

Loudoun Times-Mirror

Young Rembrandts brings art enrichment to Loudoun



A children's art enrichment program has re-opened its doors in Loudoun and Fairfax counties.

Now under the local ownership of Daniel Phan, the Loudoun-Fairfax Young Rembrandts territory is bringing art education to three-and-a-half to 12-year-old students at various schools, community centers and other local facilities.

Phan recently left a career in computer avionic engineering and decided to take part in a franchise that would allow him to give back. He had two daughters who were just accepted to Virginia Commonwealth University's dentistry program, and he wanted to own a business that could provide kids similar types of enrichment his daughters received that helped them be so successful.

Phan said he was drawn to Young Rembrandts because the franchises are well supported and because of its unique art education program for students.

The program focuses solely on cognitive development through drawing. It is based on the belief that when foundational art skills are taught to preschoolers and elementary students, there is a strong correlation between that involvement in the arts and future strong academic performance and personal achievement, officials said.

By breaking down a complex final product into smaller, more manageable steps, Young Rembrandts helps boost cognitive development, hand-eye coordination, spatial learning and critical thinking skills.

Phan remembers one class he taught where students were tasked with making a Mickey Mouse drawing. Many students didn't think they'd be able to do it, but all were able to complete the project and make individual decisions on what facial expressions to give Mickey.

He enjoyed watching the kids share their final products with each other and have conversations about what they each did differently with their designs.

"If we can make them engaged and entertained, that's the best way for young kids to learn," Phan said.

Phan said Young Rembrandts is working with 60 organizations this fall, mostly with after-school programs. Young Rembrandts teachers bring all supplies to schools when giving lessons and only need a dedicated space, he said.

Another component of Young Rembrandts is giving back to the community, Phan said. For every 10 students enrolled in a program, schools or community centers hosting the program will get a scholarship for a student.

"Every time we open a territory, we have the opportunity to showcase the passion and dedication our franchisees bring to the students and communities they serve – I am confident that Daniel will continue this legacy," Young Rembrandts founder and CEO Bette Fetter said in a prepared statement. "We're confident that he will make an outstanding member of the Young Rembrandts family, and his commitment to teaching local children will continue to make the territory in Loudoun and Fairfax Counties a crucial partner in helping children develop cognitively and discover their inner artist."

The Loudoun and Fairfax Counties location is part of the brand's strategic growth initiative, as Young Rembrandts targets 20 to 25 more signed agreements through 2019. The brand celebrates its 30th birthday this year.