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## Department of Environmental Protection Honors Students from New York City and the Upstate Watershed for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Resources Art & Poetry Awards Ceremony

**Nearly 1,000 NYC and Watershed Students Submitted More than 750 Artwork and Poetry Entries About NYC Water**

**Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg Issued Proclamation to Honor All Participating Students**

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland today hosted an awards ceremony for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest at Manhattan Community College's Tribeca Performing Arts Center. More than 1,000 students (Grades 2-12) from New York City and Watershed communities were honored for creating more than 750 original artwork and poetry entries that reflects an appreciation for New York's water resources, wastewater treatment system, and the importance of water conservation. In addition, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today issued a proclamation honoring all of the students who participated.

"Each year this contest provides students with an opportunity to learn about the amazing systems that supply more than nine million people with world class water, and have helped make our harbor cleaner than it has been in a century," said Commissioner Strickland. "Through hard work and creativity, these students

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are helping us raise awareness about the importance of maintaining our water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure so that future generations will benefit from clean drinking water and a healthier environment.”

Students from more than 60 schools participated in this year’s Water Resource Art and Poetry Contest. All participants were honored as Water Ambassadors. In addition, from the more than 750 submissions, a group of judges selected 35 winners to be this year’s Water Champions. Commissioner Strickland presented the 35 Water Champions with certificates of recognition during today’s ceremony, and each student who participated in the contest also received a certificate recognizing their contribution.

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 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 NYC 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.
- Water Stewardship: What Can I do to Help to Conserve Water? To bring attention to the value of water and ways to conserve, and the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan as a way to manage stormwater for cleaner NYC harbor water.

This year’s Water Champions for art and poetry are:

Grade 2-3 Art	Student Name	School
	Farhana Laskar	P.S. 148, Queens
	Sharon Suen	P.S. 203, Queens
	Cynthia Li	P.S. 188, Queens

Grade 2-3 Poetry	Student Name	School
	Mrs. Bayne’s Class	Walton Townsend Elementary School
	Kezia Seales	P.S. 9, Brooklyn

Grade 4-5 Art	Student Name	School
	Oreen Ben Moshe	P.S. 78, Queens
	Alice Handwerker	P.S. 31, Bronx
	Jasmine Rodriguez	P.S. 50, Queens

Grade 4-5 Poetry	Student Name	School
	Sunjoyth Chhokar	P.S. 133, Queens
	Kansas Shamro	Margaretville Central School

	Anaya Vasquez	P.S. 75, Bronx
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Grade 6-7 Art	Student Name	School
	Neko Wilson, Asia Soberanis, Atiyah Shaw, Christopher Willis	Hellenic Classical Charter School, Brooklyn
	Group Project	Manhattanville Community Center, Manhattan
	Ilana Duchan	M.S. 74, Queens

Grade 6-7 Poetry	Student Name	School
	Griztko Erickson	St. Spyridon Parochial School, Manhattan
	Alene Ortiz	Our Lady Queen of Martyrs, Manhattan
	Allison O'Connell	Our Lady of Good Counsel, Staten Island
	Fardeen Hassan	P.S. 141, Queens

Grade 8-9 Art	Student Name	School
	Arturo Claudio	St. Benedicts School, Bronx
	Olivia Centonza	Tottenville High School, Staten Island
	Angelina Yeung	M.S. 74, Queens

Grade 8-9 Poetry	Student Name	School
	Vanessa Paulino	Manhattan East School of Arts and Academics, Manhattan
	Valerie Awad	Tottenville High School, Staten Island
	Andrea Pesantes	Most Precious Blood, Queens

Grade 10-12 Art	Student Name	School
	Laura Williams	St. Agnes High School, Queens
	Natasha Sanchez	Preston High School, Bronx
	Anthony Perez	Boys and Girls High School, Brooklyn

	Chris Panican	John Bowne High School, Queens
	Jenny Rojsirilawan	Art and Design High School, Manhattan

Grade 10-12 Poetry	Student Name	School
	Angela Begonja	St. Agnes High School, Queens
	Serena Schauer	St. Agnes High School, Queens
	Deepak Sharma	John Bowne High School, Queens

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; and the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).

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