

NEWS RELEASE
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Farmington Eleven-Year-Old Wins National Student Art Contest

Student's Artwork is Displayed on Limited-Edition Beverage Label



Lizzy Begay from the afterschool program at Farmington Public Library is one of two winners of Torani's national Art for Kids label design contest. This fall, Torani Sugar Free French Vanilla syrup will sport a new, limited-edition art label designed by Begay. The eleven-year-old's artwork was selected from hundreds of entries submitted by afterschool students around the country, and her work will be celebrated at a pizza and Italian soda party sponsored by Torani at the afterschool program today.

Torani, the number one specialty syrup in North America, donates five percent of all limited-edition Art for Kids Raspberry and Sugar Free French Vanilla flavor syrup sales, September 1 through December 31, 2013, to the Afterschool Alliance. The beautiful artist series bottles can be purchased online at www.torani.com, in store at Walmart, Cost Plus World Markets and other retailers, and they can be spotted on shelves in cafes and restaurants nationwide. This is the ninth year that Torani has sponsored the Art for Kids contest in support of afterschool. The other winner this year is from an Ohio afterschool program; eight-year-old Emilia Sansotta, from the Young Rembrandts afterschool program in Avon Lake, designed the label for Torani Raspberry syrup.

"Each year we are even more impressed by the amazing art created by youth in afterschool programs," said Lisa Lucheta, Torani principal and family-owner. "Torani has a long history of bringing splashes of color and creativity into people's everyday lives. We are thrilled that our partnership with the Afterschool Alliance and the Art for Kids contest allows us to brighten many more lives, and helps young people throughout the country participate in exciting, colorful experiences after the school day ends."

"This contest and Torani's remarkable generosity support the afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "As budgets have tightened and many schools are being forced to cut back on the arts and limit creative opportunities, afterschool programs are embracing the arts. These colorful labels provide a perfect way to showcase the talent nurtured in afterschool programs."

Begay said that she was "very surprised to win" and that she looks forward to the afterschool program because she's able to check out books at the library when the program is over.

The Farmington afterschool offers assistance to students using their school laptops with homework, and the art and maker projects at the Farmington Public Library provide an opportunity for youth to be innovative and creative. The afterschool program at the Farmington Public Library serves 3,654 students per year.

“Lizzy is a homeschool student who enjoys exploring reading and the arts in her afterschool program,” said Youth Services Coordinator and New Mexico Afterschool Ambassador Flo Trujillo. “This is Lizzy’s first time speaking in front of an audience and she is really looking forward to it!” At the Torani pizza and Italian soda party, the Northwest New Mexico Arts Council will present Begay with a check to help her continue as an artist.

Torani’s Art for Kids contest supports afterschool programs, which offer young people safe, enriching, fun and engaging places to spend their afternoons. Youth in afterschool programs have been shown to perform better in school and have greater expectations for the future, while children who are unsupervised in the afternoons are at greater risk of becoming involved with crime, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy.

Many more students across the country need access to afterschool programs. More than 15 million school-age children – more than one in four kids in the United States – are unsupervised after the school day ends. The parents of 18 million children say they would enroll their kids in afterschool programs – if programs were available

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org

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