



Afterschool Alliance

NEWS RELEASE

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Two Houston Students Win National Student Art Contest

Winning Students' Artwork is Displayed on Limited-Edition Beverage Labels; Torani to Donate Percentage of Proceeds to the Afterschool Alliance

The artwork of two budding Houston artists will be on display in coffeehouses and kitchens throughout the country, promoting flavorful beverages and serving a good cause as well. This fall, Torani Cherry and French Vanilla syrups will sport new, limited-edition art labels designed by Cooperative for After-School Enrichment (CASE) students Alejandra Garcia, 10, of Crockett Elementary and Alina Arevalo, 8, of Sherman Elementary. The students' artwork was selected from hundreds of entries submitted by afterschool students around the country, and their work was celebrated at soda parties sponsored by Torani at their schools today. Torani, the number one specialty syrup in North America, will donate five percent of the product's sales from August through December to the Afterschool Alliance.

"Torani is delighted to sponsor the Art on Labels contest for afterschool students for the second year in a row," said Lisa Lucheta, Torani principal and family-owner. "For more than 80 years, Torani has been adding splashes of color to people's lives. The work of the Afterschool Alliance ensures that children everywhere can participate in exciting, colorful experiences after the school day ends. It is a natural partnership and Torani is proud to support afterschool programs."

"Torani is a true champion of afterschool programs. Its generous support helps give many more kids the chance to engage in creative, enriching activities supervised by caring adults when schools let out," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "These student-designed art labels provide a wonderful venue to showcase children's talent, which is developed and nurtured in afterschool programs. We thank Torani for helping to spread the word that all families need quality afterschool programs to keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families."

Both children entered the contest through their afterschool programs. Arevalo, who will begin third grade in the fall, was inspired to paint her winning picture by her afterschool teacher. "I feel so happy," she said about winning. "I was thinking that a flower would be nice to put on a bottle because they might like it. It's nice to look at flowers and they smell good. I think [my painting] is pretty."

Sherman Elementary Principal Emilia Cardenas says the afterschool program plays an important role in her students' lives. "I love the program because they're not out on the streets or going

home to watch TV all afternoon while their parents are at work...[at the afterschool program] we try to find their hidden talents.”

In honor of the young artists, Torani sponsored soda parties at both afterschool programs, giving the girls a further opportunity to enjoy their newfound fame. Garcia was excited about the party being thrown in her honor. She said she really enjoys her afterschool program and that she “like[s] it most because after we do our homework we can have fun.”

This is the second year that Torani has sponsored the Art on Labels contest.

Afterschool programs 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 ten percent of Texas’s kindergarten to 12th grade students are in afterschool programs, while 24 percent care for themselves after the school day ends.

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization supported by a group of public, private, and nonprofit entities working to ensure that all children and youth have access to afterschool programs by 2010. 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.

Harris County Department of Education, or HCDE, is a 117-year-old, nonprofit, tax-assisted organization dedicated to the equalization of educational opportunity and advancement of public schools. CASE, a division of HCDE, is committed to building partnerships and providing resources, leadership and training that support quality after-school programs in Harris County. Access www.hcde-texas.org.