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2016 Aviation Art Contest National Winners Announced

McLean, VA, March 16, 2016 – The National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) is pleased to announce the U.S. winners of the 2016 International Aviation Art Contest. The winning artwork, with this year's theme of "Air Sports in Harmony with Nature", will be forwarded to the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) in Lausanne, Switzerland to be included in the international judging this coming April.

The winning entries came from young artists in the states of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, California, Minnesota and New Mexico. To be eligible for the national judging, students must participate in state-wide art contests and place first, second or third in one of three age groupings. NASAO received artwork this year from 25 states with nearly 2,600 students submitting their work in those state contests.

Greg Principato, NASAO President and CEO, said NASAO members see this as an excellent opportunity to promote aviation and aerospace education in the states. "The job of inspiring, educating and preparing the next generation of aviation leaders is never done," said Principato. "It is up to all of us to take responsibility. Today's young people have a lot of 'cool' things competing for their attention. We need to show them just how 'ultra cool' aviation can be!"

The contest, sanctioned by FAI and the National Aeronautic Association (NAA), is managed by NASAO, with support from the FAA, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and the Ken Cook Company. The contest is designed to motivate and encourage young people of FAI member nations to become familiar with and participate in aeronautics, engineering, and science.

"The FAI Young Artists Contest inspires youth of all ages to learn about aviation, space, and air sports through art," said Jonathan Gaffney, President and CEO of the National Aeronautic Association. "All of the young artists who participated should be very proud of their work and congratulations to the finalists in each age group who will advance to the international competition."

The winners of the 2016 U.S. Aviation Art Contest are:

Category I (Junior): 6 to 9 year olds
First Place: Andrew Jeong, California
Second Place: Max Lin, Pennsylvania
Third Place: Andrew Han, California

Category II (Intermediate): 10 to 13 year olds
First Place: Rebecca Koerner, Minnesota
Second Place: Annette Kim, California
Third Place: Jidapa Janpathompong, Massachusetts

Category III (Senior): 14 to 17 year olds
First Place: Layla Lee, California
Second Place: Sky Waters, Minnesota
Third Place: Derek Gonzales, New Mexico

"We are so pleased to hear that the artwork of four students from California was selected for the International competition," said Gary Cathey, Division of Aeronautics Chief for the California Department of Transportation and this year's NASAO Chairman. "We hope that each student continues to pursue their aviation interests for the long term. The Caltrans Division of Aeronautics strongly supports aviation education and related activities to enable our youth to explore career paths in aviation and other STEM related occupations."

The artwork for the national competition was judged for its originality, creativity, and use of the theme by a distinguished panel including, Debbie Gallaway, former U.S. Representative to Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) and former NASA Education Coordinator; Margaret Finch, a D.C. area educator and artist, and Stephanie Berry, Director of Awards and Events for the National Aeronautic Association. The winners will receive ribbons, certificates and a framed reproduction of their artwork. Their original artwork will be forwarded to FAI headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland for the international judging scheduled for some time in April.

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Since its founding in 1931 NASAO has represented the men and women, in state government aviation agencies, who serve the public interest in the states, Guam and Puerto Rico. These highly skilled professionals are full partners with the federal government in the development and maintenance of the safest and most efficient aviation system in the world.