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**Kitchen designer, Trinity High Join Forces To `Go Green'
*Earth Day Event Showcased Alum, Students' Collaboration***

Pamela Polvere, a kitchen and bath designer, wanted to give her studio's green display a "statement."

Her alma mater, Trinity High School in River Forest, wanted to give its top art students a "real-world" opportunity to apply their skills even as they raise awareness of environmental stewardship.

Nearly three months later, the fruit of their collaboration went on display in the school's auditorium foyer on Earth Day, April 22.

Nineteen students, spanning eight teams, created 1-foot by 8-foot displays with the phrase "Green is the New Black." Polvere selected the wire-and-copper effort created by the only solo artist, senior Jessica Metro.

Metro's materials came from wire in her basement, and copper she found in the yard of a next-door neighbor who was in the midst of a renovation project.

Metro, who will enroll at the University of Illinois in Champaign to study graphic design, called the piece "Recycling Is Not Tortuous." It's a double entendre referring to the winding cursive style in which she fashioned the slogan as well as the ease with which we can recycle.

"It's incredible what these young ladies can do, given the opportunity and some guidance," said Trinity principal Michele Whitehead. "We're very fortunate to have such outstanding teachers who have a passion for art and pass their love of the craft along to students."

The piece is now on display at Pamela Polvere Designs, 7506 W. Grand Ave. in Elmwood Park.

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Polvere broached the collaborative idea in late January to Trinity administrators. Teachers and students quickly embraced the concept, with Kelly Banos-Parra, a Trinity fine arts instructor, coordinating the work of about 20 National Art Honor Society members.

To incorporate and build around the slogan, the teams used a variety of materials and techniques, including three-dimensional construction and collage, to design the banners.

Polvere's green commitment grew after she attended the Greenbuild International Conference at McCormick Place in Chicago last year.

"It just feels right," said Polvere. "We are helping each other—they are working on a project that is green, and I am showcasing the work in my showroom."

For the past year, Polvere has displayed samples of green materials in her showroom. Those samples have included cork, bamboo, linoleum, recycled glass tiles and countertops, recycled paper countertops, and low-VOC paint.

Banos-Parra, who is moderator of the school's National Art Honor Society, said the project has empowered students to think about ways in which they can actively address environmental problems, rather than be mere spectators.

"This fit right in with the mission of the society," said Banos-Parra. "We thought it really was a great match."

"It's been a great opportunity for students to use art to enhance the idea of tolerance and of working together to build a much better community and a much better world through the talents that they have," Banos-Parra added.

Banos-Parra said she hopes to place the other seven banners at area businesses and schools interested in displaying them. At the Trinity event, Polvere's mother, Gloria Onischuk, snapped up one dubbed "Be Sharp-Recycle," by Nicole Sorrentino and Elizabeth Wasil.

Onischuk will display the piece at her Oak Park bed-and-breakfast, Under the Gingko Tree.

"I'd like to see them all have homes," said Banos-Parra, "instead of being recycled."

For more information, contact Banos-Parra at 708-771-8383, ext. 532, or kparra@trinityhs.org.

About Pamela Polvere

An Oak Park resident, Polvere has been a Certified Kitchen Designer since 1989. Polvere has appeared on HGTV's "New Spaces," has judged designs for the NKBA and has served on the Plato Woodwork Inc. dealer advisory committee.

Polvere's studio is at 7506 W. Grand Ave. in Elmwood Park and online at www.pamelapolveredesigns.com.