PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS AMONG TOP WINNERS IN INNER FAITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER’S BLACK HISTORY MONTH CONTEST

Artworks and essays submitted by students awarded top prizes

PATERSON – Paterson Public Schools students from throughout the district were among the top prize winners in the Inner Faith Performing Arts Center’s 2020 Black History Month Art and Essay Contest.

“Our students have demonstrated their pride in black history through their knowledge and creativity,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. “We are very proud of what they have accomplished, and very appreciative of the recognition they have received from Rahsona Elder of the Inner Faith Performing Arts Center, and all who worked with her in holding this year’s contest.”

“I’m very proud of all of the students who participated. We had a very successful turnout, and this was the first year the contest was open to schools throughout Passaic County, which was very exciting,” said Rahsona Elder, who founded the Inner Faith Performing Arts Center in 1998.

Elder added that she had attended Public School No. 18 and the Rosa L. Parks School of the Fine and Performing Arts. “I’m a product of Paterson Public Schools, and I was thrilled to see my home district participate in the contest,” she said.

A total of 13 students from the district won top honors in the contest in which more than 400 submissions were made. The contest has been an annual event in Paterson for more than a decade, and is open to K-12 students in all schools throughout Passaic County. This year, students were asked to consider quotations by notable African Americans including Booker T. Washington, Chance The Rapper, Oprah Winfrey and Michelle Obama. Students were then asked to create a work of art based on one of the quotations. Students in grades four to 12 had the option of writing an essay based on one of the quotes.

This year’s judges were Paterson board of Educational Commissioner Vincent Arrington, Paterson City Councilwoman Ruby Cotton, Paterson First Lady Farhanna Sayegh, and Community Activist Nancy Grier.

The district’s winning students are as follows.

Public School No. 13
• Talia Martin, Grade 3, Second Place – art category, K-3
• Quetzalli Garcia, Grade 3, Third Place – art category, K-3

Public School No. 28
• Amarol Salazar, Grade 5, First Place, art category, 4-8
• Gazal Quatos, Grade 5, Second Place, art category, 4-8
• Janah Mustafa, Grade 5, First Place, essay category, 4-8

Senator Frank Lautenberg School (Public School No. 6)
• Emelyn Cortorreal, Grade 8, Second Place, essay category
• Brianna Askew, Grade 8, Third Place, essay category

PANTHER Academy
• Marquette Myles, Grade 12, First Place, art category, high school
• Jose Santiago, Grade 12, Third Place, art category, high school
• Kenneth Calvo, Grade 10, Second Place, essay category, high school
• Dariasia Everett, Grade 9, Third place, essay category, high school

Garrett Morgan Academy
• Shamary Chiqillanqui, Grade 11, Second Place, art category, high school

Rosa L. Parks School of the Fine and Performing Arts
• Jared Barnes, Grade 11, First Place, essay category, high school

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