Inspiration to Act: Building Community
Ramiro Gomez paints from personal experience. In 1986, he was born to undocumented Mexican immigrants in the Inland Empire area east of Los Angeles. Growing up, his mother worked as a school janitor and his father as a trucker. Beginning in 2009, Gomez worked as a live-in nanny to a Beverly Hills family and began to paint figures of women over luxury magazine spreads discarded by his employer. That two-and-a-half-year experience — one of simultaneous assimilation and alienation — has fueled much of his artistic practice since.

Gomez has been painting housekeepers, pool cleaners, nannies, and gardeners at work in well-to-do homes and other Los Angeles locations since 2012; the city is an ideal subject for this work as it boasts the largest Latino population in the country. Here we see a woman pushing a large trash can down an empty block outside the recently opened Broad Museum. Gomez's work reminds us that the manicured hedges, glassy swimming pools, and sun-drenched buildings of the Southern California landscape are often made possible by Latino and immigrant workers.

The people in his paintings are always faceless “in part to suggest the way they were taken for granted and overlooked, but in part also because somehow the viewer read more into them that way; they were less threatening, more inward looking and as such they more readily called forth the viewer’s empathy.”

Ramiro Gomez, *The Broad (detail)*, 2016, 72 x 72 in., Acrylic on canvas, Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Ellen Susman Collection, 2016
After engaging your students in discussions about the artwork and the theme of community the next step will be the Action Projects! Explore ideas with your class about ways they can raise awareness about their diverse communities and how we engage with them. To get you started, here are some ideas:

1. Have your class create art posters that show how we come together as a community to help in times of crisis. Invite the wider school to view their gallery.
2. Find out about global aid projects. Create an awareness campaign for an area outside of the US.
3. Engage with local groups to find out how to be active in the community. Share this research with the wider school.
4. Create a short drama piece that shows why community is important. These could be presented in assembly or filmed and screened.
5. Create a community newspaper/blog that is shared through the school and homes.

Take pictures of your completed projects and send them to education@blantonmuseum.org and austin@adl.org.
Show your students The Broad by Ramiro Gomez.

Encourage your students to just look for a full minute
Ask your students to turn to a friend and discuss what they see. Collect some one-word responses, phrases or ideas on chart paper.

Engage your students in some guided looking with these discussion questions:

- What’s going on in this picture?
- What colors or shapes do you see?
- Where might this be?
- Does this seem familiar?
- What is the woman doing?
- Why has her face been blurred?
- What can we say about the scale of the woman in comparison to the building?
- What message might the artist be communicating?
- Tell the students that this work is called The Broad and that the artist uses his own lived experience to form and express his views. He reminds us that the manicured hedges, and sun-drenched buildings of the Southern California landscape are often made possible by Latino and immigrant workers.
- How and why has the artist used his voice to raise awareness?
- What different community groups do we belong to?
- How do people move in and out of our sense of ‘community’?
- What does it mean to belong?
- How do we build more equitable spaces?
TALK

Ask your students to turn to a friend and talk about what it means to ‘belong’. Collect ideas on chart paper.

MAKE

Guide students to draw their “Universe of Obligation.”

- Starting with themselves in a center circle, write or draw the people that build their community.
- Encourage students to move towards their global community.

*Extension Question:* Does our sense of belonging change over time? How do we know ‘who’ belongs?
Resource Guide

ADL's No Place for Hate®, the Blanton Museum of Art, AISD, and The CREATE Lab have teamed up to bring anti-bias education and object based learning to our schools. This resource is one in a series featuring a work of art from the Blanton selected to foster important conversations and inspire students to act! The theme for this series is Community, and this work of art should be used to foster curiosity about our many communities and raise awareness of our sense of belonging.

This guide has everything you need to create successful discussions and a No Place for Hate Action Project.

Here you will find:
• No Place for Hate guidelines for Action Projects
• Information about the artist and artwork
• Guiding questions for initial discussion and making
• Suggested community action projects

As this guide reaches multiple schools, we hope it will inspire students to work together to create action projects that can be shared and celebrated.

Please share your projects to austin@adl.org, education@blantonmuseum.org and Cultural.Proficiency@austinisd.org

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No Place for Hate® is a self-directed framework helping educators and students take the lead on improving and maintaining a school climate where all students thrive. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) offers resources to ensure that anti-bias and diversity education are an integral part of the school curriculum. No Place for Hate® also helps create and sustain inclusive school environments where all students feel valued and have the opportunity to succeed by promoting respect for individual difference while challenging bigotry and prejudice. Launched in Austin schools in the fall of 2004, the popular campaign has been embraced by hundreds of campuses throughout the Central Texas region. Austin ISD is the largest No Place for Hate® school district in the United States.

The Need for Discussion

The success of No Place for Hate® relies on the assurance that all members of school communities have a central voice in creating a plan that will lead to lasting change. The foundation for creating that change is a strong coalition of school leaders — students, educators, and family members — who have a stake in the outcomes of that plan.

There is no more obvious stakeholder than a student. Too often, adults assume they know what is needed to support youth, but without engaging students in the process, change can be elusive. No Place for Hate® Committees create activities that amplify students' voices and give them opportunities be active participants.

All qualifying activities must be consistent with the No Place for Hate® mission by challenging bigotry, bias and bullying; exposing young people to diverse identity groups, backgrounds and points of view; promoting respect for individual and group differences; and providing opportunities for community-building within the school. Projects should challenge students to think critically, instill a sense of empathy, and empower students to become allies for one another.

No Place For Hate® Activities Should:

- Involve all students in active learning
- Involve all students in discussion and debriefing of activities
- Address school-based issues
- Have a school-wide impact
- Take place throughout the school year, with three or more activities spread out over time
- Focus on inclusivity and community

For more information visit austin.adl.org/noplaceforhate.