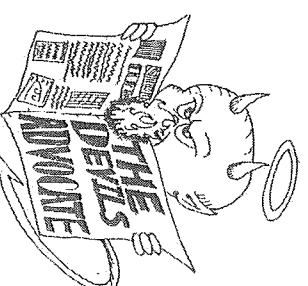


The BLUE DEVIL'S

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Advocate



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Richmond Winning Keys and Honorable Mentions at Competition

By: Cecily McPherson
Opinions co-editor

Whether it be a brush stroke upon canvas, or the sudden flash of a camera, Richmond's art and photography students are thrilled after seeing all of the positive results from the biggest art competition nationwide: The Scholastics Competition.

For 91 years, this competition has been serving to recognize artistic talent among middle and high school teens. In fact, many world renowned individuals such as Andy Warhol, Sylvia Plath, and Robert Redford were granted awards when they were high schoolers.

Throughout the course of this competition, every art class offered within the school is given the chance to submit their best work.

The process is completely digital. All students who participated had to take a picture of their piece or pieces and submit them online. From there, pieces are judged and chosen for various awards.

The highest ranking award is called Gold Key. Students who received this rating for their artwork, will be further evaluated by judges in New York.

There were 10 Gold Key awards given out to RHS students this year, not to mention the 29 other awards students also received.

Mrs. Belf, RHS's High School art teacher, said "Previously I have taught at East Detroit. We generally did about the same but the size of the school was twice the size, and we had four teachers instead of one."

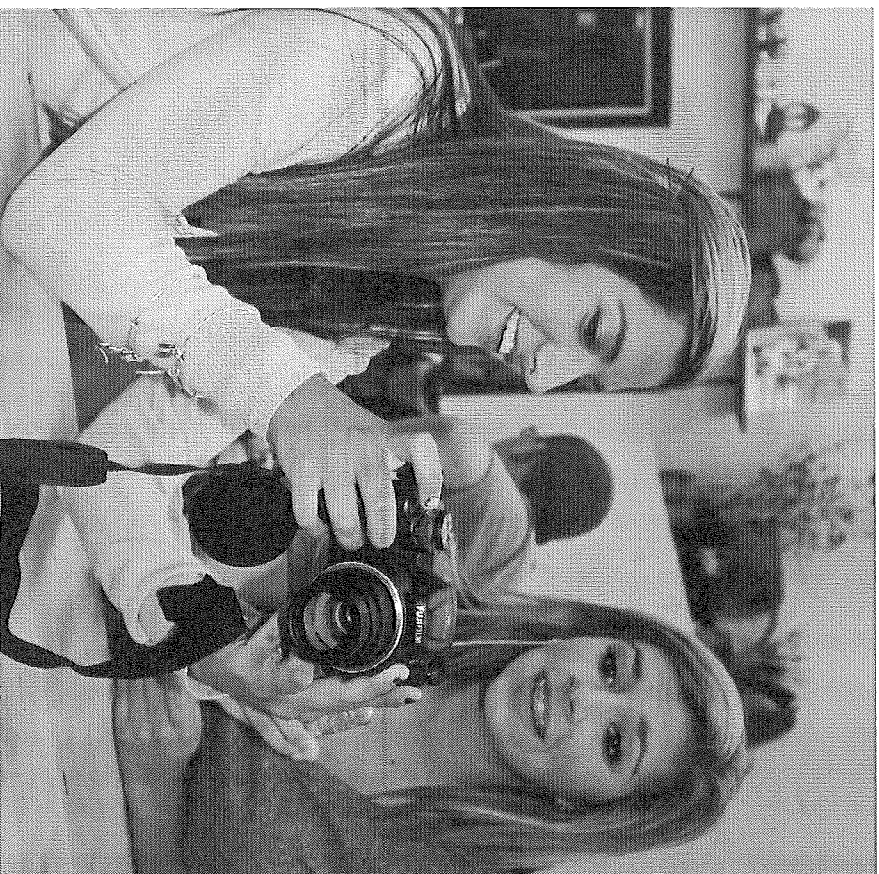
In fact, Belf detailed how L'ansse Creuse art students received only one more award than Richmond, while schools closer to Richmond's size such as Armada didn't receive any awards.

When results finally came in, Mrs. Belf couldn't have been more proud. She said, "I ran to the cafeteria. It was barely posted. I was reading it on my phone on my way to the cafeteria. I think I made kids late to class because we were celebrating."

According to Mrs. Belf, all of her students put forth the effort that is needed to win, even those that didn't end up winning. The improvement they made is astronomical.

"Many of the students even come in after school and during lunch to work on art," Belf said.

With this work ethic and the desire to succeed, Belf's only hope is that her students continue to be



Juniors Alexandra Holke and Leilah Cornelius both learn the ins and outs of the digital camera. (Photo Courtesy of RHS Yearbook)

competitive in the show. And then after high school, have the ability to pursue out on their own.

As far as the students go, their reactions were very similar to their teacher.

For junior Lauren Maksymnik, this is her second year participating in the Scholastic Competition.

"I submitted about 20 things this year," Maksymnik said. "Last year, I only submitted one drawing of my cross country team."

Her drawings fell under several different categories and offered up a broad range of her talents. Her favorite thing she submitted this year was a self-portrait.

"I like to offer up variety because the judges choose so many different things. There is really no telling what they will pick," Maksymnik said.

In the end, she ended up receiving seven awards: Two Gold Keys, three Silver Keys, and two honorable mentions.

"I couldn't have been happier," Lauren said. "I'm glad that all my hard work ended in an achievement that I will always remember."

However, not all Richmond art students have participated in this event before. For sophomore Jarret Gil, the Scholastics Competition is something completely new.

"I was kind of nervous to submit my piece this year because art is not something I am very confident in unlike soccer," said Gil.

Despite his doubts, Gil definitely believes this to be an opportunity and an experience that any young artist should take.

In the end, the results could not have been more rewarding for the young artist. Gil ended up receiving the Gold Key award for his drawing of a typewriter.

"I was shocked because it's my first year and I only entered one thing so getting anything was huge let alone a Gold Key," said Jarret.

Another first timer to the competition was senior photography student Michael Wood.

Instead of sticking to the basics and submitting individual photographs, this student went above and beyond to put together a portfolio to send to the judges.

"I submitted a portfolio and individual photographs, but I wanted to do a portfolio because one picture can't always represent something in its entirety," Wood said.

He, along with another senior, Jennifer Lafata, were the only two students to take on the challenges that are involved in submitting a portfolio, which is to consist of eight pictures that follow a specific

theme.

"My theme for my portfolio was fire, and even with eight photographs I feel I didn't capture a full visual description that would do justice to something that can be so beautiful and destructive simultaneously," said Michael.

Being a newcomer to photography and to the competition, Wood did not hope for anything more than to learn how to take better pictures. However, Mrs. Belf piqued his interest into something he ended up really appreciating.

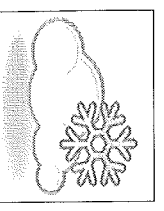
Now Wood is considering a postsecondary education involving photography.

When the results finally came in, he discovered that he earned the second highest award: the Silver Key.

He said, "Since it was my first year I wasn't expecting to win anything. The results didn't sink in immediately. When it finally hit me later that day, I was absolutely overjoyed."

Scholastics Award Winners:

- Dylan Allor: Gold Key
- Sara Campbell: Gold Key
- Racheal Campbell: Honorable Mention
- Andrew Caporuscio: Honorable Mention
- Britney Carbone: Gold Key, Silver Key
- Carley Carroll: Silver Key; Honorable Mention
- Leilah Cornelius: Silver Key
- Mikala Evans: Honorable Mention
- Jaret Gil: Gold Key
- Alexandra Holke: Gold Key, Honorable Mention
- Alyssa Johnson: Silver Key
- Chelsea Kattelman: Silver Key, Honorable Mention
- Jennifer Lafata: Gold Key, III
- Silver Keys, III Honorable Mentions
- Hayley Lauderbach: Honorable Mention
- Lauren Maksymnik: II Gold Keys, III Silver Keys, II Honorable Mentions
- Lauren McCullough: Honorable Mention
- Katlyn Milliken: Silver Key
- Morgan Norris: Gold Key
- Christina Paramo: II Honorable Mentions
- Brooke Peck: Gold Key
- AJ Verschaeye: Silver Key
- Michael Wood: Silver Key



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Mostly cloudy
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Richmond Singers to Perform at States

By: Trevor Barrett
Sports Co-editor

It's the American Idol for high school students.

Solo Ensemble is a singing competition where students from around the country attempt to wow judges in order for a chance to compete at the State Competition.

This dream is coming true for three Richmond students.

Haley Fortuna, Daniel Seguin and Corrina Andress all competed at Solo Ensemble on January 10. All three sang and all qualified for the State Competition.

"It's a chance to show off all of my practice and it's a chance to get recognized," said Fortuna, a freshman.

Hours upon hours were put in to this competition. "I've been preparing for about two months. I would not have been able to do as well if I didn't," said Fortuna, who sang "American Lullaby" and an Italian song.

"American Lullaby" and an Italian song.

"I picked 'Sebben Crudele' [the Italian song] because I'm Italian so it connects to my heritage, and I wanted to impress the judges. I picked 'American Lullaby' because it sounds really pretty to me," she said.

Singers are judged on sounding good, posture, personality, and several other categories and are given a score. This score correlates to one of five specific groups: developing (6-11), fair (12-17), good (18-23), excellent (24-27), superior (28).

In order to qualify for States, contestants must score a 23 or higher. Daniel Seguin, a sophomore, said, "This was very important to me because I went last year as well, but I did not make it to States."

Seguin, much like Fortuna, put in a lot of work. "I practiced with a private coach, with my pianist and on my own a lot," he said. He has been doing this since late November.

The songs Seguin practiced were "Homeward Bound" and "Noche

Serena."

"I did Solo Ensemble in 8th grade and I just wanted to sing something different. Plus, most people sing an Italian song so I wanted to sing a Mexican song," said Seguin, while talking about his song choice.

All three have a lot of experience in similar events. Fortuna competed in the middle school Solo Ensemble last year and also does a lot of work with musical theater. Seguin and Andress both competed in this event last year.

"I think it is a cool experience and they give you plenty of feedback so that you can improve as a singer," said Andress, a sophomore.

Andress, coincidentally, sang one song from both Seguin and Fortuna, singing "Homeward" and "Sebben Crudele"

"I have listened to both of them before and I really liked the way they sounded," she said.

With all three of them qualifying for States, there is a lot more preparation to be done for the competition

on March 27 and 28.

Nerves are running high for the young freshman.

"I'm nervous for the sight reading, but I am excited because I am a freshman competing in a high school competition," said Fortuna.

The sight reading portion is where competitors are handed a sheet of music and are given two minutes to look it over. They then have to sing the piece aloud to the judges.

She is not letting these nerves get to her.

"I feel like I can compete even though I am a freshman."

Seguin has a very similar mindset. He said, "Some singers are going to be amazing and will be better and some singers are going to be worse, so it will be pretty fair."

Seguin, who still has to decide what songs to sing for States, has one goal in mind: score higher than he did at Districts.

"I want to get superior rather than excellent, which is what I got at the District competition," he said.

SAT Throws Big Changes at Michigan School Systems

By: Jenna Stafford
Opinion's Editor

You walk in the room, take a seat at a table and writing your hands nervously.

Your palms sweat as you take a look around at all your peers. One girl, sitting across from you, uneasily chews on her nails.

A boy slumps over, asleep, resting his head on his folded arms.

Three girls chatter in high pitched voices, heads bent over test-prep books.

A cluster of boys toss bits of paper at each other, snickering.

"How many of these people are smarter than me?" you think.

"A lot, probably," your doubtful subconscious sneers in reply.

Your pencil — number 2, of course — taps nervously on the table, seemingly at its own frantic will, as the papers begin to be handed out.

This is it.

The biggest test of your high school career.

And what is this test?

The renowned SAT, of course. The test that holds a huge deciding factor in whether or not many hopeful high school students will rip open an acceptance letter from their dream college in glee.

However, this test is a new concept to Michigan teens that will be in this situation in, well, approximately 13 months.

Up until a very recent announcement, plans for the class of 2017 to take the ACT, another state-issued, standardized college acceptance test, were in full swing.

Now, students and teachers are going to be making the transition over to preparation for the SAT instead.

This change was made after the state, which is required to give students a college entrance test, reviewed many proposals from differ-

ent test vendors.

The SAT proposal was stronger than all the others. The new SAT to be given in 2016 will be completely different from that of the old test.

The most unpractical parts of the test, such as outlandish vocabulary words, will be eradicated, and the old practice of deducting a fraction of a point for an incorrect answer will be null and void.

In addition to this, the SAT will have a new grading scale. While the old test was scored from 2400 points, the new one will be on a 1600 point scale.

The new scoring scale shouldn't pose any problems to students.

Besides these benefits, it is also drastically less expensive, saving Michigan roughly \$15.4 million over the three year contract.

Dr. Jim Gullen, Testing and Assessment Consultant for the Macomb Intermediate School District, said, "It's kind of like we're switch-

ing from measuring the heights of students in feet and inches to meters. The heights don't really change, but the unit of measurement will.

So, on the surface, the scale change

Continued on page 3

New standards will be set on the new scale."

Sophomores feel as if they now stand at a disadvantage in comparison to those who have been readily preparing for the SAT.

Nicole Rhein, sophomore, said, "I don't think it's fair. We've done so much ACT-style writing, and now we have to completely change the style of our writings for the SAT."

Corri Andress, another sophomore, is not as worried. "We have some time to prepare. As long as this change helps us in the long run, it'll be okay."

Many students have been curious as to this sudden change. Usually, major academic changes are phased

Continued on page 3

H & H Student Driving School — 2015

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