

## **For Immediate Release**

Contact: Aryani Ong, [apahm2020@gmail.com](mailto:apahm2020@gmail.com), (240) 370-6660

### **STUDENTS WIN AWARDS IN K-12 POSTER ART COMPETITION CELEBRATING ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER MONTH**

Rockville, Maryland – Thirteen MCPS students will be honored for their artwork highlighting prominent Asian Americans and their contributions in the United States on **Wednesday, May 20, 7 p.m. ET** in an online award ceremony to be livestreamed over [YouTube](#). The awards are given following a juried competition where all MCPS students were invited to submit poster art. Seventy students participated. [APASAAG](#), an Asian American parent advisory group to MCPS, sponsored the event in celebration of [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month \(AAPIHM\)](#).

“Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have been involved in the critical milestones in U.S. history. Ranging from the transnational railroad to landmark Supreme Court cases to medical discoveries, Asian Americans have been the architects, and not only the witnesses,” said Aryani Ong, an APASAAG member who created the competition. “The inaugural competition is an opportunity for the school community to recognize Asian Americans’ contributions through poster art.”

Amidst the school interruption by covid-19 in March through April, students used mixed art tools including coloring, painting and pencil sketching to submit artwork. Nine students at the elementary, middle and high school levels won first-, second- and third-place awards. Four students received honorable mentions. All entries – including the winners – can be viewed at [APASAAG’s website](#).

Three local judges served on a panel: Chil Kong is Artistic Director of Adventure Theatre MTC, Athena Robles, Board Chair, Asian American Arts Alliance and Shineh Kim Yoon, Founder of Shineh Art Studio, LLC. “[I was] excited to see all the passion and artistry as these young artists celebrate leaders in the API community!” said Kong.

The program features Board of Education President Shebra Evans and MCPS Deputy Superintendent Dr. Monifa McKnight as guest speakers. Presenters of the awards are representatives of co-sponsoring organizations, including Chinese American Parents Association of Montgomery County (CAPA-MC), Calvin Li Memorial Foundation, City of Rockville Asian Pacific American Task Force, Association of Vietnamese Americans and Indonesian American Association. Several members of the school board, administration, principals and art teachers will be in attendance.

Twenty-eight years ago, in 1992, the month of May was officially designated by the U.S. government to commemorate Asian American and Pacific Islanders’ (AAPI) history, challenges and contributions. Due to a rapidly growing population, AAPIs are raising its profile in Montgomery County. At MCPS, Asian Americans comprise 14.4% of the student population and 5.7% of professional staff.

- **Watch the award ceremony livestreamed on Wednesday, May 20, 7 p.m. ET** over YouTube at <https://youtu.be/SV7wDIIQDaQ>.
- **View all the student participants’ artwork at APASAAG’s website** at <https://sites.google.com/view/apasaag/home/May2020>.

## AAPIHM K-12 Poster Art Competition Winners

### Elementary school

1st place: **Isaac Soles**, 11, Matsunaga Elementary School  
(featuring Nathan Adrian, Olympic Swimmer)

2nd place: **Valerie Shin**, 6, Bells Mill Elementary School  
(featuring Grace Lin, Writer, Illustrator)

3rd place: **Avani Dounde**, 7, Farmland Elementary School  
(featuring Kalpana Chawla, Astronaut)

Honorable mention:

**Abigail Hana Lee**, 11, College Gardens Elementary School  
(featuring Vera Wang, Fashion Designer)

### Middle school

1st place: **Lyla Cho**, 11, Tilden Middle School  
(featuring Chloe Kim, Olympic Snowboarder)

2nd place: **Clara Frank**, 12, North Bethesda Middle School  
(featuring Patsy Mink, Congresswoman)

3rd place: **Priscilla Kim**, 14, Kingsview Middle School  
(featuring Yuri Kochiyama, Human Rights Activist)

Honorable mention:

**Eliana Wang**, 11, Takoma Park Middle School  
(featuring Amber Josephine Liu, Singer, Rapper, Songwriter)

### High school

1st place: **Annabelle Sargent**, 17, Richard Montgomery High School  
(featuring Hayley Kioko, Singer-Songwriter)

2nd place: **Janet Choi**, 17, Richard Montgomery High School  
(featuring Jenny Han, Author)

3rd place: **Max Shin**, 15, Winston Churchill High School  
(featuring Ken Kang-Joh Jeong, Stand-up Comedian, Actor, Former Physician)

Honorable mentions:

**Evelyn Shue**, 15, Richard Montgomery High School  
(featuring Eric S. Yuan, founder of Zoom Video Communications)

**Caroline Dinh**, 16, Richard Montgomery High School  
(featuring Chien-Shiung Wu, Physicist)

###

*The Asian Pacific American Student Achievement Action Group (APASAAG) is an advisory body, whose members engage in regular dialogue with MCPS to provide feedback on issues affecting the Asian Pacific American (APA) community and advocate on behalf of APA students.*