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NEWS RELEASE

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Fontana Unified Photography Students Find Keys to Success, Take Top Prizes at Scholastic Art Awards

FONTANA, CA – Jurupa Hills High School senior Jesse Juarez’s talent as a photographer was recognized early in his teens, when he posted photos on Instagram while still in middle school. At Jurupa Hills, Juarez began honing his skills under the guidance of photography teacher Rebecca Cauchon, who encouraged him to expand his horizons and consider a career in visual and digital arts.

Juarez is one of five Jurupa Hills students whose work was recognized for excellence by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, with Juarez winning a coveted Gold Key Award at the 2023 Scholastic Art & Writing West Coast Region Awards for his photo collage “Many Me.” The collage will be featured as part of the Alliance’s annual National Exhibition, to be held in New York City in the spring.

Juarez was joined by seniors Rosemary Atkins (“Run, Hide, Fight”) and Roxana Silva (“Blue Goddess”), who received Silver Key Awards. Jurupa Hills senior Anita Rodriguez (“Eyedentity Theft”) and junior Sam Aguba (“Paranoid Droid”) received Honorable Mentions for their work.

“It feels unreal. I just started taking pictures for fun, but now I want to show everyone who I am and inspire other photographers,” Juarez said. “Digital art and photography are great tools and give you the ability to explore yourself creatively. ‘Many Me’ details the many emotions that go on inside your head, all the different personalities. Winning the Gold Key Award is a big achievement. I’m very proud.”

“Many Me” features multiple shots of Juarez wearing a blue acid-washed denim jacket and displaying a range of emotions – laughter, joy, sadness, introspection – placed tightly together in random patterns until the photo is crowded full with his image. The collage was inspired by a scene from rapper Kendrick Lamar’s music video for “Humble.”

Juarez, who just received a scholarship to study photography at the University of La Verne, credits Cauchon for recognizing and nurturing his talent.

“It is wonderful to see so much young and developing talent doing such amazing work,” Cauchon said. “I love to teach these kids and continually marvel at their creativity and resourcefulness. Each year I submit 10 works of student art to the Scholastic show. This year we had five winners, which I think is incredible. It’s so fun. Working with Jurupa Hills students keeps me young and in touch.”

Cauchon, now in her 11th year at Jurupa Hills High School, brings many years of experience to the three sections she teaches: Digital Photography 1, Advanced Photography 2 and International Baccalaureate

(IB) Photography. Originally from Boston, Cauchon taught photography there for 12 years and has also worked as a professional wedding and portrait photographer for 30 years.

Besides teaching the basics of photography and digital art, Cauchon brings a wealth of art history into her assignments, encouraging her students to incorporate elements of surrealism and cubism into their work. A recent assignment for her IB Photography class asked students to produce work inspired by the influential New York pop artist and muralist Keith Haring.

“It’s wonderful to see our art and photography students receive such prestigious recognition,” Jurupa Hills Principal Antonio Viramontes said. “Rebecca Cauchon is an amazing teacher who brings passion and authenticity to her classroom. She makes learning fun, and her students believe in her.”

The winning Scholastic Art Award images can be viewed [here](#). The student artwork will be on view as part of the Young Artist Gallery California Art Project on Feb. 24, as well as the San Bernardino Valley College Student Art Exhibit, to be held in April.

The Scholastic Art & Writing Award program is celebrating its centennial this year, with a mission of inspiring bold ideas from creative teenagers across the country. Notable Scholastic award winners include Andy Warhol, Stephen King, Robert Redford and National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman.

PHOTO CAPTION:

FUSD_JURUPAHILLSART: Jurupa Hills High School photography students proudly display their winning artwork from the 2023 Scholastic Art & Writing West Coast Region Awards. From left to right: teacher Rebecca Cauchon, Rosemary Atkins (Silver Key Award), Sam Aguba (Honorable Mention), Jesse Juarez (Gold Key Award), Roxana Silva (Silver Key Award) and Anita Rodriguez (Honorable Mention). Juarez’s collage, “Many Me,” will be featured in the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers’ Scholastic Art National Exhibition, to be held in New York City in the spring.

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