



MURAL, MURAL ON THE WALL

GPO Teammate Creates Art at Agency's Secure Production Facility in Stennis

Above: Over the course of several months, GPO Second Offset Pressman Dustin Young used his breaks to paint a large mural in the lobby of GPO's Secure Production Facility in Stennis. In addition to the mural, Young's artwork also adorns a door at the facility.

GPO Second Offset Pressman Dustin Young, who prints passports at GPO's Secure Production Facility in Stennis, Mississippi, originally joined GPO to gain some stability while he pursued his art career on the side. To Young's surprise, he has now worked at GPO for a decade and was recently given an opportunity to merge his side hustle with his main one.

"Art has always been my passion, but life has a way of taking you through different paths," said Young. "When I applied to work at GPO, I sought stability. I didn't expect to be given the opportunity to create art at GPO, so it's been a wonderful experience for me."

GPO Operations Manager of Government Secure and Intelligent Documents (SID) Rachel Trussell tasked Young with painting a mural in the lobby at Stennis. The idea was to create something that would bring warmth and energy and make the building more welcoming for both Stennis teammates and visitors.

"I knew Dustin was an artist, so I approached him with the idea, and he was very enthusiastic about it," said Trussell. "The only guidance I gave him was to use the branded colors."

Young decided on a design that included Lady Liberty and the bald eagle as a nod to the passport.

"I hope it creates an uplifting environment for employees and guests who walk through," said Young. "It's meant to be a visual representation of pride and motivation. Whether it inspires someone during their day or makes the space feel more welcoming, I'll consider it a success. I think it really gives a new life to the lobby."



Young used his breaks and time before and after his shift to work on the mural, which took him several months to finish.

"It's been a labor of love," said Young. "When you're passionate about something, you find the time—even if it's a little here and there. I would grab 15 minutes during lunch or come in early to get in a few more brushstrokes. Since I worked on it in pieces, the process was stretched out, but that also gave me time to step back and ensure every detail came together the way I envisioned. This wall is a testament of patience."

Young says he was challenged a bit by the wall's texture.

"The wall is made of concrete and is not a flat surface," said Young. "There are pores and grooves, so creating straight lines was a complex process."

Young, who has been making art since elementary school, owns his own business, through which he has snagged customers like Starbucks and the New Orleans Art Museum. He focuses on painting powerful images, including portraits, nature, and cultural themes.

And it seems his work is indeed brightening people's moods at Stennis.

"It's so beautiful," Trussell says of the mural. "It really brightens up the space, and it's unique to Stennis, which I love."

"People have stopped to thank me, compliment the work, or tell me it makes their day feel a little brighter," adds Young. "That means a lot. It reminds me why I do what I do and how art really can make an impact."



Top: The mural features the bald eagle, a nod to the passport, which is printed at Stennis.

Above: GPO Operations Manager of Government Secure and Intelligent Documents (SID) Rachel Trussell says the mural was part of an effort to beautify the lobby at GPO's Secure Production Facility in Stennis. In addition to the mural, Trussell and her team worked to purchase a new desk and hang photos and flags.