

# The Honorees

As founding board members of AWS Foundation, these individuals served the foundation through its growth and supported our mission to bring positive change to the lives of individuals with disabilities by granting \$12.5 million to 130 organizations in Northeast Indiana over ten years.

- Ian Rolland** Served 2007 to 2016.
- Andy Brooks** Served 2007 to 2017.
- Ben Eisbart** Served 2007 to 2016.
- Patti Hays** Served 2007 to 2015.  
Currently AWS Foundation CEO.

**AWS Foundation's mission is to help children and adults with enduring intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities live as independently as possible, be included in the community and function at their highest potential.**

**[AWSFoundation.org](http://AWSFoundation.org)**



# Buddy Benches

## Celebrating AWS Foundation's 10 Year Anniversary

August 10, 2017  
Freimann Square  
11:00am

### What is a Buddy Bench?

The buddy bench is a simple idea to eliminate loneliness and foster friendship on the playground. If a child wants someone to play with, they sit on the buddy bench. That let's others know they are looking for a friend to ask them to play. Kids are taught that if they see someone sitting on the bench, then go offer to have them join you or your group to play. It spreads the message of inclusion and kindness!

To represent the 10 years of AWS Foundation, ten benches were painted by local artists to place at local schools who have partnered with us to enhance the education of students with disabilities. Four benches honor founding board members who have fulfilled their board terms. In this brochure you will see a portion of the benches, whom they honor, where they will be located, the artists who painted them and a brief artist statement.

#### Forest Park Elementary Artist Justin Johnson

My art is focused on mixed-media drawing and digital illustration. The "keys" are a symbol for unlocking potential, conversation, personal barriers...the keys to an environment that fosters peace on all levels. They are a bit hidden... which hopefully adds to curiosity for the audience and viewer.



**In Memory of Ian Rolland**

#### Memorial Park Artist John Leavell

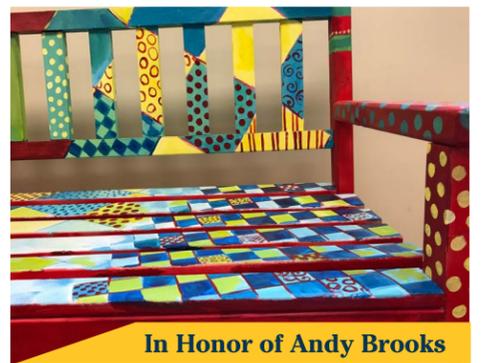
Raised in Missouri, I spent a lot of time outdoors. As I painted, what I noticed coming out were images that reminded me of early mornings fishing. Thickets and tall grasses that reflect the morning light as the sun came up are depicted, as well as wildlife that was around the ponds and lakes. I put a lot of love in this bench, and I hope children are curious and want to explore and enjoy it.



**In Honor of Ben Eisbart**

#### Haley Elementary Artist Alex Hall

My imaginative spirit is born from the people who encouraged me to dream, to see things differently and to live fearlessly. Every work is influenced by a culmination of hundreds of little moments and extraordinary experiences. I try to bring some whimsy into the mundane. It is my hope that my work forces my audience to exercise their imagination, inspires conversation and evokes joy.



**In Honor of Andy Brooks**

#### Fairfield Elementary Artist Vicki Junk-Wright

My whole life has been doing art, teaching art, living art and dreaming art. Creating is the ultimate way to know one's self and celebrate life. Painting keeps me in the present moment.



**In Honor of Patti Hays**



By Dan Dienelt

### Little Turtle Elementary

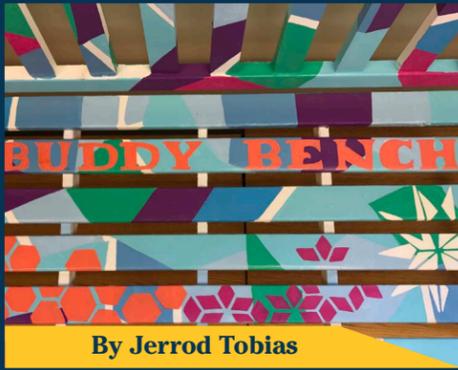
### Holland Elementary



By Julie Wall

I want to embrace my deafness. I want to love my deafness but I am stuck in a hearing world. I am a very tactile person. I like to discover new processes with paint and photography. The sensation of working with certain tools and working with my hands is amazing. It's why I like working with paint or anything in my hands that I can feel.

Inspired by growth, transformation, and change, I utilize an assortment of natural organic imagery paired with metallic finishes to help us question; what do we truly value? This body of work focuses on my response to nature and our environment. My current work attempts to combine objects found from my adventures in nature along with more traditional printing, painting, and carving practices.



By Jerrod Tobias

### Heritage Elementary

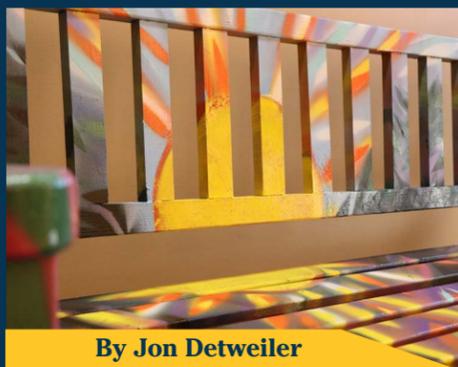
### McKenney Harrison Elementary



By Jody Nix , Mackenzie Lepper, Brittney Renninger & Erica Garcia

There is a mysterious rhythm in the air. If you look up you see it. If you listen, you hear it. The more you think of it, the more you feel it. It is the art revolution. A global grassroots cultural phenomenon. It takes many forms from the visual arts, theatre, dance, music, etc. The arts culture is the voice of human culture. Art has the power to inspire and empower social change. You don't need permission to take ownership of your life and your world. The Art Revolution is about feeling the light inside of you and letting it shine.

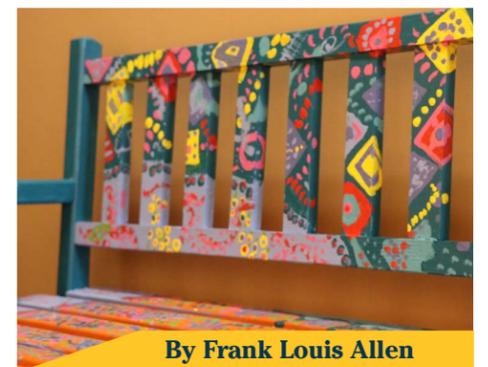
We chose to honor a children's favorite *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak as our inspiration, and attached his book in both Spanish and English in a side pocket ...hoping to provide a tool of connection to encourage a buddy to join whoever is sitting on the bench.



By Jon Detweiler

### Adams Central Elementary

### Bluffton Harrison Elementary



By Frank Louis Allen

My love for the natural world has equipped me to see fine art in very ordinary scenes. As a Seer of the Ordinary, I create original translations of very familiar settings. By exploiting nature's color, contrast and design, I invite viewers to reconnect emotionally with the place they call home.

The spontaneous nature of Frank Louis Allen's work is further influenced by his environment; who he's talking to, what music he's listening to, or what he's watching on television. What makes his work remarkable is how it has helped him communicate as an individual with both A-Typical Autism and Retinitis Pigmentosa. Allen's unique perspective and introspective illustrations lend a glimpse into the depths of neuroaesthetics productivity.