

NEWS RELEASE
September 28, 2011

CONTACT: Johanna Diaz
202/371-1999

Stratford, Oklahoma Youth Win National Student Art Contest

Rural Teens' Artwork is Displayed on Limited-Edition Beverage Labels; Torani to Donate Percentage of Proceeds to the Afterschool Alliance, Japan Tsunami Relief

For the first time ever, three talented young artists have been chosen from the same state, town and afterschool program as winners of [Torani's national Art for Kids label design contest](#). This fall, Torani Cherry, Raspberry and Sugar Free French Vanilla Syrups will sport new, limited-edition art labels designed by students from Stratford SAFE Bulldog Academy afterschool program in Stratford, Oklahoma. The ninth-graders' artwork was selected from hundreds of entries submitted by afterschool students around the country, and their work will be celebrated at a pizza and Italian soda party sponsored by Torani at their afterschool program today.

Torani, the number one specialty syrup in North America, will donate five percent of sales of Torani Raspberry and Torani Sugar Free French Vanilla with limited edition labels from September through December of this year to the Afterschool Alliance. Five percent of sales from the third student winner's cherry blossom art, on Torani's Cherry Syrup, will benefit children's relief programs in Japan following the tsunami.

The winners are Haven Prine for the Raspberry Syrup label, Brook Minor for the Sugar Free French Vanilla label and Rachael Jones for the Cherry Syrup label. At the time the contest was held this spring, the three youth were in eighth grade.

"Torani is in its seventh year of partnership with the Afterschool Alliance to sponsor the Art for Kids contest for afterschool students, and year after year we are amazed and impressed by the results," 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 Art for Kids and our partnership with the Afterschool Alliance allows us to brighten many more lives, and helps young people everywhere participate in exciting, colorful experiences after the school day ends."

"It is unfortunate that many schools have had to cut back on the arts and limit creative opportunities for students. Afterschool programs have always embraced the arts, supplementing programs in school," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Sadly, recent cuts have meant that, in many school systems, afterschool programs are one of the few outlets left to nurture the creative talents of students. That is why we are especially happy to be able to partner with Torani on Art for Kids. These colorful labels provide an extraordinary venue to showcase the talent nurtured in afterschool programs each day. This contest and Torani's remarkable generosity support afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families."

Prine describes her afterschool program as a safe place to learn new skills with friends. She said that she was shocked when she heard she had won the national contest. “I’m proud of myself for having done it, it feels really good to win,” she said.

The rural Stratford SAFE afterschool program serves approximately 150 students in kindergarten through eighth grade, offering tutoring and homework help, arts and crafts enrichment, computer courses, golf, archery, forensic science, music lessons, aerobic dance and core training and more.

“Our afterschool program has been such a positive influence in the community,” said Rhonda Reiersen, the girls’ art teacher in the afterschool program. “We haven’t even got a stoplight in Stratford, yet with Stratford SAFE, we’ve been able to give so many children opportunities they would normally not have. We’re not in a socio-economic environment where kids would have access to golf or piano lessons, but we’ve been able to provide that for them. Winning a national contest like this is huge. We’re very proud of all three of them, each label is unique, just like each of the girls.”

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.

Research conducted for the Afterschool Alliance has shown that only 12 percent of Oklahoma’s kindergarten to 12th grade students are in afterschool programs, while 29 percent care for themselves after the school day ends.

To view a video about the winners, click here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5hO5PQy1Jc>.

###

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

Torani/R. Torre & Company - For over 80 years, familiar Torani labels in bold shades of red, gold and blue have been visible in coffeehouses, restaurants and consumer kitchens. Torani, the premier brand of R. Torre & Company, is the number one flavored specialty syrup in North America and its products have spanned generations and inspired creativity. For more information or recipe inspiration, visit www.torani.com or call 800-775-1925.