



## North Carolina History Painting: An Update

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Colin Quashie

Colin Quashie is the artist who is doing the large painting (45' by 5') for the School that will recognize the perspectives and achievements of African-Americans throughout North Carolina's history. I talked about the history of this project in [an earlier blog](#). Colin was here yesterday to have lunch with representatives from the Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU)—the generous folks who have partnered with us to fund a number of projects, including the \$45,000 for the painting.



Chandra Cox (NCSU Dept of Art & Design), Ann Simpson, Michael Spink (LGFCU Communications), Ashely Ruffin (LGFCU Marketing), Mark Caverly (LGFCU Exec VP)

Here's Colin's perspective on the meeting [from his blog](#), which gives you a flavor for his personality.

*"I'm not going to lie to you, the suits usually scare me to the point that I try and avoid them at all possible costs. Corporate and artists are usually oil and water that separate along a distinct creative line. But considering what this crew has done and their affiliation with the School of Government, they had to be given the benefit of doubt and assumed cool until proven guilty. I'm happy to report that we had an absolutely wonderful lunch meeting. They were attentive and **very** committed to the project beyond their financial aid. It's attitudes like that that makes you appreciate the sponsorship even more and want to work even harder to ensure that they are kept in the creative loop as much as possible."*

Colin invited everyone to visit him at his studio in Charleston to watch the creative process first hand.

Colin talked with our friends from LGFCU about his original conception of the work and how it has continued to evolve. They asked good questions and he showed them the layout of the painting—many of the background photos are placeholders.



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It is fascinating to listen to him talk about the painting and watch his creative mind continue to work through the different challenges of the project. One feature that he's added is a series of related historical events from North Carolina that will be viewed through the window behind the lunch counter. For example, in the layout there is a scene with Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy arriving in Durham for meetings following the sit-ins in Greensboro. Colin is visiting the North Carolina Archives this week to continue his research on the project, which includes trying to find images for some of the people who will be included in the painting.

He has just finished renovating part of a building in Charleston for his studio, and it has a wall that is the perfect size for this large painting—the plan is to put up the canvas next week and begin painting early in December. Colin is working with a videographer who will chronicle the creation of the painting, and all of us will be able to follow it on his website. John Sanders once said that our current murals are neither good history nor good art. Colin's painting will be both good history and good art, and it will be a source of pride for all of us. This is the coolest project.

Special thanks to Ann Simpson for all of her hard work on this project, and I'm sure that she will keep us posted on how we can follow the progress of the painting.