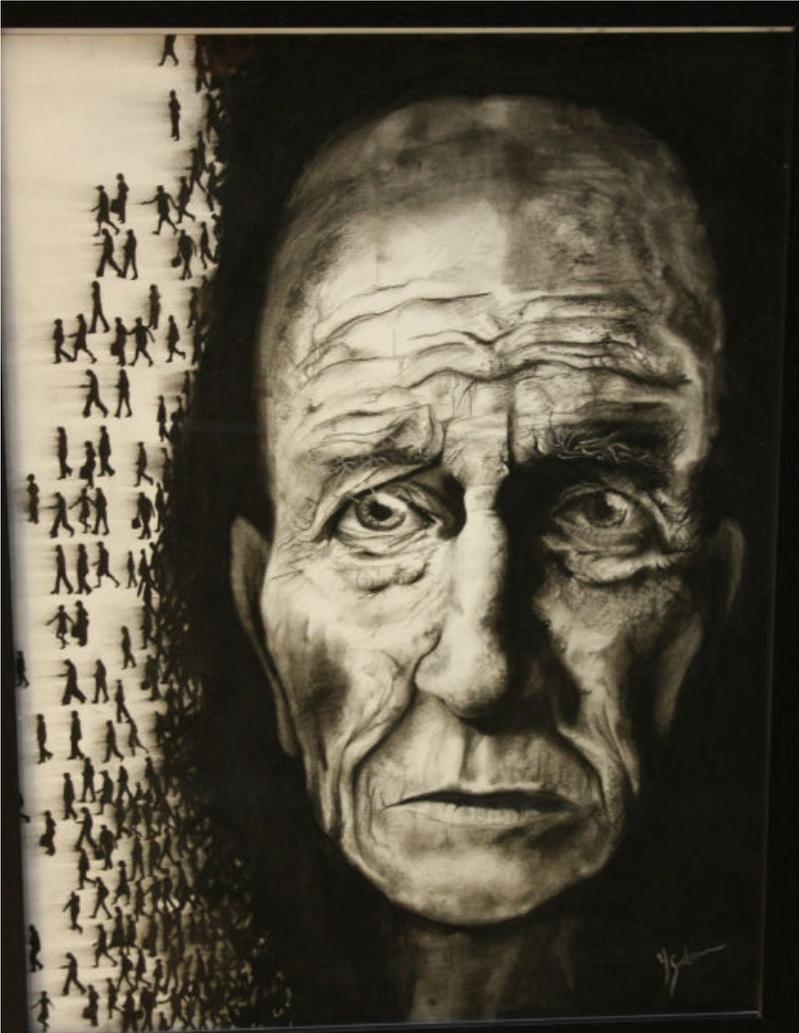


**Bakersfield, CA** – Today, Congressman Kevin McCarthy announced the winners of the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual “An Artistic Discovery” Congressional Art Competition for high school students. Winners and participants will be honored at a reception on Friday, May 11, 2012 at Metro Galleries in Bakersfield from 6:00-7:00 PM.

“The Congressional Art Competition is intended to encourage artistic expression amongst high school students in our communities,” said Congressman McCarthy. “I am always impressed by the creativity and talent of these young students, and I want to congratulate all of the artists who entered a piece into the competition this year. I also want to especially thank the teachers who encouraged their students to participate. Congratulations to all of the winners, especially the overall winner Yasmine Suleiman, whose outstanding piece of artwork will be put on display in the Capitol.”

**Yasmine Suleiman**, a junior at Stockdale High School in Bakersfield, under the direction of her art teacher, Linda Hyatt, created her piece, titled “Plight of Man”, using charcoal as her medium. In response to what inspired her piece, Yasmine said, “We all carry our own stories and experiences that simply cannot be compared. Instead, we must absorb and appreciate the individuality we possess. In this portrait, I attempted to illustrate the life that lies beneath the surface of our character. The silhouettes of the characters in the background could represent the memory and experience of the subject. However, from our perspective, his plight and his success remain ambiguous. I worked on this piece for about three or four days, on and off. It was a process that took up most of my time in thinking about how to approach and execute the idea.”

Yasmine will be invited to attend the exhibit opening of “An Artistic Discovery” in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, June 20, 2012. 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.



1st Place Eric S. Ford, Lancaster, Paper Collage: "Shadow of the Past"



2nd Place Crissy Love, Bakersfield, Acrylic paint on white towel: "Colorful Reality"



Mrs. Elizabeth Charlotte Bradford, Linoleum Cut: "Which Way"



Hughie M. Baker, Mixed Media: "Untitled"



Photography: "Sailed Away" by Isabel Marquezfield



Photography: "Yellow Flower" by 2nd Place Field Hill School



Photography: "Brooklyn" by Bakerfield Ridge School

