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Bridging the Gap in a Divided World:

Local nonprofit Path with Art is honoring those in King County who passed without a permanent home in 2017

If you're out for First Thursday in Pioneer Square, stop into Path with Art's gallery to see 133 beautifully folded paper flowers – each of which represents a life that was lost to the streets in 2017¹. Below these flowers sit candles that will be lit in vigil for those who have passed. This display of solidarity accompanies the opening of Path with Art's *Spring Visions* [visual arts exhibition](#), which features work created by those recovering from homelessness, addiction, and other trauma.



“The fact that some people died of hypothermia, which could have easily been prevented, tells me that there is still a disconnect between the larger community and those suffering right before our eyes,” says Path with Art Program Director, Amanda Hashagen. “I hope folks will come take a look at the memorial and the visual artwork our students have created, and take a moment to examine what part they can play in helping all people in our community stay safe and connected.”

Over the last ten years, Path with Art has built its case: **art transforms**. By harnessing the power of creative engagement as a bridge to community and a path to stability, this organization promotes recovery and transformation in a way that is being [recognized internationally](#).

Path with Art provides studio arts instruction, cultural excursions, exhibition and performance opportunities, and community art projects at no cost to participants or their 30+ social service partner agencies. In 2017, about 40% of their 638 students were experiencing, or had previously experienced, homelessness. According to the CDC, people experiencing homelessness have a mortality rate that is [four to nine times higher](#) than the average of those who are housed. This small-but-mighty organization provides an outlet for social inclusion, self-actualization, creative expression, and increased well-being for those seeking help.

Path with Art also acts as a catalyst for change in the larger community. Through visual arts exhibitions like the one happening on March 1, and biannual performing arts showcases at Seattle Art Museum, they foster connection and understanding between disparate members of the community. Those who walk past tents every day on their way to work are suddenly faced with the art, or the words, of a person who wakes up every day in a tent. The humanizing effects of this are unparalleled.

The exhibition opening and memorial event will take place on Thursday, March 1, 5-7PM, at Path with Art's Pioneer Square gallery (312 2nd Ave S, Seattle, 98104). All are welcome. This exhibition runs through May.

1. Data provided by the [Seattle Times and King County medical examiner](#). Detailed breakdown is from the [Women in Black of WHEEL](#), who document outdoor, violent deaths of those living in homelessness.