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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAMA AUXILIARY TO PRESENT STUDENT ART AWARDS

Ligonier – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley Auxiliary will present three student art awards at the Museum’s Lunch a l’ Art at noon on April 20. The awards are in conjunction with the Museum’s current student art exhibition, *Artists of the 21st Century*.

The Auxiliary will present three students with the *21st Century Artist Award for Outstanding Student Art*. Natalie Donofrio, a grade 12 student from Hempfield Area Senior High School (art teacher: Tom Billeck) is the recipient in the High School category. The Middle School award will be presented to Grace Maust, a grade 9 student from Ligonier Valley High School (art teacher: Judy Jupina). Jordyn Corona, a grade 4 pupil from Maxwell Elementary (art teacher: Tim Kearns), will receive the award for the Elementary School category.

Each award comes with a cash prize, courtesy of the SAMA-Ligonier Valley Auxiliary. The student artists and their art teachers have been invited to the Museum’s Lunch a l’ Art program on April 20, which features a presentation by SAMA Curator Dr. Scott Dimond. The program begins at noon and includes lunch and presentation. Cost is \$15 or \$12 for SAMA members. Reservations are required by April 13 by calling the Museum at (724) 238-6015.

SAMA has mounted the *Artists of the 21st Century* exhibition for the last 19 years at its Ligonier Valley and Loretto museums. SAMA-Ligonier Valley hosts works by students in Fayette and Westmoreland counties while SAMA-Loretto’s exhibition features students from Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Somerset counties. This year’s exhibitions feature nearly 300 student-created works. SAMA-Ligonier Valley’s exhibition will remain on view through April 23.

Artists of the 21st Century is held in conjunction with National Youth Art Month and the state’s Arts-in-Education Month. The exhibition is open to schools that participate in SAMA’s Museum/School Partnership Program. The exhibitions are celebrated with opening receptions and provide an opportunity for aspiring young artists to see their work professionally hung in a gallery setting.

Schools participating in the SAMA-Ligonier Valley exhibition include: Baggaley Elementary School; Fort Allen Elementary; Greater Latrobe Senior High School; Harrold Middle School; Hempfield Area Senior High School; Jeannette McKee Elementary School; Latrobe Elementary School; Ligonier Valley High School; Maxwell Elementary; Mountain View Elementary School; Stanwood Elementary; Valley School of Ligonier; Wendover Middle School; and West Point Elementary.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley is located at One Boucher Lane and Route 711 South in Ligonier. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. weekends. The Museum is a handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.