



# Afterschool Alliance

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Johanna Diaz  
202/371-1999

## **Houston Student Wins National Student Art Contest**

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

The artwork of a budding Houston artist will be on display in coffeehouses and kitchens throughout the country, promoting flavorful beverages and serving a good cause as well. This fall, Torani Peppermint syrup will sport a new, limited-edition art label designed by Cooperative for After-School Enrichment (CASE) student Leonard Smith, 11, of the Kruse Camp afterschool program. The student's artwork was selected from hundreds of entries submitted by afterschool students around the country, and his work was celebrated at a soda party sponsored by Torani at his school today. Torani, the number one specialty syrup in North America, will donate five percent of the product's sales from September through December to the Afterschool Alliance.

"This is the third year that Torani has sponsored the Art on Labels contest for afterschool students and we are once again delighted with the results," said Lisa Lucheta, Torani principal and family-owner. "For more than 80 years, Torani has been adding splashes of color to people's lives, just as the Afterschool Alliance helps give children everywhere the chance to participate in exciting, colorful experiences after the school day ends. Ours is a natural partnership and Torani is proud to support afterschool programs."

"Torani is helping to enrich children's lives, and is a real champion of afterschool programs. These student-designed art labels provide a wonderful venue to showcase children's talent, which is developed and nurtured in afterschool programs," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "This special collaboration with Torani has been key to helping spread the word that all families need quality afterschool programs to keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families."

Now in fifth grade, Smith says his favorite part of the afterschool program is drawing and that winning the contest was "great." "I just thought it was awesome that I finally got to be noticed," he added.

"Winning this contest has been amazing. When Leonard started this camp, his self esteem was really low. We're very proud of him," said Sendhy Jasso, Afterschool Program Coordinator for Kruse Camp, who added that afterschool programs help make her students more confident and keep them safe. "I'm really happy we offer the program to keep kids away from the street. [Without it] they'd be out on the street and there are a lot of gangs in the area."

This is the third year that Torani has sponsored the Art on Labels contest in support of afterschool. Three other winners designed labels for Torani Ginger Spice syrup, Torani “Italian Eggnog” syrup, and Torani Pomegranate syrup in California, Ohio, and Rhode Island respectively.

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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://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](http://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](http://www.hcde-texas.org)*