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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Announces Litter Hawk Youth Award Program Winners ~ Close to 1,000 entries submitted ~

(May 6, 2024) Winners of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Litter Hawk Youth Award program were recognized at a ceremony at the PA State Capitol Building on May 2.

Winning students, their families and legislators with winning students in their district were invited to attend a ceremony honoring the Litter Hawk Youth Award winners and participants. Over 50 people showed up to support and celebrate the winners and their efforts. Shannon Reiter, President, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, Phoebe Coles, Chair, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and Ramez Ziadeh, Acting Executive Deputy Secretary for Programs, PA Department of Environmental Protection, provided remarks about the importance of educating youth about litter and antilittering behaviors.

The program, funded by the PA Department of Environmental Protection, provides a way for students in kindergarten through grade 6 to express their concerns about litter through art, words or video. Each participant completed a project specific to their grade level. To complement our [Open Your Eyes to Litter](#) book series, the theme was: *Open Your Eyes to Litter – Show Us What You See.*

Judges were excited to see so many thoughtful submissions illustrating positive changes towards reducing the amount of trash found in our parks, school grounds and along our roadways. Almost a thousand students participated in this year's program.

First and second place winners in each grade level received ribbons, certificates and a Litter Hawk decal.



First place in the 6th grade video division: Twin Valley middle School students, their teacher, Jennifer Eversmeyer and Shannon Reiter, President, KPB at the awards ceremony.



First Place, 1st grade: Hudson Hess, Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, Ramez Ziadeh, Acting Executive Deputy Secretary for Programs, PA Department of Environmental Protection and Hess family members attend the awards ceremony at the PA State Capitol building.



First place, kindergarten: Mayameen Sarkar Manha, her mother and Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful at the awards ceremony.

First Place Winners:

Mayameen Sarkar Manha, Kindergarten (poster), PA Leadership Charter School, Montgomery County

Hudson Hess, Grade 1 (poster), Reamstown Elementary School, Lancaster County

Veda Alluri, Grade 2 (poster), Shamona Creek Elementary School, Chester County

Nora Buchanan, Grade 3 (poster), George Washington Elementary School, Allegheny County

Beckett Blouir, Grade 4 (poster), West Greene Elementary, Greene County

Eleanor Mountz, Grade 5 (essay), Little Red School House, Chester County

Dion Cooper, Serenity Foster, RJ Green, Royce Lane, Grade 6 (video), Twin Valley Middle School, Berks County

Runners-Up Winners:

Henry Trout, Grade K (poster), Norvelt Elementary School, Westmoreland County

Elizabeth Kalista, Grade 1 (poster), Holy Trinity Catholic School, Blair County

Tanisha "Gia" Iyer, Grade 2 (poster), PA Leadership Charter School, Lehigh County

Ava Milford, Grade 3 (poster), Knoch Primary School, Butler County

Josiah Haley, Grade 4 (poster), Homeschool, Clinton County

Alekhya Doddapaneni, Grade 5 (essay), Eden Hall Upper Elementary, Allegheny County

Everly Henderson, Mary Rhenish, Jacqueline Li, Emma Johnston, Grade 6 (video), Mars Area Centennial School, Butler County

“Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful wants to thank all the students who participated in our Litter Hawk Youth Award program this year. It’s been so rewarding to see the thoughtful and inspiring messages reflected in the hundreds of Litter Hawk entries. Each project is unique, reflecting the students’ own experiences, values and concerns. The nearly 1,000 entries are a clear indication that our youth are insisting on a cleaner, safer and more beautiful Pennsylvania,” said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. “A big thank you to the families and educators for traveling to the state capitol and helping to make the awards celebration special. Congratulations to this year’s Litter Hawks! We hope to see everyone back again next year.”

Winning entries will be displayed in the East Wing Rotunda of the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg through May 23.

The Litter Hawk Youth Award program is offered annually and was created with funding provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Pennsylvania students can participate individually or as part of a lesson initiated by schools, environmental clubs, scouts or other organized groups.

To view winning entries and for more information about the program, visit <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/grants-awards/awards/litter-hawk/>. Winners will also be featured on Pennsylvania Beautiful’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/keppabeautiful/>.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 158 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania’s roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation’s largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keppabeautiful.org.