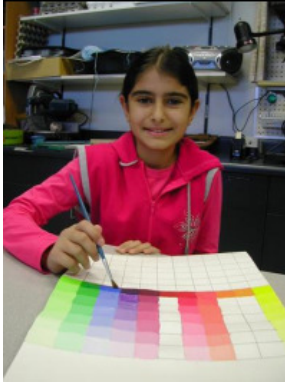


Sonoran Science Academy



Elif Ciftci



Karina Marcano



Regina LeNormand

Tucson, AZ

November 7, 2008

Sonoran Science Academy Art Students Garner Governor's Safety Calendar Award

Although the word "Science" is emphasized in Sonoran Science Academy, the school does provide its students with a fine arts balance therefore educating the whole brain of its students. "Visual thinking" is essential in the way that the scientist and the artist work. It is in this aspect where art and science overlap. Artists and scientists are both driven by curiosity and the need to solve problems which in turn sharpens their observation skills, innovation and divergent thinking ability.

It is at Sonoran Science Academy where elementary art students recently were challenged to create a poster emphasizing highway safety sponsored by the Arizona Governor's Office Highway Safety. The young students brain-stormed highway safety in their world. The subjects of bike riding, crossing the street, bus safety, school zones, construction zones, cell phones and driving, impaired drivers, and seat belts were just a few themes discussed in a power point presentation by art teacher Paula Hanson.

Over 3000 elementary art entries were submitted to the Arizona Highway Safety Department by the August 30th deadline. For the past two months, the Department went through the arduous task of selecting thirteen art posters to be highlighted in the calendar. For the past twelve years, the Governor's Highway Safety Calendar has published messages promoting highway safety through the artwork of Arizona's children.

Good news was well received from Mr. Javier Herrera, art contest coordinator, when he called Paula Hanson to inform her that three Sonoran Science Academy students were selected to have their art work featured in the 2009 Highway calendar. Karina Marcano won in the 4th grade category and Elif Chiftchi received the 6th grade award. Mr. Herrera stated that one piece was selected from all the Arizona school entries as the most "remarkable" piece to be placed on the calendar cover. This prestigious award was given to 6th grader Regina LeNormand, whose theme

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was “Drinking and Driving”. In the past, 75,000 calendars were distributed across the state. The artists highlighted will be invited to participate in the ceremony at the annual Capital Christmas Tree Lighting conducted at the end of November 2008. Needless to say, Sonoran Science Academy is proud of their students’ accomplishments in the arts.

Mrs. Hanson would like to express her sincere appreciation to the Arizona State Highway Safety Department for promoting the arts in Arizona through this calendar contest. “Some schools have no art programs at all. Its organizations such as this, that are advocates for the arts and allow community, businesses and government officials to recognize its merits and importance in the complete education of the child. Art is a visual language that speaks to the viewer not only about the beauty of our world but also about issues concerning our health and well-being. What a wonderful way to convey a message that is understood by all than to use the art work of children to express the importance of highway safety. It not only impacts those driving on the road but the pedestrians and children that need to use the highway. My students were greatly moved and excited about their part in encouraging their parents and their friends in taking the precautions necessary to assure safety regarding the highways. It’s wonderful that this opportunity was provided to our Arizona schools”, commented Paula Hanson.

