HCC students’ creativity rerouted to virtual gallery

At this time during the spring semester, the Taber Art Gallery at Holyoke Community College is traditionally displaying its final show of the academic year, the annual student art exhibition. This spring, however, with the campus restricted because of COVID-19 and the shift to remote learning, the gallery is closed. However, the 2020 student art exhibition is on display.

To be more specific, the show is going online. The 2020 virtual Holyoke Community College Student Art Exhibition launched April 30 online at: 2020hccstudentartexhibition.blogspot.com.

"Creativity is at the heart of making this particular school year work for everyone," says gallery director Amy Johnquest. "We all had to radically reroute our courses to keep everyone safe during this deadly pandemic. Teachers sourced unique ideas and strategies to continue bringing vital education to their students."

She added, "In a world where studio facilities, tactile surfaces, hands-on demonstrations and materials are key to teaching art, the HCC Visual Art Department instructors have done a remarkable job making this work. The positive results in this show are proof that our students have been able to continue being creative and making truly great art during this incredibly challenging time."

Usually, each teacher from Visual Art Department is given a section of the gallery in which to showcase students' work. Student art is also displayed in the campus hallways, and the exhibition concludes with a reception and celebration in the gallery and in the lobby of the library.

The art on display in the online galleries are photographs or digital images of original work. "With this website," says Johnquest, "I have attempted to do something similar, by breaking up the groupings by instructor. The work looks so great. It makes me really nostalgic for the live and in-person show and party we have been having for so many years. Though the campus is closed, I'm grateful to be able to continue this tradition by showcasing the work online."