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## Lamorinda Students Increase AIDS Awareness Through Art

By Jean Follmer



(L to R) Campolindo's Matt Atwood, Amy Stagg, Adrienne Snider, Allyson Wright, and Rebecca Busler (not pictured, Carla Mendoza) Photo provided

Several Lamorinda art students recently placed in the 3rd annual Don't Turn Your Back on AIDS Student Art Competition Awards and Auction sponsored by The Flowers Heritage Foundation. The Flowers Heritage Foundation is a non-profit organization that is "dedicated to providing solutions for public health issues affecting the underserved and improving the lives of the most fragile among us." The current priority of the Oakland-based Foundation is to help with the fight against HIV/AIDS through education and awareness. The art competition seeks to increase and promote awareness about AIDS in Bay Area high schools.

Acalanes Senior Rochelle Truong placed 2nd with her piece "Hope Through Strength." Truong has been interested in art since she was a young child and started taking art classes during her freshman year at Acalanes. Truong currently studies with Acalanes art teacher Karen Carbone. "I was interested in doing the Flowers Heritage (competition) because I hadn't done it before. I was actually really surprised because there were some really amazing pieces there. I was really excited to win (2nd place) and I'm glad my art can make a difference," said Truong. Truong also recently won an art contest for "Light the Night" sponsored by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. As for the future, Truong recently finished her college applications. She plans to major in biology and minor in art.

Campolindo Senior Amy Stagg placed 3rd with her piece "Every 16 Seconds." Stagg has also enjoyed art for many years. Like Rochelle Truong, Stagg began taking high school art classes during her freshman year. She added photography to the mix during her junior year and found she really enjoys it. Stagg decided to enter the Flowers Heritage contest because it was one of the optional projects for her Honors Art class. Stagg did some research about AIDS and was impacted by her findings. "It's not something you can really take lightly. I really wanted to put effort into it. One in four people don't even know they have AIDS. It made me more knowledgeable about the world," said Stagg. Stagg named her piece "Every 16 Seconds" because that is the frequency of AIDS-related deaths. "In my photo

class we all started talking about it. We watched an AIDS DVD together and then talked. I think it was a learning experience for everyone that was involved," said Stagg. Stagg also recently finished her college applications and thinks she may major in design.

Campolindo also had five students receive Honorable Mentions: Matt Atwood for "Martyr for AIDS," Rebecca Busler for "Tripled," Carla Mendoza for "Teen Girls Fight AIDS," Adrienne Snider for "KNOW" and Allyson Wright for "Together."

Junior Adrienne Snider told us she had the chance to meet the couple who purchased her piece at the auction. She said the couple is sending the piece to a clinic in Louisiana. Snider plans to continue her involvement with art in the future. "It's definitely going to be a big part of my life," she said .

The Campolindo students currently study with art teachers Jill Langston and Deborah Hovey-Lacour. To view the winning pieces and learn more about the Flowers Heritage Foundation, visit [www.flowersheritagefoundation.org](http://www.flowersheritagefoundation.org).



Rochelle Truong (right) with art teacher Karen Carbone and "Hope Through Strength" Photo provided

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