

## CARP Bay Area Transforms Oakland's Sobrante Park with an Inspiring Mural

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A neglected part of Oakland, California, has just been transformed thanks to a group of volunteers, including young Unificationists, who wrapped up a 40-day service project of a massive mural to beautify a neighborhood park.

More than a dozen people from the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles ([CARP](#)), Bay Area Family Church, and Higher Ground Church spent weeks painting to bring the mural design to life.

"I'm from Oakland and have been living here since I was little," said Ashanti, a volunteer from Higher Ground Church. "It means a lot that we're able to beautify our community and give back with this mural."





The project -- a collaboration between CARP, Youth and Students for Peace ([YSP](#)) USA, and the Sobrante Park Resident Action Council ([SPRAC](#)) -- features a stunning, colorful mural stylized to read, "Welcome to Sobrante Park."

"We began this [service project](#) on January 18 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day," said co-organizer Gabriela von Euw of CARP, Bay Area chapter. "Our design team created the mural with the theme 'revival' for this wall in Sobrante Park that is around 300 feet long and seven feet tall."



Von Euw and co-organizer Julia Chai worked with three other CARP members on the whimsical design, which weaves joyful illustrations of people, birds, flowers, butterflies and animals among bold and bright lettering across a yellow backdrop.

"We added a little outline on the letters for a beautiful ombre effect," said CARP volunteer Johanna van Galen. "We had fun while practicing social distancing and following Covid precautions."

"We are a college club focused on leadership development, spiritual growth, and also community service," said CARP volunteer Yuuki Tanaka. "I think this mural is amazing and really changes the environment to help the community."

Sobrante Park is one of the most crime-ridden neighborhoods in East Oakland with a strong drug and gang presence. Several community members joined the volunteers to transform the park wall on Edes and 105th avenues.

"With this mural we are projecting what Dr. King wanted," said Ashanti, "which was to create positive change."

"This street has been a place notorious for graffiti and trash, so by creating this mural, people will see it and feel the care and effort that the community has for this area," added Tanaka. "I think this mural can really create great energy for everyone."