



by jordan steyer

Ramon Mendoza loads up his backpack each morning with all the essentials—his laptop, a couple of pens, and a binder. But he also grabs a bag filled with the essentials of hope. It's a bag full of artist supplies and a large poster of his latest work.

It wasn't always like this.

"In 2013, I ended up in a mental hospital," he said. "I tried to commit suicide. While I was there, I started seeing an image that I now produce whenever people are feeling bad. They're called 'the struggles' or 'les lutes.' They're meant to symbolize the light at the end of the tunnel, but it really depends on what the viewer sees."

Guadalupe Mendoza, Ramon's mother, has always been supportive of her son wanting to help others.

"He uses his art to express himself," Guadalupe said. "It's his therapy. There are times when he will go into his room and close himself from the world, but I know that he is drawing. He is relieving

his stress. I'm proud because if it makes him happy, it makes me happy."

Senior Dominique Huerta started noticing Mendoza's art when he brought some of the pieces to school.

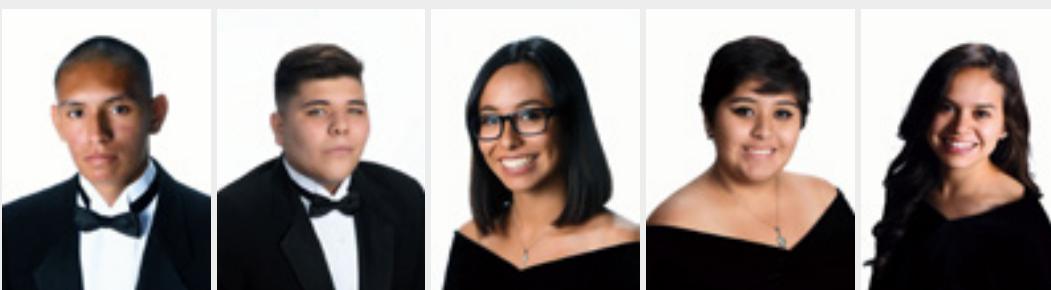
"What makes him an artist is the story behind what he is doing," Huerta said. "Anyone can draw. If you have a reason to do it, it makes it special. Ramon wants everyone to know that someone is there for you. Ramon is saying that you're never alone."

Ramon, who wants to pursue an art related profession, never wants the message to be about him. He wants it to be about the people who see his art.

"You can't see depression, or bipolar disorder," he said, "but I want to give them a face. I'm trying to help people by putting an image to a mental issue. If someone talks about it, they might go and get help."

## cured on canvas

Edward Gurrola  
Reymundo Gutierrez  
Alekka Hernandez  
Angelina Hernandez  
Luisa Herrera



"I am most proud of having a job. It was a long process. I'm making my own money and spending it on the things I want. I don't have to ask my parents for money. It makes me feel like I'm turning into my own person." - carlos vasquez



Nadinne Herrera  
Jo-el Hornbaker  
Dominique Huerta  
Yussef Ismael  
Eliana Jaime

Caitlin James  
Alberto Jimenez  
Mykayla Jones  
Kevin Kelog  
Alexis Labrado

Michelle Lamas  
Kathryn Lemon  
Michael Leon  
Isaias Leos  
Jesus Licerio

Samantha Licon  
Camila Lopez  
Gustavo Lopez

Katelyn Lopez  
Penelope Lopez  
Jorge Lozano

## couple that should've been

marissa castillo

