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## Sumter YDC Students to Graduate and Unveil Mural

**Americus, GA-** Students at the Sumter Youth Development Campus (YDC) will have two reasons to celebrate on Wednesday June 1, 2011.

At 10:00 a.m. there will be a high school graduation in the gymnasium followed by the unveiling of a mural that five students help paint along with renowned artist Emanuel Martinez. The mural, entitled "Envision Your Future," will be unveiled immediately after the graduation.

The mural project has been sponsored by the Art for Kids Emanuel Project, a program that provides creative learning materials to incarcerated youth. This mural is the third of its kind in Georgia. The first was completed at the Muscogee YDC in January. The second was completed at the Macon YDC in February.

Dr. John Rickicki, project coordinator in the DJJ Office of Education, said the project is a great opportunity for the kids.

"It's wonderful to have an artist of this caliber take an interest in our kids and leave something behind that will last," he said.

Martinez is a renowned painter, sculptor and muralist who got his start working in the Civil Rights movement with Cesar Chavez and other prominent leaders. Three of the works of art he did during that era are now in the permanent collection of the Museum of American Art at the Smithsonian. In addition, Martinez has been recognized many times for his work. He has received the Colorado Governor's Award For Excellence in the Arts (1985), the Denver Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts (1995) and the Denver Civil Rights award in 2001.

Georgia DJJ has been involved with the Art for Kids Emanuel Project since 2008, when then Sumter YDC teacher Randy Minnick contacted the project and received some art supplies for his students. From there, Minnick ended up leaving DJJ and working as a consultant for the Art for Kids Emanuel Project.

"This is a really exciting opportunity," Minnick said. "I hope that this is the start of a lasting relationship between Emanuel Art For Kids and DJJ."

For more information on Emanuel Martinez please visit [emanuelmartinez.com](http://emanuelmartinez.com).

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