traditional teaching methods. It helps engage them in academics and facilitates success in the classroom. Many of our youth have previously benefitted from this mural program," said Commissioner Buckner.

Since the Emanuel Project began in January 2011, nineteen murals have been completed in thirteen juvenile detention centers in Georgia, Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky, Colorado and Texas. For information on how to participate in the Emanuel Project, contact Dr. James "Randy" Minnick, head of program development, at 229-938-7362 or [rminnick@theminnickgroup.com](mailto:rminnick@theminnickgroup.com).

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