

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STATE ARTS COUNCIL AWARDS VISUAL ARTS ACHIEVEMENT  
IN SCHOOLS STATEWIDE AND PRESENTS FIVE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Montgomery, Ala. – On Friday, April 29, at 1:00 p.m., ninety-five (95) students from across the state will be invited onstage at the State Capitol auditorium to receive an award for their creativity as visual artists. By submitting a painting, drawing, print, mixed media, sculpture, photography or digital art, each of these students won an award in their hometown district. Their work then traveled to Montgomery to be exhibited at the Georgine Clarke Alabama Artists Gallery, from April 1-29. The state exhibit will culminate with an award ceremony to honor these exceptional students, their teachers and their schools. Every student who placed in the state exhibition will receive a Blue Ribbon Award. There will also be awards given for Best of District, Best of Category, and Best of Show.

This year's Best of Show will go to Jordan Brazell, a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student at Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Montgomery, for *Bob's Ocean*, a mixed media drawing of ink, watercolor and charcoal. Rachel Dudley is Jordan's teacher; also winner of the teacher award. The School System Award will go to Jefferson County Schools; Craig Pouncey, Superintendent.

All visual arts achievement winners have their work photographed and their images will be showcased on the website: [www.artsALABAMA.org](http://www.artsALABAMA.org).

The Visual Arts Achievement Program, which is in its thirtieth year, is designed to provide local and state recognition for quality visual arts programs in both public and private school systems. The program is limited to students in grades 6-12. In addition to the district and state exhibitions, the program involves a portfolio competition for senior students who wish to pursue their arts training in higher education. The portfolios are adjudicated by professional artists and professors from the art departments of partnering institutions. Five students from the portfolio competition are selected to receive a \$500 scholarship from the State Arts Council. Partner institutions match that award, providing a total of \$1,000 if a student chooses to attend the partnering institution. This year our partners are: Auburn University Montgomery, Birmingham-Southern College, Jacksonville State University, Savannah College of Art & Design, Samford University, Troy University and University of Alabama Huntsville and University of Montevallo. Scholarship winners for 2016 are: Matthew Evans Katlyn Coley from Hoover High School (Jefferson County), Caleb Griffin from Booker T. Washington Magnet High School (Montgomery County), Sydney Harrington from Oak Mountain High School (Shelby County), Lena Lin from Booker T. Washington Magnet High School (Montgomery County) and Tiiwon Siaway from Booker T. Washington Magnet High School (Montgomery County).

This year's artist/speaker at the award ceremony will be Jared Kelley. Jared Kelley is an illustrator and portraitist living in rural Alabama. In 2008 he received a BFA from Auburn University in Studio Painting. Prior to becoming a full-time professional artist in 2010, Kelley worked as a middle/high school art teacher, an assistant for

an Arts Education Non-Profit, and gave private painting classes on the side. Kelley has been largely self-taught in the field of portraiture. He spent 3 years as an apprentice to muralist Matthew John Smith from Alabama.

In addition to fulfilling private and commercial portrait commissions, Kelley served for four years as Lead Portrait Painter for Upper Deck Trading Cards and then Sport Kings, LLC, a major trading card company headquartered in Ontario, Canada. Kelley’s miniature sports art has been featured in art and hobby publications, including Beckett Magazine in which Kelley was listed among the nine most influential artists in the country who are changing the world of card collecting. In 2011, a single John F. Kennedy trading card portrait, painted by Kelley for Upper Deck’s 2010 Goodwin Champions Set, auctioned for \$2000, which was the most that any sketch card has ever sold for in the US.

Kelley is the Official Portraitist for the National Trial Lawyer Association (NTLA) Hall of Fame. His portraits for the NTLA include prominent figures such as Fredric G. Levin, Thurgood Marshall, Fred Gray, Sr., Elaine Jones, Ron Motley, and Alabama native Morris Dees, all on display at Temple University. Kelley is also the premiere portrait artist for the Wheeler Collection, LLC, a trading card company that specializes in high-end athletic and historical trading card products.

**THE CEREMONY:** State Capitol Auditorium, Montgomery; 1 p.m. – 2 p.m., Friday, April 29

**BEST OF SHOW** (Mixed Media – Ink, watercolor and charcoal): *Bob’s Ocean* by Jordan Brazell, a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student at Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Montgomery, Alabama.

**PORTFOLIO SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS:**

<p><b>Matthew Evans</b> Teacher: Marla Kenney Hoover High School Hoover City Schools</p>	<p><b>Sydney Harrington</b> Teacher: Ashleigh McKinney Oak Mountain High School Shelby County Schools</p>	<p><b>Tiiwon Siaway</b> Teacher: Rachel Dudley Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Montgomery County Schools</p>
<p><b>Caleb Griffin</b> Teacher: Emily Thomas Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Montgomery County Schools</p>	<p><b>Lena Lin</b> Teacher: Rachel Dudley Booker T. Washington Magnet High School, Montgomery County Schools</p>	

**RECEPTION:** Georgine Clarke Alabama Artists Gallery located within the Alabama State Council on the Arts; 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

The Alabama State Council on the Arts, located in the RSA Tower in downtown Montgomery at 201 Monroe Street, Suite 110, Montgomery, is the official state arts agency of Alabama. The staff of the Council, directed by Al Head, administers the grants program and provides financial assistance in arts education and programming. The Council receives its support through an annual appropriation from the Alabama Legislature and funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

For further information about the Visual Arts Achievement Program, contact Diana F. Green at 334-242-4076, extension 241.