

Students learn 'awesome' art

Students at Northampton High School learned about the history of print-making and non-toxic methods that can be used.

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NORTHAMPTON - High school senior Fiona R. Miller never expected to have the op-

portunity to try making "monotype" prints.

But recently, Miller, 18, and 30 fellow students got the chance, thanks to a grant from the city's Education Foundation

that allowed artist Liz Chalfin, the director of Zea Mays Print-making, to spend time in two classes of high school art teacher Lisa H. Leary.

"It's awesome," Miller said this week. "I wasn't so sure about it at the beginning. I didn't think I'd like it."

Leary, who received a \$1,525

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AWESOME ART



Staff photo by BOB STERN

Northampton High School art students roll ink on a plastic plate while learning about monotype print-making. They are, from left, Brittany A. Cocco, Miranda C. Brooks and Greta C. Moore, all 15 and city residents.

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grant to bring Chalfin to the school, as well as to take students to the Smith College art museum to see prints, said she wanted her students to experience the process of making prints.

"Print-making is not just about product; it's about going through the steps and being more fluid and intuitive," she said.

Monotypes are one-of-a-kind prints made through a variety of methods, usually using a Plexiglas plate that is covered with ink in different ways. The students' first project involved covering the plate with ink and then removing it with fingers, rags and cotton swabs to create an image.

Later, colored inks were added.

Chalfin also taught the students about the history of print-

making and non-toxic techniques she uses in her studio.

"I want them to understand the process and explore it further, and to give them an awareness of the open-ended possibilities," she said.

The students, who had mostly done drawing since the start of the class, said they were initially cautious about making monotypes because one has less control over what one makes.

"It's different; it gives me a

break from painting and lets me experiment with another art form," said Carolyn E. Clayton, 17, a senior who hopes to major in art in college next year.

Bryan M. Cohen, 17, a senior, said he had never tried anything like making monotypes.

"I guess I like it," he said. "It's a little bit weird because it turns out a lot different than I thought. Sometimes it actually looks more artistic by making mistakes."