

Achiever: Kirsten Anderson | Assumption grad wins top art honor

BY ELAINE ROOKER JACK • SPECIAL TO THE COURIER-JOURNAL • AUGUST 22, 2010

Kirsten Anderson's mother can't hang the painting she received for Mother's Day in her home because it's on display in the U.S. Capitol's "Artistic Discovery" corridor in Washington.

Anderson's painting — "Sisters in a Row" — won the grand prize in the 2010 Third District Congressional Art Competition and will be displayed there for a year with 400 other winning entries from congressional districts across the nation.

Anderson lives in Middletown with her parents, Meghan and Gerry Anderson, and her two younger sisters, Jenny and Faith.

She graduated from Assumption High School in June.

Anderson said her art teacher, Debbie Lott, "handed me the form and told me to fill it out, but I was pretty nonchalant about" the contest.

The piece she chose was part of her portfolio for her Advanced Placement art class and was intended as a gift for her mother.

"I said I guess I'll enter, but I hope I get it back before Mother's Day," she recalled.

Instead, her mother had to settle for seeing the painting in June when the family traveled to Washington to view the exhibit. Airfare for two was part of the award.

Each of the 33 participants in the contest received a certificate, and seven entrants received prizes. Anderson also won a \$5,000 scholarship to the Savannah College of Art and Design but did not choose to attend that school.

Instead, she will enroll at the Art Institute of Chicago.

"The entries in this year's competition were each exceptional," U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth, D-3rd District, said in a statement. "Every participant has the talent to excel in the thriving creative fields that Louisville is famous for. I am proud to take Kirsten Anderson's painting, 'Sisters in a Row,' to Washington where it will represent Louisville in a national exhibit on Capitol Hill."

The contest was judged by James Grubola, head of the Fine Arts Department and director of the Hite Art Institute at the University of Louisville; Melisa Gano, district arts

specialist for the Jefferson County Public Schools Gheens Academy; and Jo Anne Triplett, contributing fine arts editor for the Louisville Eccentric Observer.

Anderson said the painting is based on a photograph she took in the spring.

“It’s of me and my sisters,” she said. “We lined up our feet oldest to youngest — I’m the oldest — and I thought it would make a really cool painting. It conveys sisterhood.”

While in Washington, Anderson toured the exhibit.

“All the pieces were pretty good,” she said. “I could see why they got chosen.”

Winners also attended a breakfast, slide show, lectures and presentations. She said the highlight of the event was when Yarmuth took her and her sisters on a “behind-the-scenes tour” of the House floor.

She said the congressman is “a pretty cool dude.”

Her family made a vacation of the trip to Washington. She said her favorite attractions were the U.S. Botanic Garden and the National Museum of the American Indian.

Anderson plans to study fashion design at the Art Institute of Chicago. “I don’t think I could ever live without art,” she said.



Kirsten Anderson **Age:** 18
School: Graduated in June from Assumption High School
Hobbies: Art, hanging out with friends, video games



OTHER ART COMPETITION WINNERS:

Runner-up

“White Collar Conservative” by Corey Lucas, Male High School

Honorable mentions

“Zoom” by Sara Davis, Assumption High School

“Guitar Man” by Laurie White, Assumption High School

Best use of color

“Shoes” by Hanna Fife, Fern Creek High

Best use of medium

“Ace of Hearts” by Corey Lucas, Male High School

Best use of narrative

“Dramatic Discovery” by Krissy Raque, Assumption High School

Staff pick

“Self Portrait as King Tut” by Quantez Crowe, Male High School