

Young artists sell cards to build center

Riverside raises funds for facility on other side of town

BY MORGAN JAREMA
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GRAND RAPIDS — Darrarctu Ali, Ramiro Guillen, Holly Winstanley, Roberta Sprague and Wilmer Faller live on the city's Northeast Side.

But that isn't stopping the Riverside Middle students from wanting to help young people on the Southeast Side.

The five students recently completed a project making handmade greeting cards sold to raise money for a proposed youth center.

"This was something tangible they could see, that by selling their art work they're donating their talent," Riverside Middle art teacher Eugenia Marve said.

"I'm so pleased to provide an opportunity for kids to be of service, to understand that they're amazing and that they can make a difference."

The cards, which took about three weeks to make, reflect the five students' ethnic heritage: American Indian, African, Asian, American and Mexican. They were drawn with colored pencil and reproduced on note cards, with printing costs donated by Swift Printing.

If all the card sets are sold, the

YOU CAN HELP

In the cards

Riverside Middle School students are raising money for the proposed southeast side youth center.

What: Five students have crafted greeting cards.

Cost: \$10 for a pack of 12.

Where: Cards can be bought at the offices of the Concerned Citizens Committee, 745 Eastern Ave. SE, or by calling 252-2201

youth center stands to make about \$40,000 toward construction of the \$5.5 million youth center planned for the city's Southeast Side, Marve said.

"It's really important that kids have a place to go," Marve said. "They need more options."

Concerned Citizens Council, a 17-year-old coalition of black professional, business and nonprofit groups, plans to build a 54,000-square-foot youth center next door to the Sheldon Complex at the corner of Franklin Street and Sheldon Avenue.

The facility is to include recreational activities and programs, and space to tutor and mentor youths ages 12 to 18 from across the city.

About \$4.2 million in commitments has been raised so far toward the esti-

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CARDS

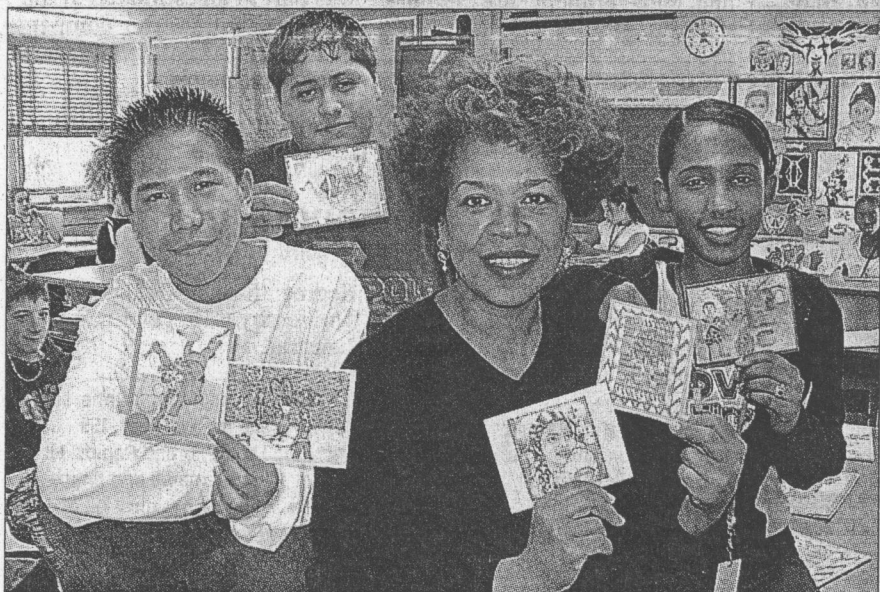
FIVE STUDENTS MADE CARDS

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ated \$15 million cost to construct and operate the facility for more than 10 years, group president Don Williams said.

A recent partnership with The Salvation Army could secure more than twice the funds needed. But Williams said fund-raising isn't slowing down, and that he's thrilled kids are contributing.

"This says that kids have a greater understanding than we give them credit for," Williams said. "These kids have shown they not only have artistic talent, but that cultural awareness and development are important to them."



PRESS PHOTO/MORGAN JAREMA

Greetings: Art teacher Eugenia Marve and Riverside Middle students, from left, Wilmer Faller, 15; Ramiro Guillen, 14; and Darrarctu Ali, 12, show off greeting cards they made to sell in a fund-raiser for a proposed youth center on the city's Southeast Side.

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