

# The First Lady Of Illinois Visits The MAC School Of Arts And Crafts In Staunton

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STAUNTON - The First Lady of Illinois had recently heard about the Macoupin Art Collective (the MAC) and visited the studio to see and learn more about the wide variety of classes offered to kids and adults.

Marcella Cloud and Trinity Bray-Jett spent the hour showing Ms. Pritzker the different areas of workspace and teaching space, and explaining how the MAC is reaching out to artists and crafters, novices and professionals, in order to encourage different visual arts as a means of self expression and pleasure.

Ms. Pritzker was pleased that a funding program that she and the First Lady of Chicago had created, had led to helping one of the programs in which the famed St. Louis muralist, Cbabi Bayoc, painted a huge and dynamic mural on the outside of the MAC building. Cbabi also met with area art teachers from area schools to coach and discuss his process of working publicly so that children and adults can watch him work, ask him questions, and consider the message he illustrates in his work.

The First Lady was also especially interested in learning about the new ArtReach program. ArtReach involves the outfitting of a bus for the MAC so that a teacher can drive the bus and equipment to underserved communities to offer art opportunities for children (and adults) who may not have otherwise had these types of experiences. ArtReach will offer opportunities in art such as throwing and glazing pottery, fused glass art, painting, and fiber arts. The majority funding for this program has already been secured to purchase and outfit the bus; other foundations and donors have been approached to cover the remaining costs of this outreach project.

Ms. Pritzker graciously asked questions, offered encouragement and help. She plans on taking a class in the near future herself. The kids present in a jewelry making class enjoyed meeting her and showing her their work using metal stamping techniques.

For more information about the Macoupin Art Collective, visit the website [macart.org](http://macart.org).