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FURSCA End of Summer Report

For my FURSCA project, I have created a series of paintings about the empowerment of black womanhood, black motherhood, black beauty, and social issues that are occurring today. Growing up I was raised in the suburbs and I went to a predominantly white elementary school and surrounded myself with white friends. Their beauty standards felt like the norm to me so I was changing the way I looked Because I thought that those standards made me beautiful. These racial standards of beauty are still pervasive today and have negatively affected my self-confidence and it was hard for me to find my true identity. Surrounding myself with people that have the same interest as me and the love and support black women give each other is all I needed to help me find who I am as a black woman.

My goal for this project is to give African-American women experience and beauty a monumental representation. I cut out black and brown features from Ebony and Essence magazines. After I cut out the images I create a collage to structure, develop, analyze, and present visual issues that are hard to express in words. During this process, I read books to help me develop conceptual foundations for my work while looking at artists as well to help with inspiration and compositions for my work. After I create a collage I use that for a reference to draw and then I use the drawing as a reference to begin painting. The painting gives the collage a complete look and also blows up the features to denote a strong historical connection to black women. All black women should respect who they are and what they are and give an example to this society of sticking together and working to love and appreciate one another.

I have achieved my goals. Not only has this process helped me improve my skills, but it has also helped me become a better person to myself and others. It made me realize how important it is to love yourself and how important black women are especially in my family. This project has helped me get closer to family and friends and my next goal is to have other women of color going through similar struggles to realize how necessary it is to accompany and love each other.

For my last year at Albion, this experience has motivated me to stay focused on what I love to do. While I am doing what I am passionate about I am also hoping to encourage others who might be going through similar struggles to understand that they are not alone. Accomplishing these paintings has benefited me to create something that is hard to express in words. Having the ability to take everything that is traveling in my mind and put it on paper or canvas is what helps me get through the week. Art is my outlet and I plan to make it my goal to continue to improve my skill throughout my last year and after graduation. Before and after graduation, I plan to put my art in as many exhibitions and apply for as many residency opportunities as possible. I would like my friends and family and the society as a whole to look at my work and understand what black women and the black community go through emotionally and physically.

Not only have I gotten closer to friends and family I have also become closer to my mentor Michael Dixon who has helped me throughout this whole experience with ideas and suggestions. I want to give a special thank you to him for all his help and motivation. I also want to give a special thank you to Richard L. and Barbara J. Meyer for all the donations that helped fund Fursca and Renee Kreger and Vanessa Mccaffrey for making this experience possible.