



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 24, 2020

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LARGE SCALE PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION BRINGS DYNAMIC VISUAL EXPERIENCE TO DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH STREET

- The 3,500 square foot asphalt mural can be found on Penn Avenue between 9th and 10th Streets
 - Artist, Jayla Patton, is finalizing her artistic vision now, to be completed August 21st
 - The installation will remain in place until November 2nd
 - This is the first of several Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership commissioned artworks being implemented as part of the '**REFORGE Downtown**' Initiative.

DOWNTOWN PITTSBURGH, PA – Continuing its long tradition of support for public art, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership has commissioned artist Jayla Patton to create a vibrant street mural on the 900 block of Penn Avenue. The mural will be the first of several temporary public art activations commissioned by the PDP in 2020 that engages local artists, and is part of the PDP's '**REFORGE**' initiative that invites the community to safely revisit and reengage with Downtown through unique events, activations, and programs.

The mural, entitled **Colorful Growth/Soft Waves**, is being installed on the asphalt between 9th and 10th Streets. Work began on Tuesday, August 11, and is expected to be completed by Friday, August 21, weather permitting.

A graduate of the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Jayla's background as an illustrator, comic artist, animator and educator made Jayla an ideal choice for the project. The PDP organized a selection panel of artists, Downtown residents and stakeholders to review portfolios of local artists. During the interview, Jayla impressed the panel with previous work examples and an enthusiasm for translating studio work into a 3,500 square foot street mural.

"Public art creates highly memorable experiences for our community and Jayla understood that really well," said Jeremy Waldrup, President and CEO of the PDP, "for several decades we've recognized the impact that artistic expression can have on Downtown and, at this time especially, that these initiatives play a vital role in giving platforms to artists who are creating their first large-scale public artworks, encouraging dialogue in our community, and providing a safe way for people to get out of their homes and experience something unique Downtown."

Jayla concurred with that sentiment. "I am excited to explore storytelling through color in Downtown Pittsburgh," said Jayla, "Color really affects mood, so bringing bright color bursts and a dynamic visual change to the urban landscape will impact people in really interesting ways. You are compelled to slow-down, reexamine, rethink. In the 'new normal' we find ourselves, it's so important that we take some time to reflect."

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“Giving Black artists an opportunity to inspire and motivate during this pandemic is incredibly important,” stated Marisa Williams, Head of Community Outreach & Impact for the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh and a member of the of the artist selection committee. “Large art installations like this bring a life and creativity to Downtown and can be so transformative in sharing messages of hope and racial justice to a community facing adversity.”

The installation was borne out of discussions with stakeholders along the 900 block of Penn Avenue back in July, while considering adjusted street layout and design for pedestrians and businesses to accommodate social distancing protocols. The mural will remain in place until November 2.

About the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership

Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations, and residents who provide energy, vision, and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors alike. The PDP’s strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, and economic development and advocacy. For more information, visit www.DowntownPittsburgh.com, follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/downtownpitt> and “like” us on Facebook.

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