Ragen Carpenter Randall Middle School, Hillsborough County 2024 NIE Teacher of the Year Honorable Mention

Ragen teaches visual arts at Randall Middle School in Hillsborough County.

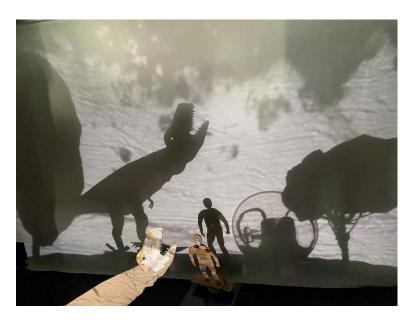
Ragen was chosen as a 2024 Honorable Mention for integrating the newspaper into four cornerstone art projects that blend creativity and sustainability.

The first uses Tampa Bay Times feature reporting about murals to introduce students to Tampa Bay's vibrant local art scene and instill an appreciation for the stories that shape our community. The project culminates in the creation of large-scale murals by students, who work in teams to collaboratively design and execute the works. The material used is recycled bottle caps, encouraging students to reflect on their environmental impact.



The second project explores public art as a critical tool for understanding the relationship between art and community. Students are introduced to real-world conflicts between artistic expression and community standards. This discussion extends beyond the classroom, touching on broader issues of freedom of expression, public space utilization and the societal roles of art.

The third project focuses on three-dimensional art and integrates a career component inspired by a Tampa Bay Times article on unconventional art materials. This unit not only hones students' artistic skills, but also broadens their understanding of art's potential to influence and inspire and introduces them to the many career possibilities within the art world.





The final project showcases how everyday materials can be transformed into significant artistic expressions by having students create 3D art projects with recycled newspaper. This project teaches students about the importance of ecological responsibility and empowers them to make a positive impact through their artistic endeavors.





