

## Local students finalists in water conservation art competition

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More than 190 entries rendered 12 finalists in a recent art competition designed to promote water conservation, and four of the 12 are from Paulding County.

The waterSmart waterArt competition is an annual event organized by the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority and Cobb County Water System.

Students from nine middle schools in Cobb and Paulding counties were challenged with creating artwork depicting the need for water conservation. The entries were judged by local artists and conservationists and the top 12 finalists were honored last week during a reception.

The Paulding County students selected were Justin Cloutier and Jonathan Davis, both from McClure Middle School, Taylor Davis from South Paulding

Middle School and Marcus Townsend from Dobbins Middle School.

All the finalists' entries are on display at Art Station-Big Shanty in Kennesaw through Nov. 29, and each entry will be displayed in a calendar that will be distributed throughout metro Atlanta.

"WaterSmart waterArt was initially developed as an outreach effort to enlist the aid of middle school students in educating our community about water conservation," said Becky Mixon, program director for waterSmart.

"Our main focus behind the calendar is to promote and raise awareness of year-round water conservation — in turn allowing students to use their creativity to take the project where they want."

By involving students in the effort to teach the importance of water conservation, Mixon said the message is spread also to teachers, family and community members.

"The contest has also allowed students to utilize

their imagination and artistic skills to creatively represent what water conservation means to them," she said.

Among the themes of this year's entries were water conservation for the sake of future generations and saving water at home and in the garden.

The waterSmart waterArt contest is in its fourth year and continues to grow.

"In our inaugural year, we received artwork from five schools and 70 students," Mixon said. "This year, we received artwork from nine schools and over 190 entries."

There are no intentions to expand the program to include more grade levels.

Paulding County is included in the contest because the county is Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority's second largest customer.

The other finalists include:

- Jessica Avila, Floyd Middle School
- Issabella Du, J.J.



Special Photo

From left are finalists Marcus Townsend of Dobbins Middle School and Taylor Davis of South Paulding Middle School.

- Ashley Enoch, East Cobb Middle School
- Joanna Frazier, Middle School, and Lovinggood Middle School
- Keely White, Hightower Middle School
- Vivian Tong, Campbell

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