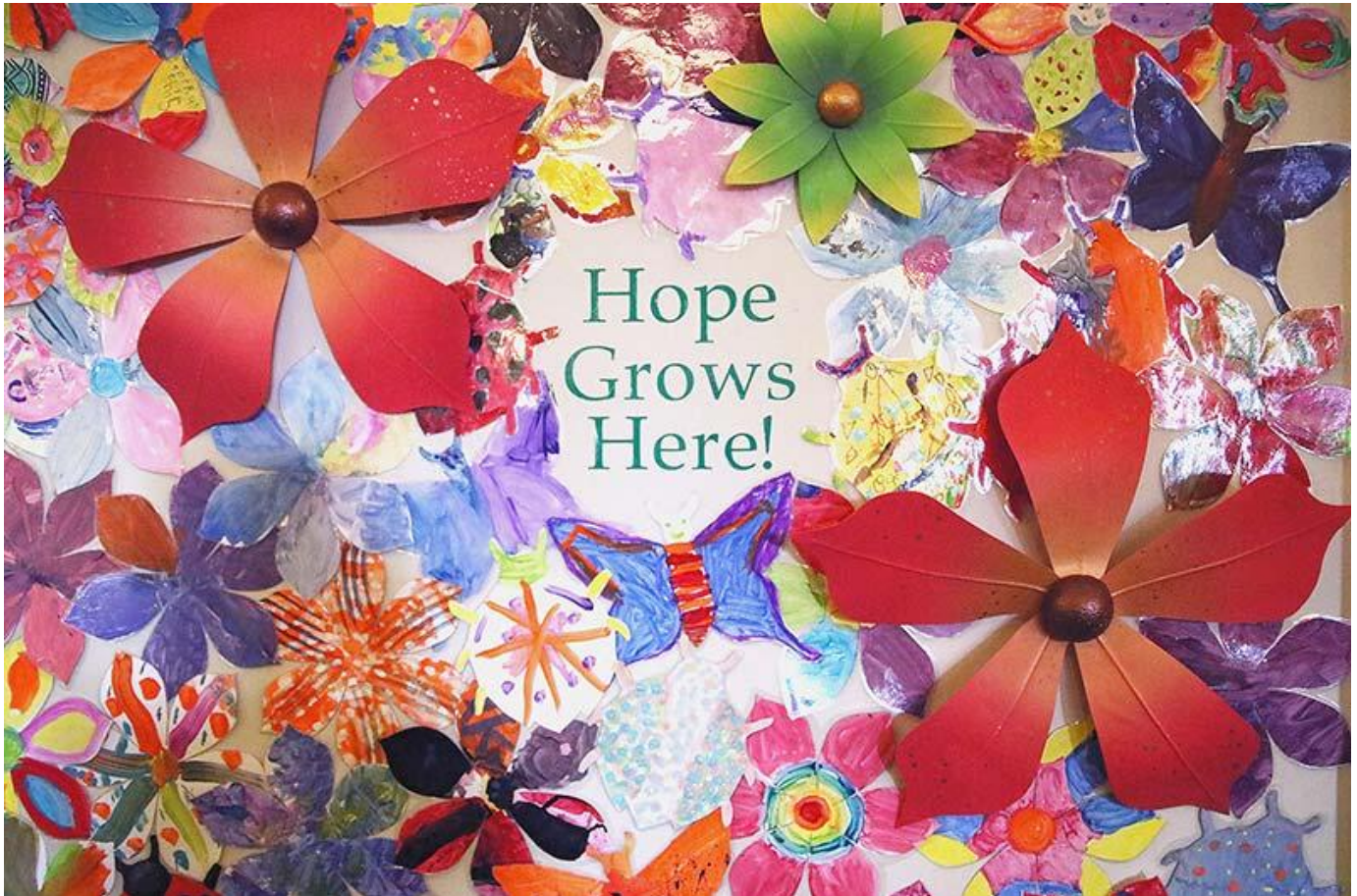


Artists, children collaborate on flower installation for Tulane Cancer Center

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A flower installation was presented to the Tulane Cancer Center to mark National Cancer Survivor's Day for cancer survivors, recently diagnosed patients and their families, friends and caregivers. (Photo from the Tulane Cancer Center)

When Dana Beuhler and Caroline Thomas were invited to be artist demonstrators in the Kids Tent at the 2017 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, they began a process that resulted in a large floor-to-ceiling art installation for [Tulane Comprehensive Cancer Clinic](#) at Tulane Health System.

"We knew we would be working with a large audience of young artists at Jazz Fest," said Thomas, who works as a Mardi Gras float builder and artist. "We wanted to

share the magic of three-dimensional art with the kids by showing them how to create beautiful hand-painted paper mache' flowers, butterflies and bugs that collectively would become a large art installation for the Tulane Cancer Center."

The process was simple; each child who visited the Kids Tent was offered a blank, pre-cut flower or butterfly to paint and decorate. Once complete, the painted masterpieces were laid out to dry, and volunteers completed the finishing touches which included laminating and cutting out the flowers and butterflies.

"At first we wondered if we would be met with resistance from young artists who became attached to their work and felt strongly about taking it home, but actually the opposite happened," said Beuhler who works in the art departments of local motion picture films and creates Mardi Gras costumes. "When we explained that their flower would be part of a larger work at the Tulane Cancer Center, the kids felt genuinely excited about letting their artwork go."

Throughout Jazz Fest, the artists and volunteers had many insightful conversations with the kids, as well as overwhelming support from the parents, they said. It was a unique opportunity not just to engage the kids on an artistic level, but also to challenge them to be a part of something bigger that gives back to their community. Thomas and Beuhler wanted to share with them the carnival arts and the beautiful feeling of expressing one's self through paint, but perhaps even more importantly, to teach them how wonderful it feels to give to others.

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