



NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



NJ Human Services Awards Teens for Creativity Celebrating Dreams and Achievements with Family Support

State Recognizes Winners for the 2022 New Jersey Teen Media Contest

June 8, 2022

TRENTON, NJ – New Jersey Human Services is honoring 12 New Jersey high school and middle school students for their winning entries in the 2022 New Jersey Child Support Teen Media Contest, which, this year, celebrates the dreams and future achievements of Garden State youth through the support of family, friends and loved ones. Students across New Jersey were asked to submit artistic, hand-drawn and written portrayals celebrating dreams the teens have, and how their family and loved ones are helping them to achieve and meet these goals.

“This annual contest is now in its 27th year, and yet, we continue to be awed by the talent, creativity and emotion that the students put into their entries,” said Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman. “The level of the entries we receive each year is a testament to the talent of New Jersey students, the support of their families, and the encouragement of their teachers and schools.”

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: *What is your dream and how are your parents/loved ones helping you get there?*

“As families continue to adjust to the challenges that arose out of the pandemic, our annual contest is a creative way for young people to think about their future, dreaming of what they hope to achieve, and the importance

of a strong family and community foundation in helping them meet their life goals,” said Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira.

“This contest is one of the ways that we regularly bring attention to New Jersey’s Child Support program,” said Assistant Commissioner Natasha Johnson, who oversees the Department’s Division of Family Development. “The enduring slogan for New Jersey’s Child Support program is ‘Child Support. It’s more than just money,’ and we encourage our young contest participants to think about their support system and the important role their parents and loved ones play in their everyday lives.”

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

- *1st Place*: Yoojin Jeon, East Brook Middle School
- *2nd Place*: Sharon Lee, East Brook Middle School
- *3rd Place*: Hajin Kim, Brookside School

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

- *1st Place*: Olatomi Gabriel, Freehold Township High School
- *2nd Place*: Yaxuan Wang, Livingston High School
- *3rd Place*: Erin Park, Bergen County Academies

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

- *1st Place*: Chayenne Rojas, Soaring Heights Charter School
- *2nd Place*: Victoria DeVito, Bernardsville Middle School
- *3rd Place*: Vinaya Vittal, Academy 1 Middle School

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

- *1st Place*: Samma Faragalla, Dwight Morrow High School
- *2nd Place*: Ayah Abbassi, Pillars Preparatory Academy
- *3rd Place*: Soojin Kim, Dwight Morrow High School

In addition to having their work featured in the 2023 Child Support calendar, students with winning entries received congratulatory plaques and prizes acknowledging their achievement at an awards event at the New Jersey State House. Winning pieces may be viewed online at www.NJTeenMedia.org.

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

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