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## Positive images and motivating messages created for troubled youth by ECSU graphic arts students

By BRENDA SULLIVAN  
Staff Writer

WILLIMANTIC — Bright images and uplifting messages have been created by Eastern Connecticut State University students in the ECSU Design Group that will be hung in the halls of the local juvenile court.

The works in the "Visions of Optimism" exhibit were unveiled at a reception held Dec. 14 at the Admissions Building at ECSU.

The exhibit will be on display through Fall of 2007.

"The images in 'Vision of Optimism' were created to send messages of hope, strength and courage to the young people passing through the juvenile justice system," said the group's professor, June Bisantz.

"They are a colorful collective vision of optimism which will send the best kind of caring message to everyone who sees them," she said.

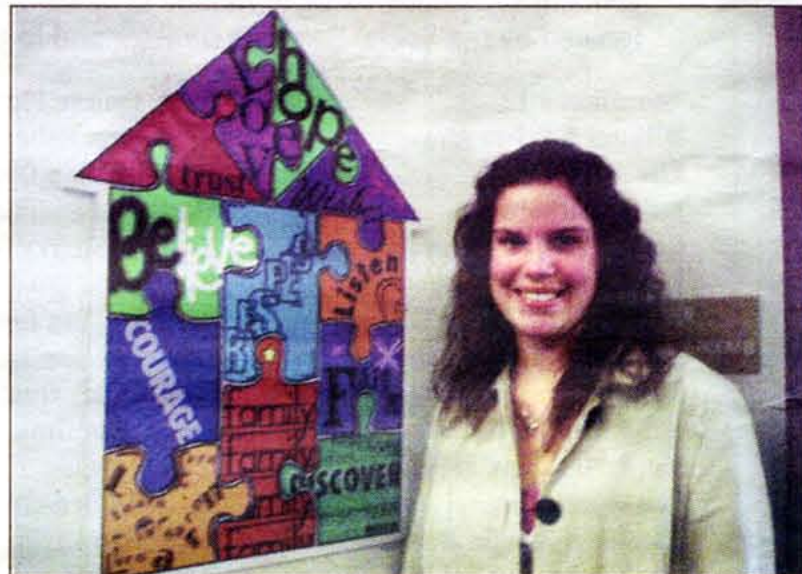
The project is one of several community outreach works created by ECSU graphic design students.

Recent projects include "Third Thursday" banners and promotional materials (designed by Anne Marie Lombardo as a senior project); seasonal banners for downtown Main Street (created by Krista Utke, Richard Harrington, Adam McLaughlin, Amy Pjura, and Jennifer Bolliard); and billboards for the Willimantic Food Co-op.



**Images to grow by.** Alyssa Morello stands beside "Nurture, Grow, Triumph," created to inspire young people to reach for brighter horizons.

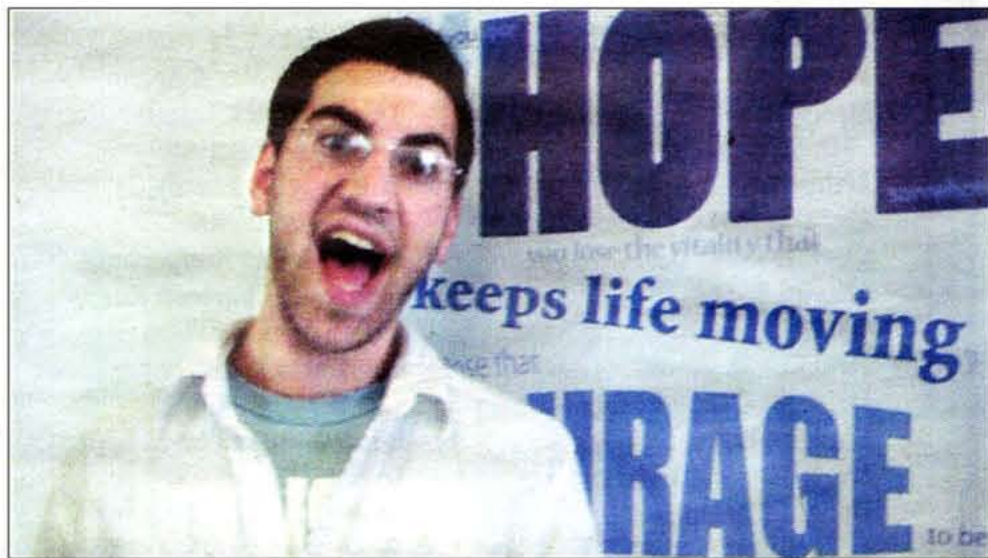
Photos by Suzanne Connors.



**Life is a puzzle.** Amy Pjura (top photo) with "Putting the Pieces Together," one of four collaborative pieces sparked by her original concept. Puzzle pieces include motivating words such as "courage" and "discover." Suzanne Connors (second photo) with her work, "Inspired."



**Open the door to the future.** Sara Reed and friend Tim Jedrzejczyk beside "Positive Outlook," which represents ideas brainstormed by the design students, including doors opening, climbing to the top, peer support, and holding hands for the future.



**Get excited about the future!** Chris Turiello incorporates a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr. produced in a graphic design, that accentuates encouraging words such as "hope" and "courage."