

Artology Submission for Art Category

Artology at Schurz High School is a CPS After School Program funded by Columbia College, coordinated by Discover the Depths and partnered with buildOn.

What does Artology mean? It is a fusion of art and science! We explored some of the most fascinating ocean creatures - cephalopods! We dissected a squid to learn more about its anatomy and adaptations so we could recreate a life size, inflatable colossal squid in our own unique and artistic way. Colossal squid are thought to live in the deep ocean. They are very mysterious and rarely seen alive. We choose that particular animal to illustrate how very little is known about our oceans. Such a large animal impresses upon people how the vast, deep seas harbor a whole other world filled with immense wonders.

Squidward is made of recyclable and repurposed materials. The students collected hundreds of plastic bags. The colorful plastic bags were fused onto contractor's plastic leftover from another project. Many of the bags logos are visible so people can see how the bags they use in their daily lives either end up in a landfill or are made into an artistic, educational tool.

One important aspect of the project was for the students to receive training on public speaking to present the squid to the community. *Squidward* made his debut at the high school's Eco Fest that hosted 100's of elementary students. The students passionately communicated what they learned about marine debris and it's impact. Our environmental messages included data on how only 11% of plastic bags are recycled, marine animals mistake plastic debris for food (turtles eat bags mistaking them for jellies), there is more plastic than plankton in the ocean and so on. The students encouraged people to rethink their choices and to refuse, recycle and reduce their consumption of plastic.

The students also learned about careers in the scuba diving industry and marine sciences and took a field trip to the Shedd Aquarium. The students tried scuba diving right at the high school! Since his debut Discover the Depths has taken *Squidward* on the road and taught many people not only about colossal squid but how plastics are plaguing our oceans.