

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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14th Annual School Bus Drug Prevention Media Contest Winners

Boynton Beach, FL — March 5th, 2024

The Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition's 14th Annual School Bus Drug Prevention Media Contest winners have been chosen! The contest was open to all students from K-12th grade in Palm Beach County to showcase their creativity and commitment to drug prevention. New this year was a category for adults to enter. Contestants had the opportunity to participate in art, video, dance and other artistic contests, each offering a unique platform for creative expression.

With "Ride the Wave Alcohol Free" and "Ride the Wave Vape Free " as this year's contest themes, the contest challenged students to create a positive prevention entry with a clear message promoting an alcohol-free or vape-free lifestyle for youth.

We were astounded at the poster contest response of over 700 entries from students. It was very difficult to choose from so many beautiful entries from 30 schools all over the county. It took hours for our select panel of judges to choose just eight total winners from hundreds of submissions. Poster winners each earned a **\$100 gift card** and Scholarship Winners were each celebrated with a **\$1,000 scholarship award**.

Here are the winners of our 14th Annual School Bus Drug Prevention Poster Media Contest:

SCHOOL BUS

DRUG PREVENTION MEDIA CONTEST

ARTISTS' PICKS



**ESTRELLA ISRAEL, 1ST GRD -
GLADE VIEW**



**RAYJAN AMBER ALVAREZ,
7TH GRD - BAK MOAS**



**DIANA VELASQUEZ DIAZ
12TH GRD -
JOHN I. LEONARD**

POPULAR PICKS



**ELLA COTTOM, 3RD GRD -
BINKS FOREST**



**ISABELLA KEISEL, 6TH GRD -
CRESTWOOD**



**NIKHIL RAMPRASAD,
11TH GRD -
OXFORD ACADEMY**

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

HANLEY FOUNDATION



**MERLISE ELYSEE, 12TH GRD -
SOUTH TECH ACADEMY**

JUDY CARRERAS



**GESSLY SALCEDO, 12TH GRD -
JOHN I LEONARD HIGH SCHOOL**

Poster Winners			
Winner	Grade	School	Award
Estrella Israel	1st	Glade View Elementary	Artist Choice - Elementary School
Rayjan Amber Alvarez	7th	Bak Middle School of the Arts	Artist Choice - Middle School
Diana Velasquez Diaz	12th	John I. Leonard High School	Artist Choice - High School
Ella Cottom	3rd	Binks Forest Elementary	Popular Pick - Elementary School
Isabella Keisel	6th	Crestwood Middle School	Popular Pick - Middle School
Nikhil Ramprasad	11th	Oxbridge Academy	Popular Pick - High School

Scholarship Winners			
Winner	Grade	School	Award
Merlise Elysee	12th	South Tech Academy	Hanley Foundation Scholarship
Gessly Salcedo	12th	John I. Leonard High School	Judith Carreras Scholarship

Not only did the poster champions from elementary, middle, and high school win cash scholarships, but their awesome posters will get plastered all over Palm Beach County school buses, making every ride to and from school an exciting showcase of their talent! The posters will be seen by tens of thousands of students every day to influence a healthy lifestyle.

Congratulations to the three winners of our Video/Reel contest. First place took **\$500**, second place **\$250** and third place **\$150**.

Video Winners			
Winner	Grade	School	Award
Marjorie Joseph	12th	Atlantic Community High School	1st
Christopher Clarke	6th	Bak Middle School of Arts	2nd

Santos Gomez-Gomez	11th	Palm Beach Gardens High School	3rd
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The JAM 4 HUMANiTY Contest also achieved meaningful engagement in six new categories to promote the prevention of youth substance use. Congratulations to the JAM 4 HUMANiTY winners listed below who earned a **\$100 prize** from Mission Possible Foundation and JAM 4 HUMANiTY, plus the opportunity to be featured in their Bright Minds Films music video PSAs and national prevention awareness campaigns:

JAM4HUMANiTY			
Winner	Grade	School	Award
Crazy Games	Various	Tate Recreation Center	Sports
Daniel Meza	9th	Saint Andrews School	Dance
De'Andre Martin and Tarik Wilkins	Various	UB Kinsey Elementary School of the Arts	Instrument
Dominique Derraco-Franklin	Adult	ALL or Nothing Dance Company	Adult
Platinum Steppers	Various	Achievement Center for Children & Families	Cheer
Various	Various	Universal Learning Academy's Aftercare Program	Lip Sync

In addition to the winners' prizes given, every student entry, finalist or not, earned two community service hours. If you would like to take a look at the winning posters and videos, they will all be featured on our Media Contest website: PBCBusPoster.org.

Our 14th Annual School Bus Drug Prevention Media Contest would not have been possible without our generous sponsors. The Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to:

- Mission Possible Foundation
- Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
- Hanley Foundation
- Judith Carreras Scholarship
- Coral Shores Behavioral Health
- Michael Joseph Brink Foundation
- The Rotary Club of Wellington.

We are also grateful to our contest partners, whose unwavering support has made our 14th Annual Contest a resounding success:

- The Palm Beach County School District
- MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)
- The South Florida Fair
- The Box
- Art Synergy
- SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions)

Community Service Opportunities

Additional community service hours are still available through our 14th Annual School Bus Drug Prevention Media Contest. They can be earned by volunteering at our Bus Poster Event on Monday, March 25, 2024 from 9AM to 11AM at various school bus depots across the county. Volunteers are needed to help “poster the buses” by sticking the winning entries onto Palm Beach County school buses. Approximately 3,000 posters in about 900 school buses will be posted! Sign up with a friend and have a blast while earning up to four hours of community service at [Poster Day Sign up](#).

For media inquiries or more information, please contact Susan Foley at prevention@pbcchc.org.

About Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition

The Palm Beach County Behavioral Health Coalition was created to give parents, youth, and neighborhoods the tools to continue building a healthier, drug free community. By bringing together teens, parents, educators, business owners and other partners, we coordinate activities, provide information, and organize public awareness campaigns to steer youth and adults away from harmful decisions and towards program and support services. Since 1982, our Coalition has had a major impact in Palm Beach County's efforts to keep our communities healthy, safe, and drug-free. We encourage you to take an active role in shaping the future of Palm Beach County by joining one of our task forces, attending our events, and/or sponsoring our initiatives.

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