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U.S. Rep. Smith Announces Congressional Art Competition Winner

MAY 03RD 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Smith congratulates finalists and announces winner, Avery Coffman with “St. Jude Chapel Montauk, MO”

Cape Girardeau, Missouri - Congressman Jason Smith congratulated Congressional Art Competition finalists and announced the winner during a reception at the Southeast Missouri State University River Campus on Monday evening. Avery Coffman, a Senior from Salem R-80 won the 8th Congressional District Competition with a work of the St. Jude Chapel in Montauk, MO. The piece was completed by burning a drawing of the church into a piece of wood.

“Avery’s piece really stood out to me. I have never seen anything like it and was really amazed by what she was able to do,” said Congressman Smith. Her work will look great in the hallways of the United States Capitol and I look forward to educating my colleagues on what her piece represents and how she completed it. Millions of visitors to our Nation’s Capital will now be able to view her work”

The work of the St. Jude Chapel will be displayed in the United States Capitol for a full year and Avery will receive two round trip tickets to Washington, D.C. to attend the Congressional Art Competition reception with other art competition winners from across the country.

There were six finalists in total from across southern Missouri. They were:

Alexis VanHoosier, 12th Grade, Farmington R-7

Emilia Torres, 11th Grade, Farmington R-7

Avery Coffman, 12th Grade, Salem R-80

Marlene Schuh, 11th Grade, Salem R-80

Rylie Nicole Coats, 9th Grade, West Plains High School

Sophie Bollinger, 12th Grade, Perryville High School

The evening started with Congressman Smith receiving a painting from 3rd grader Layla Burgfeld of Blanchard Elementary titled “Neon Puppy” (*attached photo*) and will be displayed in the Congressional office located in Cape Girardeau.

Smith also spent time speaking with finalists Sophie Bollinger of Perryville High School and Emilia Torres of Farmington. Bollinger intends to pursue art after graduation while Emilia plans to compete again in the Congressional Art Competition next year.

“All of these kids are so talented and I am honored that they are willing to display those talents through this friendly competition,” said Congressman Smith. “They are all going places and have big plans, but I know they will continue to be inspired by and hold close their roots here in southern Missouri.”

The Congressional Art Competition is an annual event for high school students held each spring.

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