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Department of Environmental Protection Hosts 29th Annual Water Resources Art & Poetry Awards Celebration

This year 1,350 Students Submitted More than 1,400 Pieces of Artwork and Poetry about Breaking an all-time Record

The Submissions of the Water Champions Can be Viewed on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today hosted an awards ceremony for participants in the 29th Annual *Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest*. 1,350 students (grades 2-12) from New York City and Watershed communities were honored for creating more than 1,400 original pieces of artwork and poetry that reflect an appreciation for New York's water resources, wastewater treatment systems, and the importance of water conservation. This year's competition marks an all-time record for student participation and for the first time social media was used to help judges review submissions. In addition, through the art and poetry submitted, students raised the awareness about the importance of maintaining New York City's water supply and wastewater infrastructure. The ceremony included remarks from Reggie Harris, Poets in the Branches Coordinator at the Poets House and was held at Manhattan Community College's Tribeca Performing Arts Center.

"The *Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest* is a way to give students the opportunity of expressing their immense talents by creating artwork and poetry to

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show their knowledge about New York City's drinking water, wastewater and stewardship," said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. "This year's record-breaking participation is a testament of the inspiration and the great creativity demonstrated by the new generations of stewards of the New York's environment."

Students from 75 schools participated in this year's *Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest* and participants were honored as DEP Water Ambassadors and received a certificate recognizing their contribution. In addition, from the more than 1,400 submissions, a group of judges selected 60 students as this year's Water Champions.

DEP's *Water Resources Art and Poetry* program raises 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 students' creative expression of four central themes:

- *Water—A Precious Resource*: To highlight the importance of the quality of our tap and harbor water.
- *The New York City Water Supply System*: To look at the history of the city's drinking water system.
- *The New York City Wastewater Treatment System*: To examine how the City treats more than 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater every day.
- *Climate Change and Water Stewardship: What Can I do to Help?* To bring attention to the value of water and how we can help to protect our environment.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 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 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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