The Memories in Color project hopes to shed light on victims of trauma in Colombia who have lost loved ones and suffered the destruction of their homes due to decades of armed conflict. Memories in Color uses symbolic art to bring victims and victimizers together in dialogue about their past and future. This project has allowed K-State students, faculty and the Manhattan community to come together to learn more about intercultural communication and the importance of a diverse community.

In a recent interview, Laura Kanost, Associate Professor of Spanish, mentioned that she intertwines the Memories in Color project with K-State Spanish classes to teach students how to translate transcribed Spanish audio into English. Lucía Garavito, also an Associate Professor of Spanish, and Kanost use the Memories in Color partnership to engage students in learning more about the devastation Colombia has faced and how the country is moving forward. Kanost explained that student translators contribute to a shared database that will continue to benefit future students throughout the collaboration with Memories in Color.

It has shown to be a useful, engaging learning experience for students to get involved with the Memories in Color project because the assignments and projects in class allow students to translate through collaborative dialogue. Kanost says, “At times the class was in tears because of the impact of the testimony they were translating, and at others they were cheering for each other’s ideas.” Students can relate to the messages on a personal level and bring these experiences to their translation.
Throughout the duration of the Memories in Color project, there have been multiple organizations that have helped make this possible. “The Center for Engagement and Community Development funding has been an extremely beneficial collaboration and we hope the partnership will continue,” Kanost emphasized. There have been multiple other collaborations that have been valuable to the progression of this project, such as: The Department of Art and Chapman Gallery, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art and the Manhattan Public Library.

The Memories in Color collaboration will hold an art show with guest Edwin Rodriguez, founder of Memories in Color, at the Chapman Gallery, October 7-18th. Through the exhibit, related talks and creative workshops, this project plans to create a peaceful dialogue where the symbolic art pieces of victims in Colombia can provide a hands-on learning experience for the K-State campus and Manhattan community.