



## Academy of Visual and Performing Arts At Culver City High School

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### AVPA Artists Win Recognition

*For immediate release:*

**Culver City, CA – February 18, 2010:** The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards is a nationwide arts competition open to all high school students. Culver City High School (CCHS) art students from CCHS Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA) have been recognized for their exceptional talent in the visual arts. Seniors, Charlene Amarasekara and Sequoyah Madison, have won “Gold Key” awards, the highest level of achievement, for their portfolios in visual art. Ninth grader, Isabel Bennett, has also won a “Gold Key” award for her photograph. All three students will now continue to compete in the Scholastic Arts & Writing Awards national adjudication in New York City for further scholarship consideration. Additionally, Charlene Amarasekara and Slaveya Minkova have won “Silver Key” awards for individual art pieces in painting and sculpture. Slaveya Minkova also won an Honorable Mention for an art piece in mixed media.



The Scholastic Art Awards ceremony and exhibition will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, February 27, at The Armory Center for the Arts, 145 N. Raymond Street in Pasadena, where the winners of the Regional Scholastic Arts & Writing Awards competition will be recognized for their achievements. All the “Gold Key” award recipients from CCHS' Academy of Visual and Performing Arts will have their artwork displayed in the galleries at The Armory. The exhibition will run February 28 – March 14 in the Mezzanine Gallery.

AVPA's Co-Director, Kristine Hatanaka, who also runs AVPA's art department, comments, “Opportunities and art contests like these are highly competitive. Scholastic Art Awards is one of the most competitive because it involves the entire Southern California region.” According to Hatanaka, “I'm always proud of the talent and creativity of my students. It's very gratifying for me to see them receive the recognition of a national competition like this one. I always encourage my students to take every opportunity to showcase their skills and creativity.”

“Gold Key” winner Charlene Amarasekara comments, “Winning the Gold Key award is an incredible experience. It's such a meaningful achievement to have received this recognition for

all the hard work involved in what I do and will hopefully mean more scholarships for college.”

The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards have celebrated 87 years of identifying and documenting the outstanding achievements of young artists and writers in the visual and literary arts. Since 1923, 12 million students have participated, 2 million young artists and writers have been recognized, and \$20 million in awards and scholarships have been made available. Each year, 250,000 students in grades 7 through 12 participate in the competition.

**About the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts**

The Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (AVPA) at Culver City High School has been inspiring and empowering students to build a compassionate, creative community through innovative and challenging arts education since 1996. AVPA enjoys tremendous support from Sony Pictures Entertainment and other area businesses as well as from the Culver City community. For more information about the Academy, go to <http://avpa.org> or contact Tony Spano at 310-842-4200 x6094 or Kristine Hatanaka at 310-842-4200 x6001.

Photo caption:

Scholastic Art Awards Winners: Charlene Amarasekara, Isabel Bennettt, Sequoyah Madison and Slaveya Minkova with their winning entries.

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