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CONTACT:

Farrell Sklerov / Mercedes Padilla (718) 595-6600

DEP Holds 25th Annual Water Resources Art & Poetry Award Ceremony

More than 350 NYC Students Submit Artwork and Poems About NYC Water

Environmental Protection Commissioner Cas Holloway today hosted the 25th Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Award Ceremony. More than 350 students from kindergarten through 12th grade from New York City public, independent and parochial schools were honored for creating original artwork and composing poetry that reflects an appreciation for New York City water supply and wastewater treatment systems and the importance of water conservation. A Proclamation from Mayor Bloomberg recognized all the children who participated. The ceremony was held at the Brooklyn Technical High School, where the students' artwork and poetry was displayed during the ceremony. Voting for this year's contest was conducted online for the first time ever, reflecting the city's commitment to using technology to reach the greatest number of people. The contest generated more than 10,000 votes from teachers, parents and NYC residents. The 25th anniversary ceremony included the participation of Paolo Javier, the Queens poet laureate, who spoke about the importance of poetic and artistic expressions, and an original poem by Commissioner Holloway on the water and wastewater systems.

"For 25 years, New York City students have been participating in DEP's Art and Poetry contest to showcase their knowledge of our most precious resource: water," said Commissioner Holloway. "Not only is the friendly competition fun for children, but it is the awareness of present and future generations that preserves this resource so that we always have plenty of delicious NYC Water to enjoy. I applaud all of the student artists and poets we honor today for capturing that clean drinking water is a treasure for all New Yorkers to protect, and I know that our future is in good hands."

DEP's Water Resources Art and Poetry Program helps raise awareness about the importance of clean, high-quality drinking water, and what it takes to maintain New York City's water supply and wastewater treatment systems. The ceremony recognized the student's creative work for

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NYC Department of Environmental Protection
Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373

(718) 595 - 6600

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capturing four central themes:

- ▶ *Water — A Precious Resource for People and Wildlife:* Students focused on the importance of the quality of our tap and harbor water.
- ▶ *The New York City Water Supply System:* Students focused on the history and the present stage of the NYC drinking water system.
- ▶ *The New York City Wastewater Treatment System:* Students focused on how the City treats more than 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day.
- ▶ *Water Stewardship:* Students focused on the value of water and ways to increase conservation, and the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan as a way to manage stormwater for cleaner NYC harbor water. The plan was announced by Mayor Bloomberg in 2010 to improve harbor water quality by capturing and retaining stormwater runoff before it enters the sewer system.

DEP's Water Resources Art and Poetry Award Ceremony is an opportunity for New York City's kindergarten through 12th grade students from nearly 90 schools to showcase their knowledge of New York City's water systems. DEP received roughly 350 entries from individuals and groups and 24 were selected as winners. All students were honored at the ceremony and received a certificate for their participation.

This year's winners for art and poetry are:

K-5 Art

1. Halima Uddin, PS 18 in the Bronx, Third Grade
2. Afsana Rahman, PS 50 in Queens, Fifth Grade
3. John Bondanza, PS 144 in Queens, Fifth Grade
4. Emily Yuan, PS 144 in Queens, Fourth Grade

K-5 Poetry

5. Joshua Palencia, PS 133 in Queens, Fifth Grade
6. Shailynn Santos, PS 18 in the Bronx, Fifth Grade

6-8 Art

7. Renee Landzberg, Riverdale Country School in the Bronx, Seventh Grade
8. Gillian Cornell, Holy Rosary School in Staten Island, Sixth Grade
9. Jacob Jarvis, MS 447 in Brooklyn, Sixth Grade
10. Soren Roe, MS 447 in Brooklyn, Sixth Grade
11. Elijah Coyle, MS 447 in Brooklyn, Sixth Grade
12. Joey Guan, MS 447 in Brooklyn, Sixth Grade

6-8 Poetry

13. Nicole Ruggiero, Holy Rosary School in Staten Island, Sixth Grade
14. Britney Franco, IS 239 in Brooklyn, Sixth Grade

9-12 Art

15. Timothy Caparosa, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade
16. Liam Wahl, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade
17. Alex Arthurton, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade

- 18. Carina Mondesire, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade
- 19. Tori Green, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade
- 20. Justeen Rodriguez, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade
- 21. Yamil Reyes, NYC iSchool in Manhattan, Ninth Grade
- 22. Mingdong Zhang, Herbert H. Lehman High School in the Bronx, Twelfth Grade

9-12 Poetry

- 23. Udisa Chowdhury, Hillcrest High School in Queens, Tenth Grade
- 24. Zachary Landzberg, Horace Mann School in the Bronx, Ninth Grade

DEP manages the city's water supply, providing more than 1 billion gallons of water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8 million in New York City. New York City's water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, and comprises 19 reservoirs, and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,400 miles of sewer lines take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater.

Original Poem by Commissioner Cas Holloway

Some wonder, what is this infrastructure plan that is green,
Green pipes? Green tap water? What does it mean?
To put this concept into sharp relief,
One must first understand what lies beneath.
Our forefather engineers built a system of pipes,
That suited its time by accepting water of all types,
Water with the sewage, rain water from the street,
Stormwater from rooftops goes to a pipe under your feet,
Snaking through a maze of brick and concrete.

Building grey tunnels and pipes is part of a solution,
To stave our waterways of pollution,
But another way to handle too much rain,
Is to capture it before it hits a drain,
To do this requires things green, not grey,
Which is the more natural way,

You can use a rain barrel--good for when it's hotter,
And a green roof can hold a lot of water,
But if a green roof doesn't suit you,
Then how about one that's blue to act as a detainer,
It Releases rain into sewers much later.

We can also enhance the pits of city trees,
To hold water and put sewers at ease,
Streetside stormwater storage sounds just swale,
And permeable pavement is thirsty, and won't fail.
We hope this explains the plan for infra green;
Here at DEP, we try to say what we mean,
Which is, to put it in a Robert Frost kind of way:

Green Infrastructure is here to stay,
Because it is green, as opposed to grey,
And nothing grey, like nothing gold, can stay.

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