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Jersey City High School Students Named Winners of Hudson Cradle Art Contest

Winning Artwork to be Featured in Posters & Promotional Pieces for 16th Annual Taste of Hudson

Jersey City, March 9, 2006 -- Hudson Cradle, an infant group home in Jersey City, is pleased to announce the winners of their first-ever "Taste of Hudson" art contest. The winning art work will be used to promote the "16th Annual Taste of Hudson – A Benefit for the Babies" event on April 6, 2006, at Harborside Financial Center on the downtown Jersey City waterfront. This year's event is presented by Paulus, Sokolowski & Sartor / KeySpan Services.

The contest was open to students in Jersey City Public School System's Visual and Performing Arts High School Program - a magnet for artistically accelerated teens that operates out of New Jersey City University. Students in the program are from throughout Jersey City. The three top entries, as voted on by members of the Hudson Cradle Board of Directors, are:

- 1st Place Winner Zarina Rose Lagman, County Prep High School (Sophomore)
- 2nd Place Winner Elmer Ledesma, Dickinson High School (Junior)
- 3rd Place Winner Brienne Guirantes, Lincoln High School (Sophomore)

"All three finalists all did an exceptional job, with incredible attention to detail that truly communicated our event's mission," commented Sallie Porter, Hudson Cradle's executive director. "We are honored to have the artwork of these talented young members of our community represent us."

The top three were chosen from nearly 50 entries for their unique artistic interpretations of Taste of Hudson. Miss Lagman's winning pastel of an infant in a crib with a golden spoon in his hand was chosen for its clever layout and lifelike realism. Mr. Ledesma's and Miss Guirantes' colorful pastels featured babies in detailed, realistic restaurant settings; Mr. Ledesma's of an infant attired in a chef's uniform in a beautiful dining room and Miss Guirantes' depicting a chef playfully interacting with a baby outside of his kitchen.

Miss Lagman's work will be featured in invitations and posters promoting the event throughout Hudson County. All three of the top prize winners' original works will be displayed at Taste of Hudson on April 6.

A select number of limited edition reprints of the artwork will be available for sale at Taste of Hudson. **For more information on purchasing tickets or artwork, please contact Sallie Porter, Hudson Cradle executive director, at (201) 332-7879.**

About Taste of Hudson

Taste of Hudson takes place on Thursday, April 6 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Harborside Financial Center Atrium in the Exchange Place section of downtown Jersey City. It has become an annual Spring tradition that brings together some of the finest eating establishments from Hudson County and beyond in support of an amazing cause. Hudson Cradle is an infant group home providing full nurturing residential care to homeless infants with special needs. Most of the babies are prenatally drug exposed (usually cocaine and heroin), some are HIV exposed, and some have been abused or neglected. All of the infants are under the supervision of the Division of Youth and Family Services. Hudson Cradle also provides family support and community education. **Since opening its doors in 1992, Hudson Cradle has provided a loving home to over 500 infants!**

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PHOTO CAPTION: Hudson Cradle executive director Sallie Porter visits with the winning "Taste of Hudson" art contest artists. From left to right: 2nd Place Winner Elmer Ledesma, Dickinson High School (Junior), 1st Place Winner Zarina Rose Lagman, County Prep High School (Sophomore); Sallie Porter; and 3rd Place Winner Brienne Guirantes, Lincoln High School (Sophomore). All are enrolled in the Jersey City Public School System's Visual and Performing Arts High School Program - a magnet for artistically accelerated teens that operates out of New Jersey City University.