



Paisley Grace Shepherd, Hawks Rise Elementary, 4th grade SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

'Heart pumping' art

'Healthy Kids' contest continues in doctor's memory

Amanda Karioth Tompson Council on Culture & Arts

For the past six years, the diagnostic imaging center Radiology Associates of Tallahassee has presented a special art contest for local kids. • Originated by Dr. Sergio Ginaldi who was a specialist at Radiology Associates, the contest has become a much-anticipated opportunity for art teachers and their students. Ginaldi passed away on Sept.5 and his colleagues are determined to continue the annual art contest in his memory.

Though it began with a singular theme of healthy lungs, over the years, the contest has expanded to include depictions of many different versions of wellness. Cara Fowler, Chief Financial Officer of Radiology Associates shared, "we've decided, moving forward, to refer to the art contest as 'Dr. Ginaldi's Healthy Kids.'"

This year, the theme was "Let's Play," a prompt encouraging students to compose images featuring their favorite activities. Though the 2020 contest kicked off during the height of the pandemic, that presented an opportunity to reinforce ways to stay safe and active during lockdown.

"This year some students did incorporate masks and social distancing in their designs which is great because it shows that while they're out playing, they're still keeping six feet apart," said Fowler.

Once the artworks are completed, the art teachers submit a handful of the best ones to Radiology Associates for inclusion in a printed calendar. A panel of judges then selects 12 artworks to represent each month of the year and one to grace the cover of the calendar. This year, an additional artwork was selected as a memorial to Ginaldi.

The competition adds a sense of excitement for students and the teachers who are most appreciative of the influx of funding it provides for their programs. Fowler is proud that last year the contest generated \$13,000 which was divided among the participating educators.

For educators like Judy Jecko, the liaison to Radiology Associates and art teacher at Gretchen Everhart School, it makes a big difference to the bottom line of her classroom budget. "We are fortunate to have a great community partner in Radiology Associates," said Jecko.



Benjamin Welty, Sealey Elementary, 5th Grade

ciates," said Jecko.

Fowler echoed her thanks to the contest partners including Florida Cancer Specialists, Tallahassee Pulmonary Clinic, Tallahassee Neurological Clinic, Tallahassee Primary Care Associates, Dr. Michael Forsthoefel, and First Commerce Credit Union.

Dr. Alan Chen, specialist at Radiology Associates, is leading the legacy project in honor of Ginaldi. Chen's sub-specialty is pediatric radiology, so he sees a lot of kids every day. "The relationship between a child and a doctor can be delicate at times," Chen said. "We hope to bridge that gap a bit with this program. It gets us away from just the doctor - patient relationship and gets us closer to being a community."

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Contest

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One member of that community is Paisley Grace Shepherd, fourth grader at Hawk's Rise Elementary. Her artwork was selected for the cover of this year's calendar. "I created a version of myself because I do ballet a lot. It's very active and it gets your heart pumping," she explained.

Paisley Grace is an artistic kid. She enjoys dancing, gymnastics, acting, playing music and creating art. "Some people need more than just words to express themselves," she explained. "They need music and dance, and they need to draw it out if they can't express how they're feeling."

When reflecting on this contest she added "some people need motivation for what they need to do. If you're looking at all these different pictures of active things, that makes people feel like they can do those things too."

This is precisely what Paisley Grace's art teacher Angela White is striving for. One of White's main goals is to show her students that art can give individuals a voice. "I tell them, art isn't just about creating something pretty on paper, it is also about delivering a strong message. Art can affect people's lives, positively."

Fowler understands that it works both ways. "I dabble in art myself so seeing that expression from these kids is inspiring. I look forward to it every year. It's just fun and making art is

The winners

The 2020 'Dr. Ginaldi's Healthy Kids' art contest winners are:

Cover Art - Paisley Grace Shepherd - Hawks Rise Elementary

Memorial Postcard Art - Isabella Jimenez - WT Moore Elementary

Months (in no particular order)

Brinson Reams - Kate Sullivan Elementary

Kealana Lightfoot - Killlearn Lakes Elementary

Lily Matthews - Gretchen Everhart School

Maelyn McBrady - DeSoto Trail Elementary

Natalia Walker - Buck Lake Elementary

Zayne Earl - Conley Elementary

Estella Kever - Hawks Rise Elementary

Belle Beaver - Roberts Elementary

Nathaniel Gibson - Ruediger Elementary

Benjamin Welty - Sealey Elementary

Alyssa Chandler - Woodville School

Hannah Reyes - WT Moore Elementary

healthy in and of itself. We want healthy kids and that includes their creative health."

Amanda Karioth Thompson is the Assistant Director for the Council on Culture & Arts.