



NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



NJ Human Services Awards Teens for Creativity Celebrating Support from Family and Loved Ones

State Recognizes Winners for the 2020 New Jersey Teen Media Contest

June 10, 2020

(TRENTON) – New Jersey Human Services is honoring 12 New Jersey high school and middle school students for their winning entries in the 2020 New Jersey Child Support Teen Media Contest, which celebrated the importance of support from families and loved ones.

Students across New Jersey were asked to submit artistic visual or written portrayals celebrating valuable life lessons and unforgettable memories experienced with people closest to them. Teens enter the annual contest individually or through their school, and winners' works are featured in Human Services' Child Support calendar published each year. Winners are chosen based upon their interpretation of the year's theme.

“We are once again excited by the amazing talents of New Jersey's students,” Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson said. “It's important to engage students in creative outlets that allows them to reflect on the world around them and on the role their families and loved ones play in their lives. I congratulate the winners and all who participated.”

“It is so important to encourage students to appreciate the strength and support they get from their loved ones and to celebrate their talent,” said Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira. “This is a great opportunity to bring attention to the importance of young people having a strong support system and the role it plays in building stronger families.”

“This contest is one of the ways that we bring attention to New Jersey's child support program,” said Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who oversees the Department's Division of Family Development. “By giving young people a family-related theme to build their art or written work, we are encouraging them to think about their support system and the important role their parents and loved ones play in their lives.”

continued

Winners in the Hand-Drawn/Hand-Painted category for *middle schools*:

- First place, Mariah Fay, Christopher Columbus Middle School (Clifton)
- Second place, Charlize Diaz, Emerson Middle School (Union City)
- Third place, Esperanza Baquedano, Emerson Middle School (Union City)

Winners in the Hand-Drawn/Hand-Painted category for *high schools*:

- First place, Kiera Reeves, Piscataway High School (Piscataway)
- Second place, Jesus Calderon, Boonton High School (Lincoln Park)
- Third place, Sophia Lerro, Paul VI High School (Haddonfield)

Winners in the Written Work category for *middle schools*:

- First place, Ahlam Zalat, Pillars Prep Academy (Edison)
- Second place, Adrian Caballero, Paterson Charter School (Paterson)
- Third place, Brianna Morrishaw, Paterson Charter School (Paterson)

Winners in the Written Work category for *high schools*:

- First place, Angela Eggie, Ocean City High School (Ocean City)
- Second place, Amy Leon, Boonton High School (Boonton)
- Third place, Daniel Givens, Ocean City High School (Ocean City)

In addition to having their work featured in the 2021 Office of Child Support Calendar, students with winning entries will receive gift certificates and congratulatory plaques acknowledging their achievement. Due to the Coronavirus public health emergency, the annual display of winning entries usually held at the State House has been posted online and can be viewed at www.NJTeenMedia.org.

For more information about the New Jersey Child Support program, call 1-877-NJKIDS1 or visit www.njchildsupport.org.