

Achiever: Emily Liu | Sixth-grader wins state awards for music and photography

BY ELAINE ROOKER JACK • SPECIAL TO THE COURIER-JOURNAL • AUGUST 1, 2010

Emily Liu thought this year's theme for the PTA Reflections contest — “Beauty Is ...” — sounded “general and pretty easy,” so she entered in three categories.

Two of her entries won awards at the state level. She won an Award of Merit for Musical Composition and an Award of Excellence for Photography. Although her entries didn't advance to the national level, she was one of two local students to receive state recognition in two categories.

Trevor Polston, a student at Wilkerson Traditional [Elementary School](#), won an Award of Excellence in both music and literature in the Special Needs division.

Emily completed the fifth grade at Norton Elementary School in June and will attend Meyzeek Middle School.

The National PTA Reflections Program recognizes student achievement in the arts. Students may enter in literature, musical composition, photography, visual arts, dance choreography and film (video) production.

Entries are judged first at the local level, where works are chosen to advance to the district, state and national levels.

In the 2009-10 contest, 133 Kentucky students won either an award of excellence or an award of merit at the state level. Of those, 24 entries went to the national competition, including eight from the Louisville area. We featured those students on this page this summer.

At the national level of competition, 500,000 entries were judged; 72 won an Award of Excellence, and 120 entries won an Award of Merit at the national level.

Three local students won a national Award of Merit for their entries.

Emily wrote her musical composition for the piano. The two-minute piece represents the beach, and the rhythm suggests waves hitting the shore.

She describes the piece, which started as a tune in her head, as “peaceful and calm.”

Emily, who lives in the Springhurst area, has been playing piano since she was 6 and has

composed many pieces that she recorded.

For her photographic entry, she chose a picture she took in her backyard during the 2009 ice storm. She took pictures of branches covered with ice, and the one she chose to enter is “one branch, in a Y shape, against the sky.”

“It was unusual and it looked good,” Emily said, adding that she expects it will make people who live in Louisville remember how they reacted to the ice storm.

Emily enjoys taking pictures because “it’s fun to do and I’m happy with the results.”

Emily has been entering Reflections contests since second grade, when she won state recognition and advanced to the nationals, although she didn’t win at that level.



Achiever Emily Liu

Age: 11

School: Incoming sixth-grader at Meyzeek Middle School

Hobbies: Photography, drawing, making stuff and thinking about inventions



Emily's winning photograph

REFLECTIONS CONTEST AWARD WINNERS

To enter the 2010-11 Reflections contest, contact your school's PTA or PTSA for entry forms, rules and deadlines. This year's theme is “Together We Can.”

At the Kentucky PTA student recognition ceremony in Frankfort in May, the following local students received awards:

SCHOLARSHIPS

Benjamin Gies, Atherton High School, \$1,000 Harold Steele Student Scholarship; Kristin Decker, Butler Traditional High School, \$500 Student Scholarship; Kevin Moses Lee, Central High School, \$500 Student Scholarship; Eriauna Stratton, Louisville Male High School, \$500 Student Scholarship; Terri Griffin, La Grange Elementary, \$500 Teacher-Member Scholarship.

Self-Esteem Awards

(Given for an essay, story or poem on the theme “What Makes Me Feel Special”)

Carrington Bagwell, Chenoweth Elementary (Award of Excellence, Primary); Kellie Kidder, Jeffersontown Elementary (Award of Excellence, Primary); Nana Agyeman, Price Elementary (Award of Merit, Primary); Lizzie Bartholomew, Chenoweth Elementary (Award of Excellence, Intermediate); Charity Brogdon, Highland Middle School (Award of Excellence, Middle); Elizabeth Markert, Noe Middle School (Award of Excellence, Middle); Anntress Manion, J Graham Brown High School (Award of Excellence, Senior); Connor Allen, Eastern High School (Award of Excellence, Senior); Jessica Hinkle, Eastern High School (Award of Excellence, Senior); Caitlin Farhat, Atherton High School (Award of Merit,

Senior); Spencer M. Zwenger, Eastern High School (Award of Merit, Senior).

Christa McAuliffe Rising Star Award

(Recognizes students who have successfully worked to improve their grades, attendance, attitude, character or self-esteem)

Ayden Anderson, Centerfield Elementary (Award of Excellence, Elementary); Meghan Brown, La Grange Elementary (Award of Excellence, Elementary); Marilyn Julia Pastrana, La Grange Elementary (Award of Excellence, Elementary); Kevin Padilla, La Grange Elementary (Award of Merit, Elementary); Courtney Daigneault, Centerfield Elementary (Award of Merit, Elementary); Jessica Wells, East Oldham Middle School (Award of Excellence, Middle/Jr.); Morgan Gray, East Oldham Middle School (Award of Excellence, Middle/Jr.); Margueritte Wheeler, East Oldham Middle School (Award of Excellence, Middle/Jr.); Hannah May, Highland Middle School (Award of Merit, Middle/Jr.); Glenna Amante, Highland Middle School (Award of Merit, Middle/Jr.); Angela Rowe, Atherton High School (Award of Excellence, Senior); Jasmine Cowherd, Ballard High School (Award of Excellence, Senior); Patrick Gregg, Atherton High School (Award of Excellence, Senior); Christian Zacarias, La Grange Elementary (Award of Excellence, Special Needs); Chad Langford, Centerfield Elementary (Award of Excellence, Special Needs); Austin Vittitow, Centerfield Elementary (Award of Excellence, Special Needs); Gabrielle Greene, East Oldham Middle School (Award of Merit, Special Needs); Conner Riddell, La Grange Elementary (Award of Merit, Special Needs)