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SAMA AUXILIARY TO PRESENT STUDENT ART AWARDS AT APRIL LUNCH

Ligonier – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley Auxiliary will present four student art awards at the Museum’s Lunch a l’Art at noon on April 16. 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*. Clark Huey, a grade 12 student from Greensburg Salem High School (art teacher: Kelley Audia) is the recipient in the High School category (\$100 prize). The Middle School award (\$50 prize) will be presented to Sammy Suppes, a grade 6 student from Valley School of Ligonier (art teacher: Kelly Vallye). Vincent Gaskey, a grade 2 student from Mountain View Elementary School (art teacher: Nate Bolby), will receive the award for the Elementary School category (\$25 prize). The awards were selected by a committee of Auxiliary members Mary Campfield, Mary Clark and Bonnie Hoffman.

Additionally, the Auxiliary will present Jessica Anto, a grade 12 student from Ligonier Valley High School (art teacher: Linda J. O’Sullivan) with the *Auxiliary’s Choice Award* (\$100 prize), which is voted on by all members of the Auxiliary. The student artists and their art teachers have been invited to the Lunch a l’Art program on April 16, which features a presentation by visual artist Zarah Blair.

“The Auxiliary of SAMA-Ligonier Valley is pleased to be awarding four student art awards this year,” said SAMA-Ligonier Valley Coordinator Sommer Toffle. “The talent from the students is remarkable and it says a great deal about our local teachers. We are very proud of the students and what they have achieved.”

SAMA has mounted the *Artists of the 21st Century* exhibition for the last 17 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 featured more than 300 student-created works.

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 this year's SAMA-Ligonier Valley exhibition include: Amos K. Hutchinson Elementary School; Baggaley Elementary School; Fort Allen Elementary School; Greater Latrobe Junior and Senior High schools; Greensburg Salem Middle and High schools; Harrold Middle School; Hempfield Area Senior High School; Jeannette McKee Middle School; Latrobe Elementary School; Ligonier Valley High School; Maxwell Elementary School; McKee Elementary School; Mountain View Elementary School; Stanwood Elementary School; Valley School of Ligonier; Wendover Middle School; West Hempfield Elementary and Middle schools; and West Point Elementary School. The *Artists of the 21st Century* exhibition will close on April 19.

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.