

Bakersfield, CA - Congressman Kevin McCarthy will honor participants and winners of the 29th Annual "An Artistic Discovery" Congressional Art Competition for high school students at a reception on Friday, May 7, 2010, from 5:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. at Metro Galleries, located at 1604 19th Street in Bakersfield. May 7th is also "First Friday" in downtown Bakersfield. First Friday is an arts related event where art galleries, shops and boutiques are open later and live music and local artists set up on the street to entertain.

□ *"I am always impressed with the talents of the young artists in our district, and it's amazing to see their creativity at work,"* McCarthy said. *"I invite the community to come out and join me in honoring their achievements and support First Friday in downtown Bakersfield."*

The overall winner is Sona Shah, who is a junior at Stockdale High School in Bakersfield. Under the direction of her art teacher, Art Sherwyn, Sona created her piece, "Playing Art" using pastels and charcoal featuring six different children working on art pieces outdoors. Sona said that her piece was created to represent unity with the kids in black and white and their art pieces in color.

Sona will be attending the exhibit opening of "An Artistic Discovery" in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, June 17, 2010, with her parents, Dr. and Mrs. Nilesh Shah. Her artwork will be displayed in the corridor leading to the U.S. Capitol for a period of one year. As the overall winner, she will also receive three round-trip tickets to the exhibit opening, as well as a cash award to be presented at the district reception. Awards will also be presented to those students who place first, second, third and receive Honorable Mentions in the following three categories: photography, computer-generated art, and all other mediums. In addition, all winners will have the option of displaying their artwork in the Congressman's Washington office for one year.

Congressman McCarthy received 105 entries from 10 schools in the 22nd Congressional District this year, which includes part of Kern, San Luis Obispo, and Los Angeles Counties.