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### Career Center Mural Project

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# Career Center Mural Project

CAMERON DAVIS

# Preview

Research for this project started in the fall semester of 2019 when I was assigned my graduate mentor, Erica Lewis, to help assist and guide me through the process of my research. First, I came up with three loosely conceptualized ideas that would be possibilities for the Career Center's mural:

- ▶ Portraits of the famous alumni who attended the University of Louisville. The idea behind this concept was to not only demonstrate the variety of possibilities that the university has proved to their students, but also the motivate the current students to do big things in the world.
- ▶ School of Law building with the circular path and landscape, displaying students walking their way through the process of college; contains the first thoughts as a freshman when it comes to choosing a major and shows students walking to their graduation on the other side eventually leading into the career path they desire.

# Preview (continued)

- ▶ Different well known landmarks in the Louisville area to express the opportunity for future employment of the city. The purpose of this was to demonstrate the richness of cultural landmarks within the city to show what students can expect to enjoy after their college experience once they into their career.

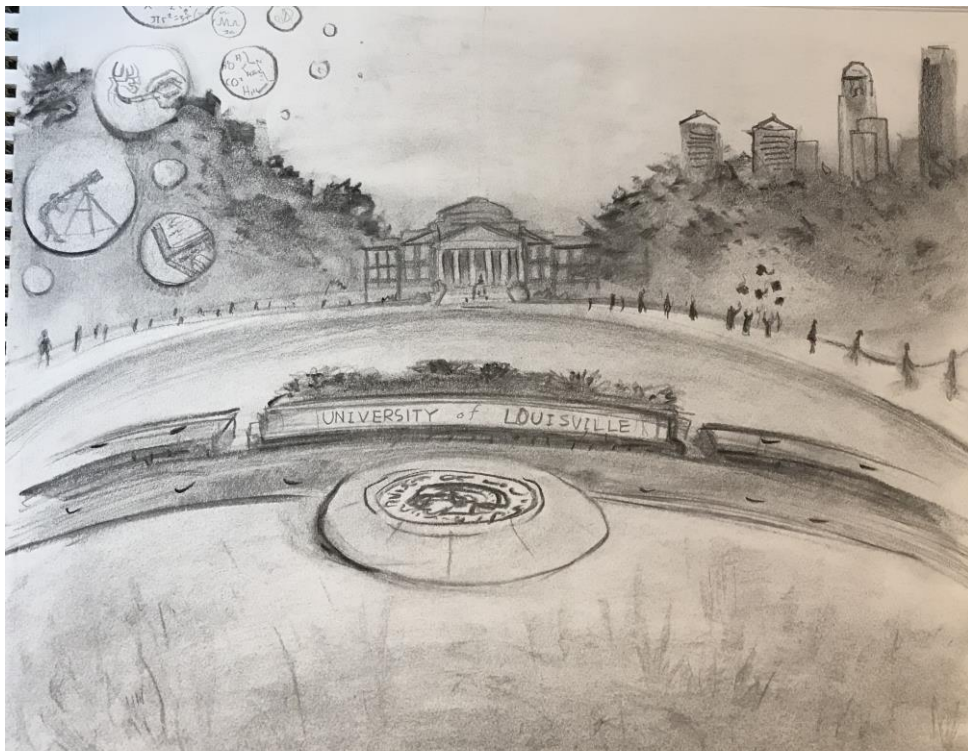
After coming up with these concepts, I showed the three sketch ideas to Samantha La Mar at the university Career Center. We decided that the School of Law idea was the favored concept. However, there were two walls, so instead of dividing one design across two walls, I instead used two ideas: the School of Law landscape and the famous alumni.

# Findings

- ▶ In order to begin my formal research for these murals, I started by finding more information about well-known alumni. I did this by emailing the heads of departments on campus to find a variety of alumni from different fields. This process was not very helpful, so I decided to talk with the School of Business about some of their well-known alumni, which is where I found my first alum, David Jones, Sr. Eventually, I went to Alumni Hall and asked the administrators if they could provide me with some names of well-known alumni from different departments. This experience was very helpful for deciding the remaining portraits to include in the mural. At this point in the research process I had selected five alumni to use for the mural.
  - ▶ Lamar Jackson, a current NFL player, attended the university playing football until 2017.
  - ▶ Sam Gilliam, A famous artist, graduated from the university in 1955 as a Fine Arts major.
  - ▶ David Jones Senior, Co-Founder of Humana, graduated from the university in 1954 as a business major.
  - ▶ Lucy Helm, Executive Vice President & Chief Partner Officer of Starbucks, graduated from the university in 1982.
  - ▶ Sue Grafton, Author of the Kinsey Millhone Alphabet Series, graduated from the university in 1961 with a degree in English Literature and minors in humanities and fine arts.

# Process: Sketching

- ▶ After finalizing the information behind the two murals, I recreated the drawings in more detail, developing them conceptually to better understand how we would actually create the mural.



# Process: Separation Layers

- ▶ For the portraits, Erica helped me create separation layers of the values in the faces in Photoshop, similar to the process of creating a screen print. This process made the alumni mural much easier to visualize, and we decided that a projector would be the best way to create the painting by projecting the individual layers for an accurate portrait.





# Process: Start of Alumni Mural

- ▶ During the 2019 winter break, I started working on the physical mural itself. For the portrait mural, I planned out the compositional layout of the alumni portraits with Erica's assistance. We started off by roughly estimating how much space would be between the faces and how much of the shoulders would be shown. After this step, I projected the Photoshop separations to map out the faces to each other proportionally. We then draw the contours of each alumni to get a better sense of composition for the final product.





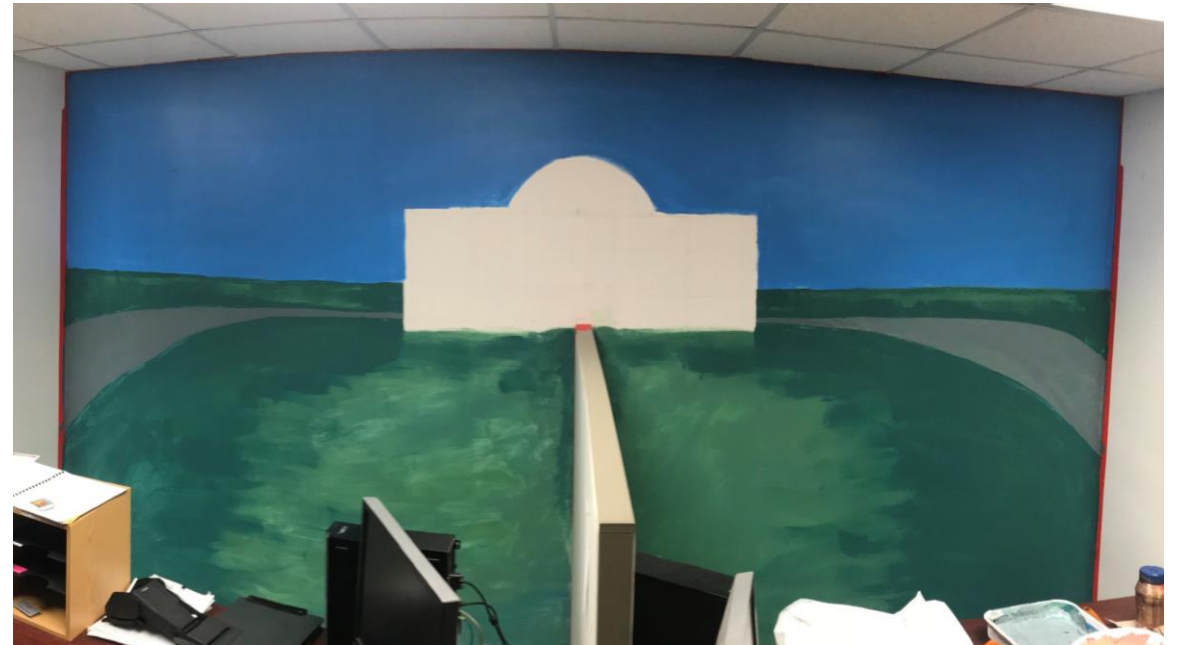
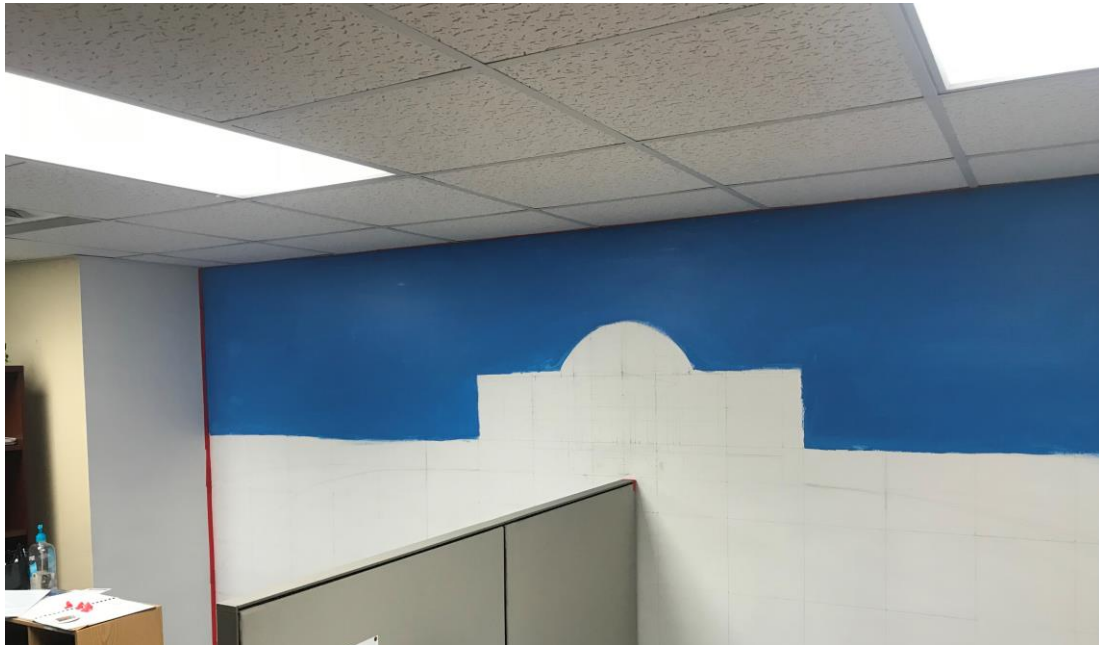
# Process: Stages of Alumni Mural

- ▶ After this, we used the projector to paint on the layers of each separation, starting with the lightest tones, as they were the largest base layer, to the dark tones, which were the smaller details on top. Each face had between five and seven layers of value. This process went by fairly quickly, and we completed the main part of it in a day or two over winter break.



# Process: First Layer for School of Law Mural

- ▶ For the larger School of Law mural, also physically started over winter break, I created a grid of 10in x10in squares to map out to transfer my drawing proportionally. My goal with this portion was to get the base layer down so I could move quickly during the spring semester. I ended up drawing out and spending a good amount of time on the composition and proportions of the School of Law building. After I sketched out all the basic contours on the painting, I started to apply the first layers throughout.







- ▶ Over the course of multiple layers, I built up everything in the background and worked my way to the foreground during the spring semester. After I had the sky and trees painted, I added color to the School of Law, which made the rest of the mural very easy to complete.
- ▶ I found that the most challenging aspect of this was keeping the School of Law building true to its proportions from my reference photograph. The last things that I added to this mural were the thought bubbles and the people walking on the path. I ended up spending the first few weeks of the semester working on the mural and finished it in the first week on February.

## Process



# Outcome

- ▶ SCHOOL OF LAW MURAL





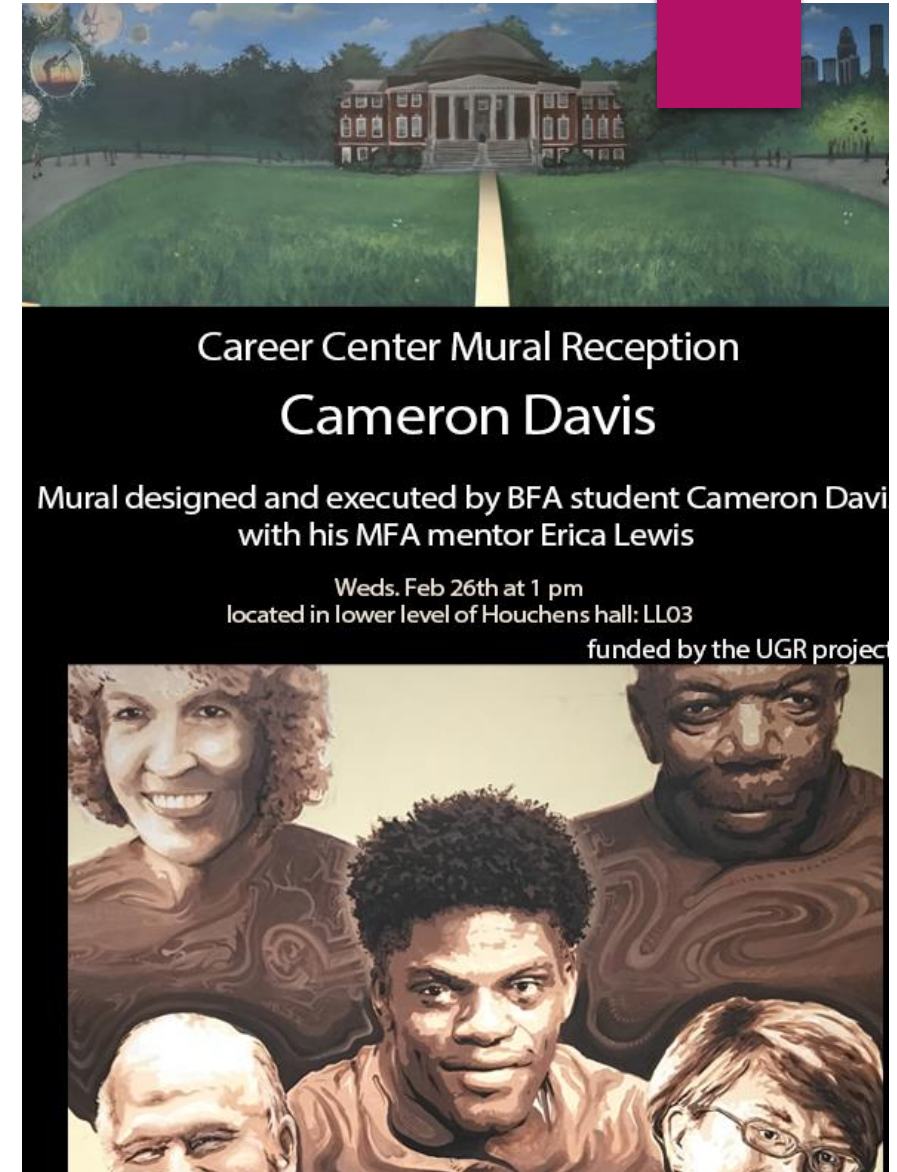
# Outcome

ALUMNI MURAL

# Culminating Event

- ▶ To conclude everything I have done for this project, on February 26<sup>th</sup> in the Career Center a reception was held with snacks and refreshments to celebrate the work. Prior to this, I designed a flyer to advertise the event. After printing copies I posted them throughout multiple buildings on campus.

- ▶ Image of advertisement flyer for the event





# Conclusion

- ▶ From the totality of work and effect invested in this research project, I learned a lot from different aspects of the university. I learned how to reach out and communicate in order to obtain specific information from different departments on campus. For instance, when I started brainstorming possible alumni to include in the mural I went to the alumni hall to get assistance for help finding well-known graduates. I also reached out to the School of Business as well as emailed multiple departments on campus which taught me a lot about some of the amazingly influential alumni who attended the University of Louisville.
- ▶ This project taught me a lot about my own artistic purpose and helped me further explore my talents. This was not my first mural though it was more challenging than anything I have painted before. I say this because I had never painted an indoor mural that was planned out. This project challenged me to really build a strong foundation for a work of art by not only making the art, but also planning it out by researching information for the pieces. I encountered a few problems with proportion and planning at first, however, after thinking critically, I was able to problem solve to fix what I needed in order to better myself as well as the project. What I have learned from this project will certainly help me approach other murals and art pieces that I paint in the future.

