

### Trinity mural painted by teen

06/02/2009 05:52 PM

By: Britt Godshalk

ALBANY, N.Y. — It sits in what some may consider a rougher part of town. But those who enter this community center in Albany are presented with new hope, new solutions, and this...



"It's the first thing they see when they walk in the door," said Kevin McKay, the senior probation officer for the Albany County Probation Department. "It expresses everything that Trinity does."

"I wanted people to look up and say, who did that? That's a nice piece of art right there," said artist Anthony Chandler. "I like that."

Meet the artist, 14-year-old Anthony Chandler.

"The inspiration was meeting all the people, the different kinds of people that are here, that worked here. They were really nice to me and I felt at home every time I came down to work on the mural," he said.

But he didn't come here as an artist. He came here as a juvenile delinquent.

"Anthony was arrested for graffiti," said McKay.

It was June of last year just before the end of school. There had been reports of graffiti in the area of the Spectrum Theatre. Someone had actually tagged the front door. As Anthony walked down the street nearby, a police officer stopped him, and asked to search his bag.

"He found a marker and a binder with, like, all my graffiti in it and then he was just like, oh well did you do this stuff on here and I was like, oh yeah, I did, I did a little bit on the door," said Chandler.

"I was very angry and upset, shocked," said Erica Lowe, Anthony's mother.

At first that anger was toward the police.

"Did he really do this?" Lowe asked rhetorically. "You're kinda in denial because everybody thinks their kids don't do something."

"I was like, oh, why did I do that, man, I shouldn't had never wrote," said Anthony. "I was like, I'm better than this, why did I write on that wall!"

"He was charged with making graffiti and possession of a graffiti instrument," said McKay. "The more bad choices you make the easier it is to make bad choices, which leads to a life into crime. We wanted to take the opportunity to help Anthony make a better choice and avoid the possibility of Family Court."

Anthony said, "They started asking me, can you sketch out pictures for Trinity?"

"When Anthony came in with his initial drawings, it was like, wow," said McKay.

"When he was finished I was ecstatic about it, I was just like, ahh!" said Lowe.

Of all people, Anthony's mother said she has the arresting officer to thank.

"They actually did help my son become something better because if he didn't get in trouble he could possibly still be out there doing it," said Lowe.

Instead he's in a positive place telling the story of positive place.

"Trinity does a lot so I wanted to make a story out of it," said Chandler. "So I made a road saying this was the path to good things. And at the end it's always going to be a sunny sky."

And as he leaves his mark behind, he pictures a few sunny skies for himself.

"Yeah very, after this, yeah it felt good," said Chandler. "Yeah I think I do."

The Albany County Probation Department is recruiting volunteers for the Juvenile Community Accountability Board, the program that helped Anthony Chandler get back on the right track. The Department is planning to hold a training session on July 11 from 9 a.m to 2 p.m at the Probation Department.

For more information



For more information or to enroll in the training, contact Senior Probation Officer Lisa Mahar at 518-487-5300 or [Lisa.mahar@albanycounty.com](mailto:Lisa.mahar@albanycounty.com). Or check out the JCAB page on the Department's [website](#).