

JUNE 4, 2016



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Elise Doney, Teen Services Librarian,

Lakewood Pierce County Library

Peyton Gomez, Lakewood Youth Councilmember

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Future Leaders of Lakewood	i
Sponsors and Donors	ii
About the Letter Writing Competition	iii
City of Lakewood Vision Statement	iv
City of Lakewood 20 Year Accomplishments	vi
Gold Medal Winner – Chase Dylan Stephens	1
Silver Medal Winner – Celena Wilson	4
Bronze Medal Winner - Tichomir Dunlop	7
Honorable Mention - Zhaira Wincy Flores	10
Honorable Mention – Jodelein Garcia	13
Honorable Mention – Eben Johnson	15
Honorable Mention – Kivi Johnson	17
Honorable Mention – Genesis Koloj	19
Honorable Mention – Claudia Penney	20
Honorable Mention - Ramiro Reyes	23
Honorable Mention – Ayana Rice	25
Honorable Mention – Phoenix Schumacher	27
Honorable Mention – Emmerson Stephens	29
Art Murals	33
Hudtloff Middle School Art Murals	34
Lochburn Middle School Art Murals	39
Woodbrook Middle School Art Murals	43
Clover Park High School Art Murals	44
Lakes High School Art Murals	72



FUTURE LEADERS OF LAKEWOOD

Congratulations to the talented students who participated in the City of Lakewood's 20th Anniversary Celebrating Our Dynamic Future Letter Writing Competition and art murals portraying Lakewood's past, present and future.

For the letter writing competition, a volunteer panel of judges including representatives of the Lakewood City Council, Lakewood Youth Council, Pierce County Library System and the City of Lakewood 20th Anniversary Committee reviewed the entries. The selected winners were evaluated on originality, creativity, adherence to the writing theme, use of language, grammar, spelling, and artistic expression.

Letter-writing winners were awarded technological prizes and gift cards. The student letter writing entries and art murals are published in this book.

The City of Lakewood gratefully acknowledges the sponsors and donors who supported the 20th anniversary celebration, letter-writing competition and the publication of this book.

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Letter-Writing Sponsors



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Lakewood Playhouse
Pizza Studio
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Tacoma Trophy
Tijuana Taco*



Editor's Note

ABOUT THE LETTER-WRITING COMPETITION

The City of Lakewood's 20th Anniversary Letter Writing Competition for Young People was opened to Grades 6-12 students living in and/or attending schools in Lakewood to express their creativity and language skills about the future of their community. The competition was held from April 1, 2016 through May 9, 2016.

The theme of the letter writing competition was "Celebrating Our Dynamic Future." It symbolized the City of Lakewood's Vision Statement adopted by the Lakewood City Council on October 19, 2015.

Applicants were asked to write about one of the five following topics and include a drawing or photograph illustrating their response:

- As a student in Lakewood, I want to make the city greater by
- Tell us what you really love about Lakewood today and what you would like it to look like in the future.
- In the future, my dream job is
- If I could change my city, I would ___ and why?
- As I look into the future, I want Lakewood to be known for

A special thanks to the student writers of this competition who provided inspirational foresight of what life can be for the future of Lakewood. Letters, drawings and photos included in this book are as received and regret if there are any errors, omissions or inconsistencies. May these writings become memories to be reflected upon at the City's 30th Anniversary on February 28, 2026.

Alice M. Bush, MMC
City Clerk, City of Lakewood

CITY OF LAKEWOOD VISION STATEMENT

Adopted by Lakewood City Council
October 19, 2015

Our *VISION* for Lakewood is a thriving, urban, South Puget Sound City, possessing the core values of family, community, education, and economic prosperity. We will advance these values by recognizing our past, taking action in the present, and pursuing a dynamic future.

The City Council's *VISION* for Lakewood at its **30** Year Anniversary is a community:

- Inspired by its own sense of history and progress;
- Known for its safe and attractive neighborhoods, vibrant downtown, active arts and cultural communities;
- Sustained by robust economic growth and job creation;
- Recognized for the excellence of its public and private schools, and its community and technical colleges;
- Characterized by the beauty of its lakes, parks and natural environment;
- Acknowledged for excellence in the delivery of municipal services;
- Leveraging and embracing of our diversity; and,
- Supportive of Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM), Camp Murray, service members and their families.

CITY OF LAKEWOOD
20 YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS
(1996-2016)

- First City Council officially took office October 11, 1995
- City incorporated February 28, 1996
- Lakewood Municipal Court opened February 28, 1996
- Citizens' advisory boards and committees created to advise the City Council on arts, parks and recreation, landmarks and heritage, lodging tax, civil service, planning, public safety, community service, youth and Lakewood's Promise.
- Lakewood received national recognition as one of 100 Best Communities for Young People in 2006–2008 and 2010-2012 by America's Promise
- Lakewood forms a Police Department
- Lakewood operates 12 neighborhood parks totaling 600 acres including Fort Steilacoom Park
- Lakewood builds City Hall with no debt financing, Towne Center is emblematic of Lakewood's transformation combining public offices, retail stores, food establishments and entertainment
- Veterans memorial erected and funded primarily by donations
- Lakewood Sounder Station opened
- Lakewood Police Station constructed
- Police Department awarded National Accreditation through Commission for the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies
- Municipal Court services expanded to serve communities of University Place, Steilacoom and DuPont
- South Sound Military & Communities Partnership created
- South Sound 911 spearheaded by Lakewood's leadership
- Sewers in Tillicum & Woodbrook neighborhoods constructed
- Public Works Operations & Maintenance Shop built
- Senior Activity Center, Farmers Market, Summerfest and recreation activities and events
- Pacific Highway, Bridgeport Way, Steilacoom Boulevard improvements
- LED Streetlights conversion underway

GOLD MEDAL WINNER

FIRST PLACE



Chase Dylan Stephens
Grade 8
St. Charles Borromeo
Lakewood resident

Topic: In the future, my dream job is

Dear City of Lakewood,

In the future, my dream job is to serve in the United States Army as a ranger and a general because I desire to serve my country and be a honorable and selfless human being like my father. My tenth birthday was a memorable day for me because it shaped me who I am today. On that day my father granted me my wish of going to New York to visit Ground Zero and West Point. I came into this world on a day that would be considered as one of America's most tragic days. September 11, 2001, is my birthday. Each year on my birthday, I am reminded of the horrific events that occurred which took the lives of 2,977 people. As I walked Ground Zero with my father, I realized the magnitude of his job as a police officer. Sixty police officers sacrificed their lives at the World Trade Center trying to save the lives of others. President Obama said, "Even the smallest act of service, the simplest act of kindness, is a way to honor those we lost, a way to reclaim that spirit of unity that followed 9/11." This quote represents my father, and I too desire to be a selfless human being who puts the lives of others before my own. He has received two "Medal of Valor," seven "Medal of Merit," and one "American Red Cross Real Heroes" awards for his many years of hard work and service to society.

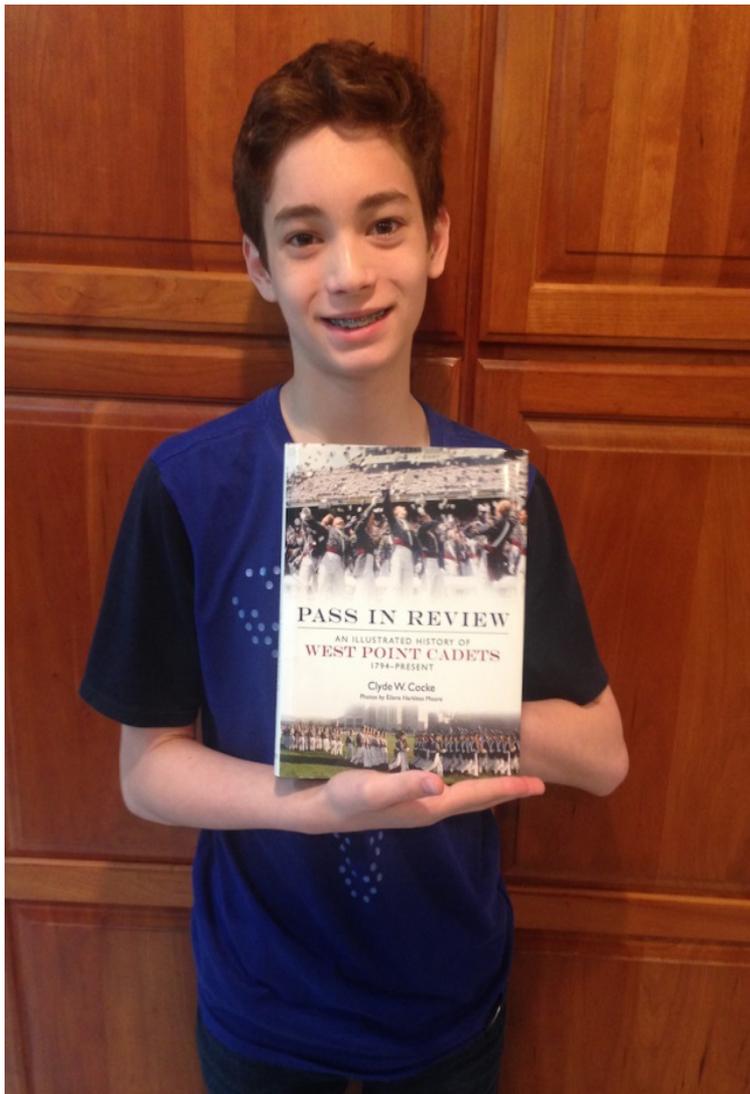
Walking Ground Zero with my father, I recognized the sacrifices he has made in his life to serve our community and country. My father best lives up to my definition of success,

because he faces and overcomes obstacles everyday as a police officer, and he possesses the attributes that I admire. He is honorable, just, and selfless. His main goal in life is to serve others in the community. Not only is he a police officer, he is also the Search & Rescue supervisor for the Pierce County Sheriff's Department and a member of the FEMA Urban Search & Rescue Task Force as a Logistics Specialist. He was called out by FEMA to help with the search and recovery of the victims who lost their lives in a landslide in Oso, Washington, in March of 2014. He worked tirelessly for two weeks to give the families closure by finding their loved ones who had perished in the disaster.

After we spent the morning at Ground Zero for my tenth birthday, we went on a private tour to West Point. I saw first hand where the cadets trained and lived. My father had served in the United States Air Force starting at the young age of seventeen years old. My career goals are to graduate from West Point and be a ranger and a general in the United States Army. I knew during my visit to West Point that I would need to be disciplined in my academics and physically active in order to be successful there. Therefore, I try to challenge myself in mind, body, and soul. I play basketball and run cross country to stay active and to be involved in team sports, since they are valuable in teaching leadership and sportsmanship skills. I have volunteered at a local food bank in which I packaged, cleaned, stocked, and served others who were in need of food. In addition, I have participated in Bible study where I learned and memorized over two hundred fifty Bible verses. Both community service and Bible study have challenged me spiritually.

After I retire from the military, I would like to be the mayor of Lakewood. As the mayor of Lakewood, I would find ways to make this city an active and engaging place for the youth to learn and participate in various activities. I would set up community gardens and encourage teenagers to plant and grow their own fruits and vegetables. This could teach them responsibility and promote good eating habits. In addition, I would advocate to have more public parks and recreation centers with outside basketball and tennis courts. The Lakewood YMCA has been a great place for the citizens of Lakewood. However, more places are needed for the youth to go to after school or on the weekends that do not require having a membership. Long lasting friendships can be formed at these

places which can be beneficial in building a strong and safe community. My desire of serving my country and community will not be an easy task, but I will accept all the challenges with gratitude since these trials will make me stronger mentally, physically, and spiritually.



SILVER MEDAL WINNER SECOND PLACE



Celena Wilson
Grade 12
Harrison Preparatory
Lakewood resident

Topic: In the future, my dream job is

Dear City of Lakewood,

In the future, my dream job is to be an inpatient staff pharmacist. My dream wasn't always to become a pharmacist, at first I actually thought that all pharmacists do is make drugs and fill out prescriptions. Over time, I learned that being a pharmacist is so much more than just making people's medication, it's actually a job that can change lives through connections, service, and love. I'm very fascinated by medication and how they work in the human body and how helpful or detrimental they can be. However, this fascination for drugs is only a very small part of why I want to become a pharmacist. I strongly believe that everyone in this world deserves to feel loved, accepted, and never alone and I feel that becoming a pharmacist is my way for creating a greater positive effect on me, my community, and the rest of the world.

Starting big, I want my future job to help me make a positive effect on the world, and becoming a pharmacist may help me get there. Living here in Lakewood has really taught me the right values that a community needs. The City of Lakewood has truly shown me that it is very important for a community to feel like one big happy family for it to really strive and grow for the positive good. Over the last 20 years, Lakewood has grown tremendously in size and spirit and I've never felt more like family in this community than I have ever before. Our community members make great efforts to make personal connections with the rest of their community and it makes Lakewood a much happier place. It's because of the sense of family that Lakewood

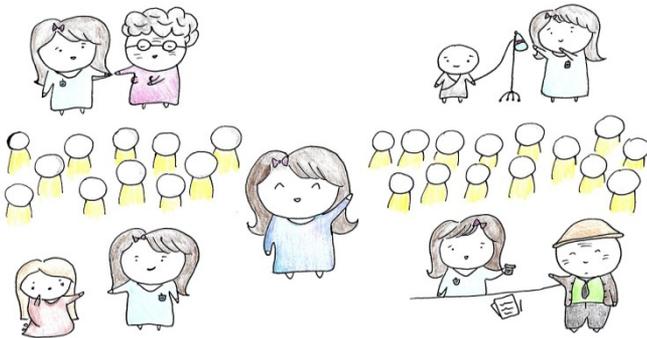
has that makes people want to live here, that makes people feel wanted, that makes people want to get more and more -involved. The feeling of family that the City of Lakewood has is something so unique but so amazing that I want to bring this family feel to the rest of the world, to the other communities out there. Through my work in pharmacy, specifically in hospitals, I want to bring that family feel and make connections with the staff, patients, and patients' families. If I can show the people in a hospital how important and how incredible making the personal connections can be, then maybe all of those people will then go home and try to make new and stronger connections with their neighborhood, eventually creating a ripple effect to reach their whole community. Then maybe someone else in that community will want to reach the world too and the positivity will move further and further out.

The world is great, but something more important to me is my community. I'm kind of important, and I guess the world is important too, but what's really important to me is my community. My community is my target for service and I believe that it's the right place for me to grow my passion for service. I have this fire in me that sparks with the thought that I can be the one to show others that they are never alone. I want to work inside of a hospital, work one on one with patients and really show them that they are never alone. I want the little boy getting chemotherapy to know that I do want him to get better and that I'm there for anything he needs. I want him to know that the people in the hospital truly care about him and that we are ready to fight his battle right alongside him. I want to show the little orphan girl getting treatment for her disease that she still has me cheering for her to get better and that I'm there to talk to her and be the support she needs while she is in our care and beyond. I want the elderly woman whose kids never visit to know that even I don't want her to be lonely and that I really want to listen to her stories of when she was a little girl in the countryside. I want the teenager who is scared to take antidepressants because they're scared of what others will think to know that they will always have someone to talk to and someone to encourage them to get better. I want the old man with Alzheimer's to know that I am happy to remind him of who he is every single day when his family gets so frustrated with his memory loss that they won't

be there anymore. I want to show the child whose parents can't be in the hospital with them because they need to work to pay the medical bills that they are never alone and that they still have me at the hospital to be with them, to be there to support them, to be there to hold them when pain comes. I want to show my community members, through the people who come and go the hospital, that they are loved, accepted, and most importantly, never alone.

Putting others before me is my top priority, but I realized that if I can't grow myself then I can't help others grow too. I believe that my dream job of becoming a pharmacist will give me an abundant amount of opportunities to grow and be able to better show my community and world that love and connection is very important. I hope that working in a hospital and doing the things that pharmacists do will open my eyes wider to the type of people the community is made up of. I think that this job will give me the opportunity to learn how to work with people from all different walks of life, thus helping me to make a greater impact in the community and reach the rest of the world. I hope that going into pharmacy will help me grow as a person and a better citizen of this earth.

I thank the city of Lakewood for sparking my passion to make the people in this world feel like family, for reminding me that I have the power to show others that they are never alone, and for showing me that people never stop growing and that each and everyone one of us can always get better. Thank you City of Lakewood, I am forever grateful.



BRONZE MEDAL WINNER THIRD PLACE



Tichomir Mahne Dunlop
Grade 6
Huddtloff Middle School
Lakewood resident

Topic: As I look into the future, I want Lakewood to be known for

Dear City of Lakewood,

In the future, what I want most of all is for our City of Lakewood to be one that is proud of its natural heritage and does everything it can to protect it. I want to help!

I was thinking about this recently, because a week ago, a neighbor cut down seven huge, beautiful Garry oaks, which are considered threatened in the State of Washington and are needed by many endangered animals. City rules say that if your lot is smaller than a certain size, you don't need permission. The neighbor even needed a logging truck, and the destruction took three whole days.

We are in shock. We love the trees in our neighborhood. Another neighbor is sick from what has happened – he has lived here all his life, and loved those oaks. Cutting down the trees changed the micro-climate. His yard will be scorched in the summer, and will be colder in winter, without the trees to make shade from the sun and protection from the wind. Now the rain water will all run off into Puget Sound without the trees to absorb it.

We are upset, but the many animals who depended on those trees will be worse off, and maybe will die. The neighbor might have killed an entire generation of birds who were nesting in those huge oaks. The squirrels need those trees for food, and the owls like to roost in them.

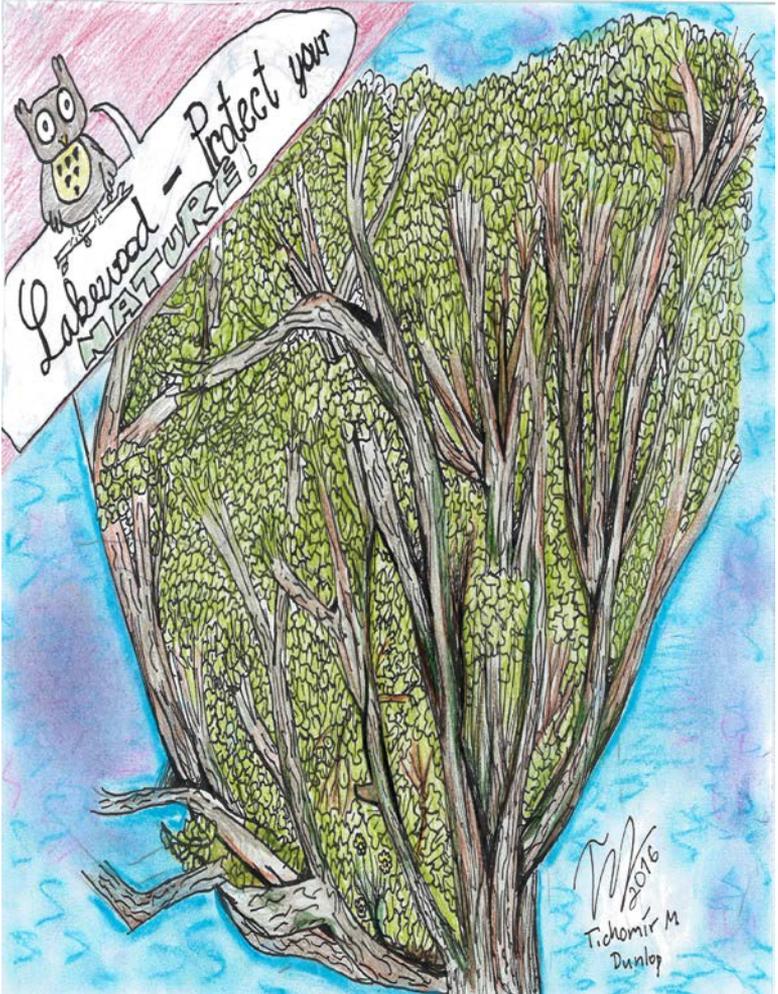
People don't always seem to know or appreciate our nature here in Lakewood. The people who cut down the Garry oaks were not from here and didn't know how important the trees are, and even the policeman who came didn't know what a Garry oak was, even though he lived here all his life and these trees are like a symbol of Lakewood. They don't know how special these trees are!

In the future, Lakewood must do everything it can to protect the Garry oaks especially, but everything in our natural world in general. People should not be allowed to cut down Garry oak trees, no matter how small their property, unless they have an extremely good reason. The city of Lakewood needs to make sure that people know and value these oak trees, as well as all the nature found in the city, such as the many lakes and rivers.

The city can have programs to help teach young people about our nature – at my schools, for example, we were never taken for a walk in nature even once, and no one made sure that we knew about trees or anything else about nature, like our animals here, or how to protect our lakes and streams. If no one teaches people to value these things, then they won't, and our beautiful forested neighborhoods will turn into sad, ugly-looking places. When there are trees, people feel better about where they live, and feel better in general. Trees are good for people. By the next city anniversary in ten years, I hope that all the kids in K-12 schools spend at

least one day a year out in nature, learning about it and how to protect it.

I would be glad to do anything I can to help people learn more and appreciate our beautiful nature here in Lakewood that I love so much. I hope I never have to see beautiful trees cut down for no reason again. I want Lakewood to say beautiful and green – to stay Lakewood!



HONORABLE MENTION

Zhaira Wincy Flores
Grade 10
Clover Park High School
Lakewood resident

Topic: If I could change my city, I would ___ and why?

Dear City of Lakewood,

Once, there was a place called The Prairie. Gracious with its grand oak trees surrounding the nearby lakes, its resources giving a sustaining supply for its indigenous people to use. When it was discovered the land was fought over, experiencing many changes in the process. New forts were built in the area, homes and mansions were made, cemented roads started paving through the green ground, and lines were placed giving power and energy for each and every home. The landscape had changed to the point that it couldn't be called the Prairie no more. Now, the old aging historical structures that had changed it are still in place, but the once quiet forestry had turn into an area that fit the view of the modern age of today. This evolved scenery had been renamed as what we know as 'Lakewood'.

The community of Lakewood has always been a kind of peaceful to me, amicable in some areas. Despite the conflicts and some of the imperfections it has gone through in the past (and maybe even now in the present), the city is no different from any other.

This area has already evolved into a more prosperous town than it was before. It had already progressed so much, with its now growing diverse society that is helping create a more greatly valued Lakewood, all leading to a much more brilliant future.

For this city, its beauty is under appreciated and not seen much by others.

Through my eyes, the walls of the city are beautifully painted with various blends of colors, weaving one story after another created by the minds of the young, and the old. By day its downtown is alive with busy streets of its residents, and silent enough to hear nature's quiet symphony by night. Neighborhoods are as peaceful as they'll ever be, being surrounded with various groves. Their homes, welcomed by the warmth of the sun that peeks through the leaves of nearby trees as the quiet chirps of a single blue bird resonating through the air. The nearby lakes are filled with tranquility and serenity as people lay in the grass, whilst admiring the diamond like glimmers reflecting off from the waters. The park's trees covering the people with its shade as they admire the scene around, enjoying the breezy air. The city's natural scenery cannot be matched with any other.



Our schools and colleges harbors and nurtures many of the minds that we consider as the future leaders of this beloved community. Each student being of different culture or ethnicity learning many other different diverse perceptions of others from other parts of the world, all in the time that they are in school.

They learn to have the understanding that not just one culture, or race, or ethnicity should be prioritized, but rather be respected and appreciated. The educators, training the young minds to not only understand the mistakes of the past, but to understand that there are more than one solution to solve a problem. This lesson will continue to stick to us, even when we had already found ourselves in our dream job. Be it a plumber, an electrician or even as a service member they must know that we must learn to solve problems on our own. For these jobs and these people help Lakewood improve more, to provide a much more fitting environment that is deserved for the families that live here. To help stabilize the economy and increase the job opportunities there are in our city, helping us all in the near future.

But in this community, there are always room for improvement. Some streets of our neighborhoods, there are always signs of trash littered. It lays there for hours, leaving an aroma that's not fit for the nose. A stench that lasts. For us to love our city we must, at the very least, consider to clean it up when we can. To keep the streets free of waste and litter is one of the responsibilities we must entrust in ourselves to do. We must support a much greener attitude for the future appearance of our city, to help clean it up, possibly in more ways than one.



Celebrating the dynamic future should be something we do everyday. We prosper in more ways than one, our schools educate us to give the lessons of life, and our daily lives are ensured by the services of the many people in our workforce. Our community will only get bigger if we let it, our community will improve so long as we encourage it, and our community will only get better if we care for it. This community will have a future, and the people in it will only let it be a bright one.



HONORABLE MENTION

Jodelein Garcia
Grade 11
Clover Park High School
Lakewood resident

Topic: In the future, my dream job is_____

Dear City of Lakewood,

In the future, my dream job is to become a High School English Teacher. I believe that education is an extremely important part in our lives and that it is powerful. There is a great deal of ignorance in society and the only way we can really solve that is with the idea of teaching people. Education is also a way to spark people's passions and ideas whether they are being taught how to play music, to know how to add numbers, to mix chemicals, or to read a book. These foundations of being taught something is what truly brings people's devotion into something, to the point where they have the potential to find the cure for cancer or solving climate change. I have been taught and surrounded by inspiring and passionate educators who just want what is best for their students. They have truly inspired me to have the desire to teach. I also have a passion to serve and to make an impact in people's lives. I believe that serving others is a beautiful thing, to dedicate your time and effort into just making others happier and making a difference. So becoming a teacher is a way that I can implement these things all together: advocating for the idea of education being powerful, to serving others, and making an impact in people's lives. I will also be teaching about something that I am passionate about which is English. English is my favorite subject and is something that is crucial to learn about in society. English is the outlet to letting people speak their minds and to express themselves. As a High School teacher, I want to create that impact in young people and to show how capable they are and to not feed into what society may look at them as such as laziness and ignorance. Teachers that I've had displayed this idea of young people having enough eagerness to learn about

something and the motivation to do something about it. Without them, I wouldn't be here writing about my dream to become a teacher or the passion to serve others and making a difference. Education is a very powerful thing and in third world countries it is something that is not very common and is looked at as a privilege. As a teacher, I want to create this idea that education should be valued and that you should use it to your greatest advantage whether it's becoming a doctor, a politician, or a business owner. Becoming a High School English Teacher will allow me to uphold these ideals and to allow myself to make an impact in someone's life.



HONORABLE MENTION

Eben Johnson
Grade 6
Homeschooled
Lakewood resident

Topic: If I could change my city, I would _____ and why?

Dear City of Lakewood,

Hello, my name is Eben Johnson. I am a homeschooled student who lives here in our beautiful town of Lakewood. I think that Lakewood is a remarkable town, and if I could change it, I would make it a safer, and friendlier place. A place where no one has to worry about their children getting kidnapped, a place where people can take a walk to the town center without getting robbed, a place where you can turn a corner without getting hit by a car that's going too fast around the turn. Lakewood should be a town where people can talk to each other, where people's priorities are more than nice things and phones and emails, where people can simply enjoy the natural beauty of our town. I think that a good way to start, would be to encourage the "Adopt a Street" program. Usually, if a city is dirty, that's where the dirty things happen. If more people did the "Adopt a Street" program, it would mean safer streets. People would feel more comfortable walking down clean streets, than they would walking down ones that are covered in trash. And if people can feel safe walking down the streets, they would feel safer talking to each other more instead of always being on their phones. Our family did the "Adopt a Street" program, and sometimes still does. When we all saw the little "trash picker uppers" we were all so excited to start. It's really a fun thing for families to do together. Now, I'm not saying that this is a town where kids are constantly getting kidnapped, and people are getting robbed. I'm not saying that having nice things, phones, and email is bad. Personally, I actually think that having these things is very convenient, and I love all the technology and gadgets that we have these days. But people seem to be depending on them too much. I want Lakewood to be a place where people can stop and talk to each other, where people can get off of their phones and have a real conversation. Nowadays, every kid in every school has their own phone, and usually have their eyes

glued to it in the hallways between classes, at lunch, and sometimes even in class. Some people say they have friends, but really, those are just people on Facebook who live two hundred miles away. People have to learn to just put away their phones and have human interaction. At my house, we have a rule that on weekends, you can play video games and watch tv for one hour, then, you have to go play outside for an hour, and so on and so forth. At first, I hated the idea. But as the weeks passed with this new rule, I grew to like it. Sometimes now, I even expand the hour outside because I am having so much fun. If people could set those kind of guidelines for themselves, I think that Lakewood would be a much better place, with people everywhere making conversation, and having real friends, that aren't two hundred miles away. I think that Lakewood should be known for being a safe, clean, and friendly town.



HONORABLE MENTION

Kivi Johnson
Grade 6
Home Educated
Lakewood resident

Topic: In the future, my dream job is_____

Dear City of Lakewood,

Hi! My name is Kivi Johnson, and I am a homeschooled student who has lived in Lakewood my whole life. I really like our gorgeous town and think that we have done a good job making it a clean, friendly and happy city.

I was born here on the kitchen floor of our old house because we didn't make it to the hospital. I really think that we are blessed to have colleges and schools to train up doctors, midwives and nurses, especially when most babies everywhere else on the world are born at home like I was or sometimes even on the street. Just a little bit ago my little brother Coal's life was saved because of the great N.I.C.U. nurses. That is why my dream job is going to another country and becoming a midwife. I would also like to be a Christian missionary and run an orphanage and farm. I would want to be a christian midwife because so many babies and mothers die every year due to the lack of medical supplies and support.

My little sister Pella was born in 2011. We had a great experienced midwife who came and delivered her nice and healthy. Three years later in 2014, our little brother Tuff was born. My big brother Eben and I got to witness the birth, and I thought that it was very interesting. The midwife's came a little late; they missed the whole thing. I got to ask them many questions, however, and they explained the whole "what midwives do". I liked it, and then I decided that was what I wanted to be when I grew up.

When Coal was born this year in 2016, we were all expecting a nice, short healthy birth. Then the midwife's called a month early and said that Mama had a liver problem that would kill the baby if she didn't have him then. Two days later, little

Coal was born in the hospital, but then scared us all when he stopped breathing five minutes later! The doctor felt his heartbeat and said he was dead, but the nurse kept trying and finally got him breathing again. He was rushed to the N.I.C.U., where he was nursed back to health, and one week later my siblings and I were finally able to meet him. That experience left me thinking more about some of the poor kids across the world, who need just as much attention as Coal did.

Here in Lakewood, I find it harder to believe that there can be people living in caves, cardboard boxes and even in swamps. A lot of countries are full of disease, famine, and death. I think that I could make a big difference to some people not as blessed as us, and start by letting them have healthy babies.



HONORABLE MENTION

Genesis Koloj

Grade 7

Lochburn Middle School

Lakewood resident

Topic: As a student in Lakewood, I want to make the city greater by _____

Dear City of Lakewood,

In the future my dream job is to help the city of Lakewood to become a better place because some don't care but once they do the wrong things it's going to be bad. I wanna help the people to persuade them into the good instead of the bad and I help 702 people every Saturday and even though I am tired I still help them. My other dream job is to be a police officer because we are helping our community.

HONORABLE MENTION

Claudia Penney
Grade 11
Harrison Preparatory
Lakewood resident

Topic: As I look into the future, I want Lakewood to be known for

Dear City of Lakewood,

I have lived in this beautiful city for six years now and I have seen it grow in so many ways. As this city grows I hope it is still able to retain its values. In the future, Lakewood should be known for all the wonderful people who live in it. My wish is that others get to have the same experience with the citizens of Lakewood that I have had. When people visit Lakewood or come here to start a new chapter in their life, they should leave with various positive relationships with the townspeople of Lakewood.

Coming from DuPont at eleven years old I was not sure what to expect from my new home. DuPont is a rather "sheltered" city. To go anywhere it was pretty much a 30 minute drive from my house. I had never lived anywhere else (that I could remember) besides DuPont, so moving from there and switching schools in 6th grade was unthinkable. The people I met here have impacted my life in a positive manner and they still are now. Not only have I made life long friends, I have made personal relationships with my teachers as well.

It was my sophomore year when I began to rely on these relationships more than I ever had in the past. My home life had come crashing down and I needed as much support as I could get. My teachers and friends, just a fraction of the people who make this city wonderful, banded by my side. Although life was throwing me a curveball, the people of this city helped me hit a homerun. This experience really showed me that the City really does have excellent schools; the schools in Lakewood not only prove their excellence in the education they provide the youth

of Lakewood, but also due to the amazing people that reside within these schools.

This past year when I joined the Lakewood Youth Council and became the Youth Council representative for the Human Services Advisory Board, I was not sure what to expect. I did, however, know I would meet a number of amazing people as that is just what I expect from Lakewood. My prediction came true. I met so many caring people within both Youth Council and the Human Services Advisory Board. I really appreciate all the things that both these groups stand for. They work extremely hard to help the citizens of Lakewood obtain all the things they deserve. Whether it is Youth Council serving the city through events or the Human Services Advisory Board helping provide food, housing, and health services, Lakewood's caring personality really shines through.

Not only do these groups have a strong sense of service for their community, they are also very diverse. Representative of Lakewood itself, the people that comprise these wonderful groups come from a variety of different backgrounds and have a variety of different skill sets. This is something that I feel is very unique to Lakewood. Although we all live in the same community we are all so very different. Lakewood is not a cookie cutter city, its population is extremely diverse; however, there is no diversity in the loving hearts of Lakewood's citizens.

To this letter I have attached an image that I feel represents exactly what I am trying to describe in this letter. This image is of the beautiful city hall that was taken recently on a warm sunny day. All those amazing people I have described either reside in this building during some part of their week, day, or month or are served by the people in this building. This building holds so many warm loving hearts, Lakewood's beautiful lakes and parks pale in comparison to the beautiful hearts of its people. In the future, Lakewood will be known for the caring and diverse citizens of the city.



HONORABLE MENTION

Ramiro Reyes
Grade 6
Lochburn Middle School
Lakewood resident

Topic: As a student in Lakewood, I want to make the city greater by ____

Dear City of Lakewood,

As a student at Lochburn Middle School and member of the Computer Clubhouse, I have high expectations to make my dream come true of becoming an engineer to make buildings that would make the city better. Even though I am still a kid my dreams can never fall, my hopes will always rise, and will make the city a better place.

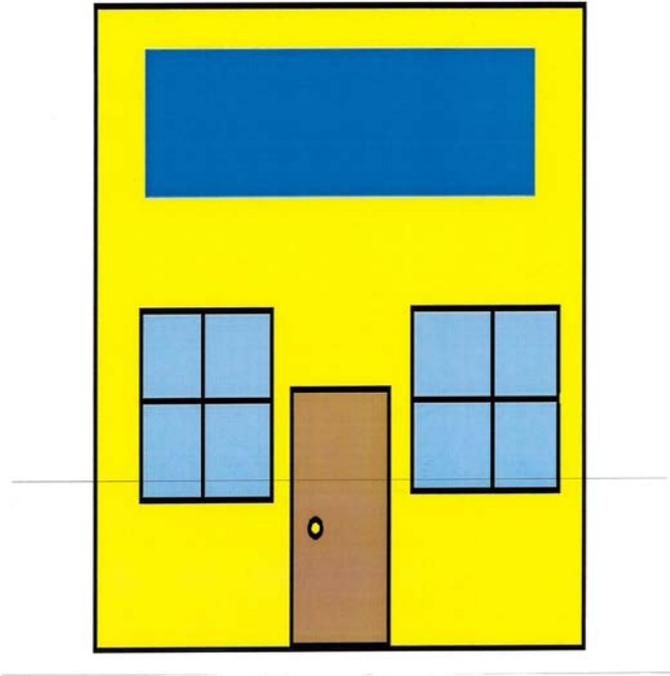
I would like to become an Engineer to make a senior citizen center to help more seniors who are living alone and don't have jobs, the seniors would have a safe place to live and to play in their own arcade with chess, pinball, bingo and many more games that senior would mostly enjoy. Some citizens might even get a job at the Citizen Center.

I would also like to make a home for the people who don't have a house and don't have jobs and give a job to those who have lost their jobs. I make the homeless shelter and give them nutritious foods that are not contaminated with poison. They would have a bed to sleep in and not sleeping under a bridge during a cold night. And some people are throwing away food that many people that are homeless could be receiving and construct a food bank that if you brought food in you would be able to take food out that you might like and the homeless people will enjoy.

I would also fix the streets because cars might cause accidents in the future that may harm people that are crossing the street having to go the hospital. Many accidents occur when people are using their cell phones while driving and make the other driver in front of you crash into him

or her that's why I would design a lock for cellphones in your own car that lock your phone when you are driving if you have bluetooth you won't need that update to your car.

Ramiro Reyes
Ramiro Reyes



HONORABLE MENTION

Ayana Rice
Grade 10
Clover Park High School
Lakewood resident

Topic: As a student in Lakewood, I want to make the city greater by _____

Dear City of Lakewood,

If I could change my city, I would change the poverty in my city. In my city there is an unemployment rate of 6.7 percent, and an even higher rate of individuals experiencing homelessness as of 2015. Due to this fact, hundreds of families fight to meet basic needs that are essential to functioning on a daily basis yet alone in society. I see first-hand how poverty effects the children in my community in many different ways. Students having to face the struggle of getting their electricity cut off and going to school the next day worrying if they would return home to the cold and darkness. Or having to pick up a job during the school year because their parents don't make enough money to put food on the table. No one should have to walk around in winter without a jacket because they can't afford one. That is why volunteering in my community has helped me realize that there can be change and hope can be restored to the families living here, including my own. It doesn't take a million people for change to be effective. Small groups and individuals like myself can be just as effective as well or even more. I was inspired to help make a change when I volunteered at a resource fair with my mom. To see that people took the time out of their day to bring resources to families who may not have access to them otherwise, had a very positive influence on me. Families had access to healthcare resources, basic need, food, employment opportunities, housing and more. There are many things that can be done to work towards ending poverty in Lakewood. Hosting resource fairs in the communities with a high rate of poverty is one. Holding the event in their neighborhood may help because they can't afford transportation to get to another location. Like in the picture I have sent. There was an event that my mother and I attended to where she was one

of the many resourceful tables of organizations that help people in need in the neighborhood. Another one could be transporting food banks where there would be a vehicle transporting food to homes that may need it the most. Another idea could be the hosting food banks in the schools on the weekend so at least there may be a possibility of getting the struggling families within the school. There are many more countless ideas that could help put an end to poverty in our community and even raise our school testing scores to state average. I believe that if the issue of poverty can be reduced the children of this community would succeed the way they should. I chose this topic because I can relate to being in poverty. My family and I experienced days without electricity, having to make trips to food banks, struggling to keep with the rent and even homelessness. Now I can say we have way better days and it is a blessing to not have to struggle like we use to before but there are still children in this community who are continuing to face these issues and that is concerning. It concerns me because I know what it's like to be in their shoes and I want that to change and that is why I chose this topic.



HONORABLE MENTION

Phoenix Schumacher
Grade 6
Harrison Preparatory
Lakewood resident

Topic: As I look into the future, I want Lakewood to be known for _____

Dear City of Lakewood,

As I look into the future, I want Lakewood to be known for its support in our military families and to also be known for being a clean, well balanced community.

We as a city could accomplish this by showing support and hosting multiple events to help military families get through tough times like the loss of a family member or a family member overseas. To help support the children of these families we can hold an event where children from local schools can meet and get to know the military children who may be new to the area or not yet attending school. This support and interaction with our military families is very important because we owe them for keeping our country the home of the free and the brave and to sacrifice themselves for us and our country.

To keep this city well-balanced and clean the city and community can pick up trash and host more events to get our community members involved. To keep the city clean we need to have more “cleanup crews” to help keep the streets clean. When we keep the streets clean we can help contribute to stopping unnecessary pollution, and this can help our environment. Not only can we be connected with our community but also to be connected with our environment. When you bring your community closer we can all be friends and that can make ever thing better. It will be a small world after all.

As I look into the future, I want the City Lakewood to be known for its support of our military families and to also be known for being a clean, well balanced community. I hope that this can happen in the future.



HONORABLE MENTION

Emmerson Claire Stephens

Grade 11

Houston Ballet Academy and Keystone National High School

Lakewood resident

Topic: In the future, my dream job is_____

Dear City of Lakewood,

In the future, my dream job is to be a professional ballerina. This has been my passion ever since I was four years old while taking dance classes at the Lakewood YMCA. There have been moments in my life where I have been tested and challenged in pursuing this career. However, the trials that I have faced have molded me into the person I am today. Last November, I sat motionless behind the artistic staff, including Stanton Welch, the artistic director of Houston Ballet. My heart sank and my eyes pooled with tears of disappointment when I heard them whispering my name and saw him and the rest of his staff take their pens and cross off my name in the evening's program of "Level 8 Solo Night." My host mother, Laura, must have noticed it too since she reached over and squeezed my hand as if to assure me that everything would be okay. All I wanted was for my own parents to be with me to help me through what I was feeling. I felt as though at the age of sixteen that my dream as a professional ballerina was shattered. How could this be happening to me is what was going through my mind. I had been training for twelve years for an opportunity to perform a solo in front of an artistic staff such as Houston Ballet. The slip of paper which announced that I would not be performing my variation of "The Sleeping Beauty" due to injury fell out of my program and landed between my feet. I stared at it and cringed at the thought of two-hundred slips littering the ground. What I did not know as I watched my peers perform while I sat in the audience that this would be a

blessing. This event has helped shaped me into the person I am today. As the lights dimmed, my mind took me back to the years of dedication and training that would only lead me to here, an audience member, rather than a dancer on stage.

When I was eleven years old, I walked into The Kirov of Academy of Ballet in Washington D.C. with my suitcases packed with my belongings and a heart filled with anxiety and uncertainty. I did not know what to expect by attending a Russian boarding school for ballet three thousand miles away from home. My previous dance school, the Pacific Northwest Ballet School in Seattle, was all I knew. My parents had supported me in my decision to go to the Kirov for more training hours. I would now be training twenty-two hours per week instead of five hours per week. I had second thoughts about my decision because I would be sacrificing having my family and friends nearby to support me. However, that year at the Kirov I learned to be self-sufficient, and I persevered through the obstacles that presented themselves to me. After the year had passed, I returned home to train with a former principle dancer, Deborah Hadley, who told me she could help me reach my dream of becoming a professional ballerina. I trained with Ms. Hadley for five hours a day for three years, until she felt it was time for me leave to go to Houston Ballet for final polishing and performance opportunities. Training forty hours per week at Houston, I was fortunate to have never sustained an injury until a week before the biggest night of my ballet career. My left leg shook whenever I straightened it. I immediately went to the trainers at Houston Ballet, but they could not diagnose the problem. I was told I could not take classes until I went to see a doctor and was released to train again. I was devastated with the thought of missing “Level 8 Solo Night.” My leg shook because part of my thigh muscle had gone through the fascia. Once the muscle was manipulated back underneath the fascia, I was able to dance again. Unfortunately, I had only one day to practice for the biggest night of my life. I tried to

convince my teachers to allow me to perform, but they all agreed that it would not be in my best interest to go on stage since I had not trained in a week. The day of the performance, I volunteered to fold the programs and to insert a strip of paper inside each one which would inform everyone I would not be dancing. I tried to keep my spirits high for my friends who were excited to be performing, and I made the decision to go to solo night to support them.

I went backstage and congratulated all of my peers on their performances. Feeling quite vulnerable, I cried when my ballet teacher hugged me and told me that it was the right decision not to perform. She said it was not worth chancing a bad performance in front of the company's artistic staff or possibly falling because I was not thoroughly healed. When I left the theater that night I smiled when I scanned the theater floor and saw the two-hundred slips of paper which had informed everyone I would not be performing. My mom was right about them falling out of the programs. I could not wait to tell her so we could both have a giggle about it.

In February I broke a bone in my left foot and I left Houston Ballet to heal at home. I was on crutches for six weeks and I am currently in physical therapy and I have started to train again. It is a blessing that I am on the road of recovery and my goal is to be completely healed so I can attend San Francisco Ballet's summer intensive in July. I was accepted into their summer program after auditioning for them back in January. I have been able to put things into perspective about my injuries. My injuries have become my greatest blessings because they have molded me into a person with more maturity, wisdom, perseverance, and resiliency. I am no longer afraid of failing or of the obstacles that I will face in the future because my spirit will be strengthened with each trial. Helen Keller said, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition

inspired, and success achieved.” I will be successful in life by overcoming the trials and obstacles that will continue to present themselves to me.





ABOUT THE ART MURALS OF LAKEWOOD'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Over 200 art renderings of Lakewood's past, present and future are portrayed by Lakewood students from Hudtloff Middle School, Lochburn Middle School, Woodbrook Middle School, Clover Park High School and Lakes High School instructed by:

Lindsey Bertolini – Hudtloff Middle School
CJ Ebersole – Lochburn Middle School
Margie Scala – Woodbrook Middle School
Frank Casey – Clover Park High School
Tracy Fortune – Lakes High School

Thank you to the teachers who participated in the art mural project. Your hard work and commitment to teaching our students are helping to shape the future of our city. All art murals received for the City's 20th anniversary art mural project are included in this book and regret if there are any errors, omissions and inconsistencies.

A special thanks to the students who portrayed their creativity, originality and vision of Lakewood's past, present and future. Please enjoy the memories and future visions of Lakewood!



Jada Perry – Top Left
Marien Wong – Top Right
Galadriel Johnston – Bottom Left
Charlotte Widman – Bottom Right
Hudtloff Middle School



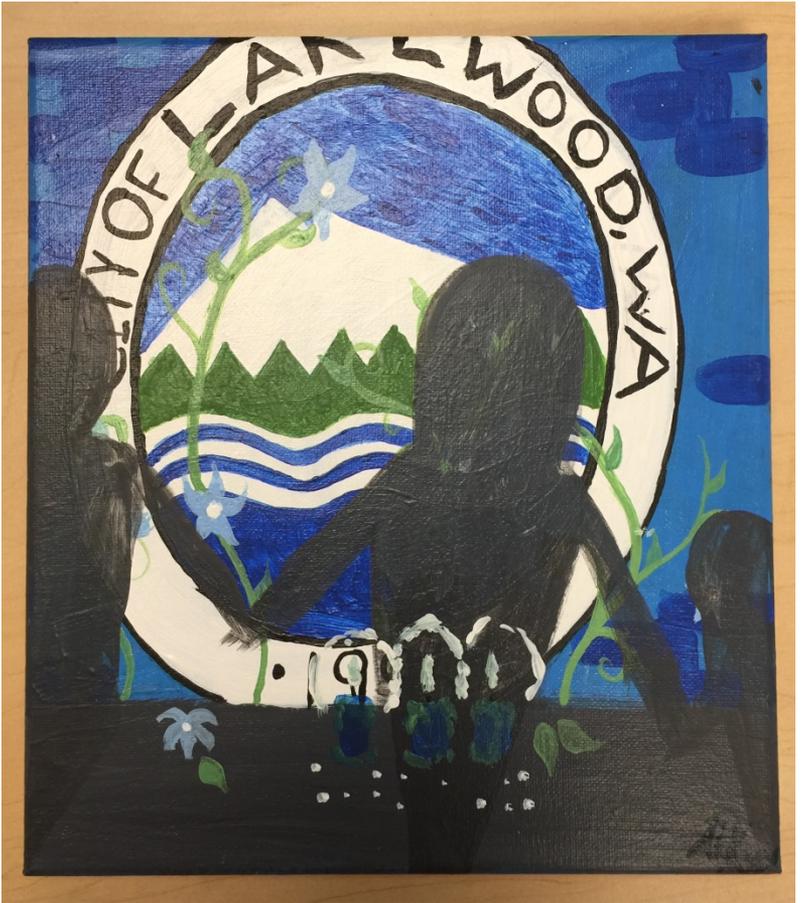
Serina Sok – Top Left
Sammy Zhmora – Top Right
Anthony Avila – Bottom Left
Coraz'on Jackson Rollins – Bottom Right
Hudtloff Middle School



Kevin Medina – Top Left
Victoria Stayton – Top Right
Lexi Randall – Bottom Left
Taylor Ann Wilson – Bottom Right
Hudtloff Middle School



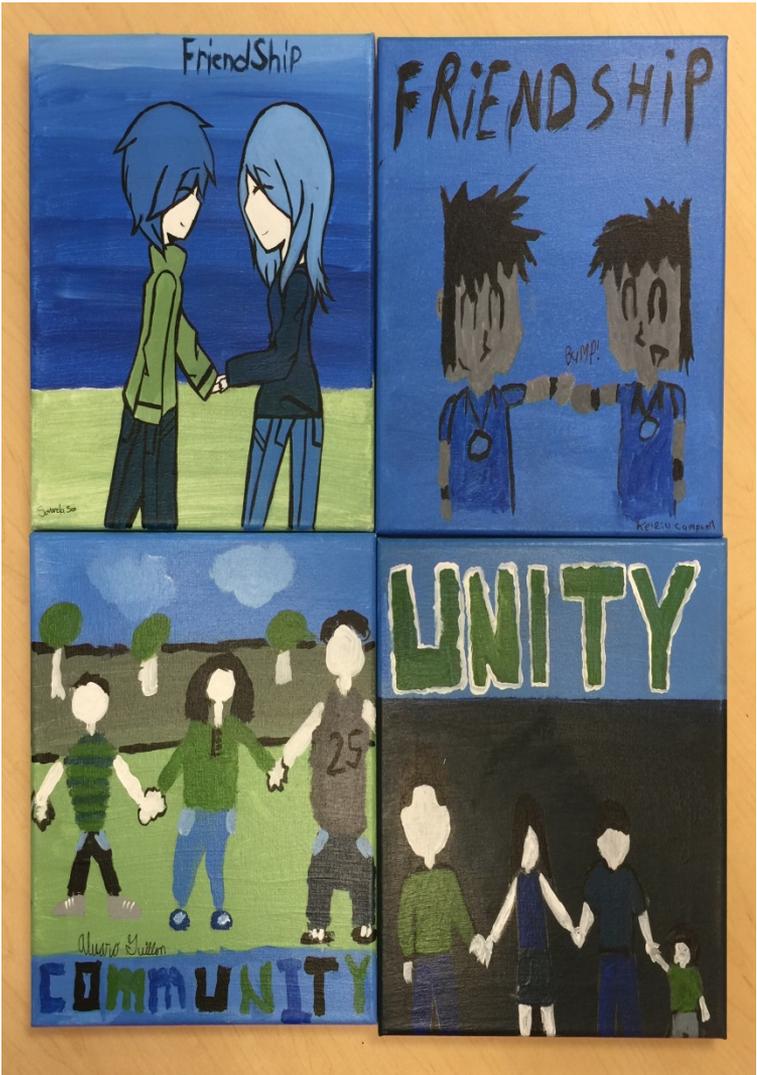
Leighlyn Haller - Top Left
Dennis Wanjika- Top Right
Evie Coulter – Bottom Left
Tristan Zukowski – Bottom Right
Huddloff Middle School



Alyssa Young
Hudtloff Middle School



Lilly Cleem - Top Left
Paul Tii- Top Right
Emma Osborn – Bottom Left
Ramiro Reyes – Bottom Right
Lochburn Middle School



Savanda Son – Top Left
Ke’Rill Campbell – Top Right
Alvaro Guillen – Bottom Left
Ryan Tii – Bottom Right
Lochburn Middle School



Lexani Kawashima – Top Left
Avalon Garcia – Top Right
Allaya Guildford – Bottom Left
Blaire Bobila – Bottom Right
Lochburn Middle School



Kaya Hernandez – Top Left
Troy Roberts – Top Right
Ayden Hess – Botttom Left
Seiene Santana –Bottom Right
Lochburn Middle School



Amari J. Edwards, Jose J. Farias Madrigal, Cerena D. Giles, David C. Hansen, Maybelis Y. Herrera, Kody M. Radice, Gabriela J. Rodriguez-Foor, Larson E. Rojic, Madison N. Sowards, Jacob T. St. John, David J. Tate, Darius E. Thomas, Daniela P. Villaverde, Matthew C. Ward, Jd Charles B. William, Aiyza N. Williams, Tulensa Tulensa, Molly Perras, Maddeline O. Perras, Alise M. Pedrola **Woodbrook Middle School**



Morgan Brandfors Tatiyana Harges
Janet Garcia Nysalea Hall
Clover Park High School



Clark Meldrum Kaetlen Davis
Clover Park High School



Jay Wiszniewski
Clover Park High School



Brandon Yelvington Joseph Green
Aislinn Monie Hayley Brandshaw
Clover Park High School



Sun Moon Willis Smith Lexi Brown
Clover Park High School



Kamri Patrick Ana Muro-Velazquez
Rosendo Yaque Sanchez Kyanna Labrada
Clover Park High School



Symphanie Paulson Kai Blackard Dmytro Misiura
Clover Park High School



Serenity Freeman Shalon Franklin

Ramsey Roberts

Clover Park High School



Stephany Lemus Jorge Jimenez Gabriel Coria Jose de
Lazaro Gerardo Pedro Flores
Clover Park High School



Shannen Imasa Matthew Quichocho
Ulises Zamora
Clover Park High School



Stephany Lemus Jorge Jimenez
Gabriel Coria Jose de Lazaro Gerardo Pedro Flores
Clover Park High School



Josseline Benitez James Worrell Vanessa Skeete
Clover Park High School



Willow Gregory Lake Wilson
Tajanea Harris Owen Tauiliili
Clover Park High School



Tre'von Smith Ayana Rice Halia Kaina Kyle Stewart
Clover Park High School



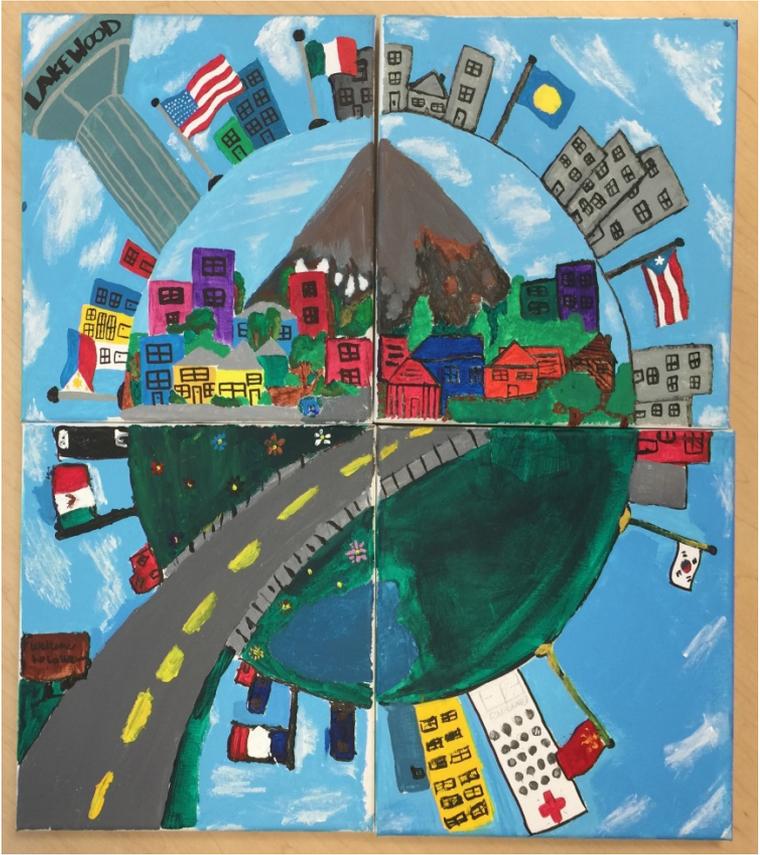
Robert Haugtvedt Andy Lopez Salecia Brown
Clover Park High School



Ivan Strugaru Vitalii Strugaru
Rodika Strugaru Davyd Strugaru
Clover Park High School



Brooklynne Douglas Shasha Courtright
Austin Huffstutter David Bluel
Clover Park High School



Asmeralda McGandhi Ernesto Canales
Cierra Schaffner Jorge Martinez
Clover Park High School



Luis Velazquez Magof Topasna
Maleek Murphy Lauren Brown-Lowry
Clover Park High School



Jataj'Ma Turner Anthony Forwalker Kayla Pruitt
Clover Park High School



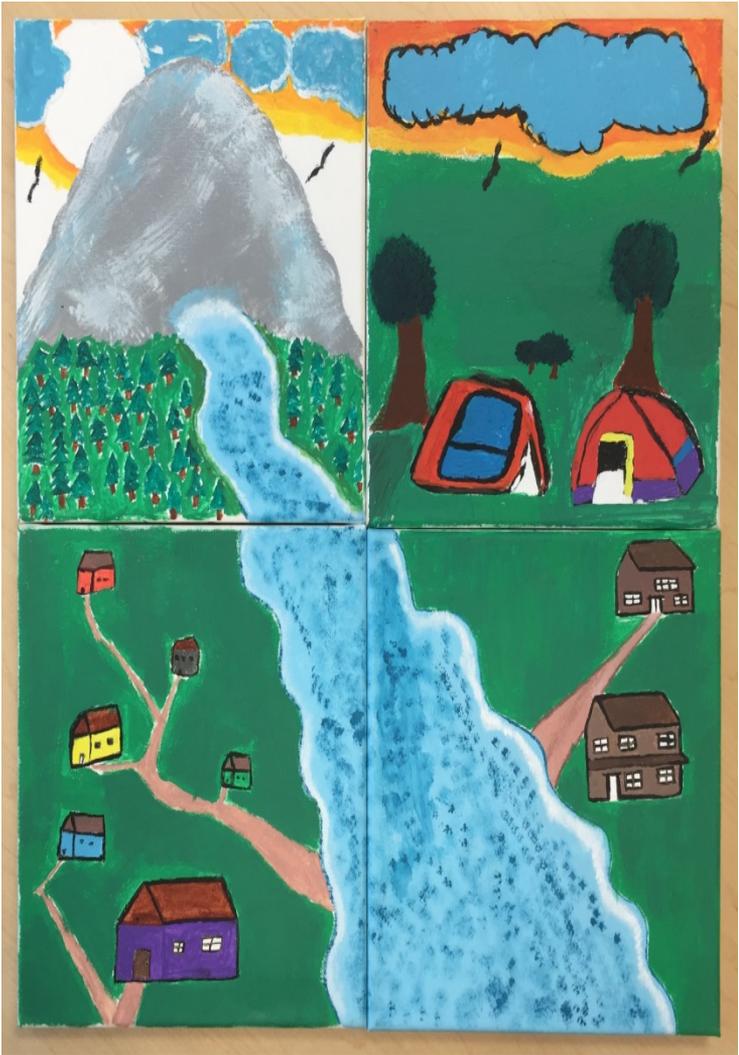
Robert Shuck Tayla Atwell
Austin Webb Berenice Jimenez-Gutierrez
Clover Park High School



Carolos Alvarez David Claudio
Anna Carter Keith Maguire-Vaughn
Clover Park High School



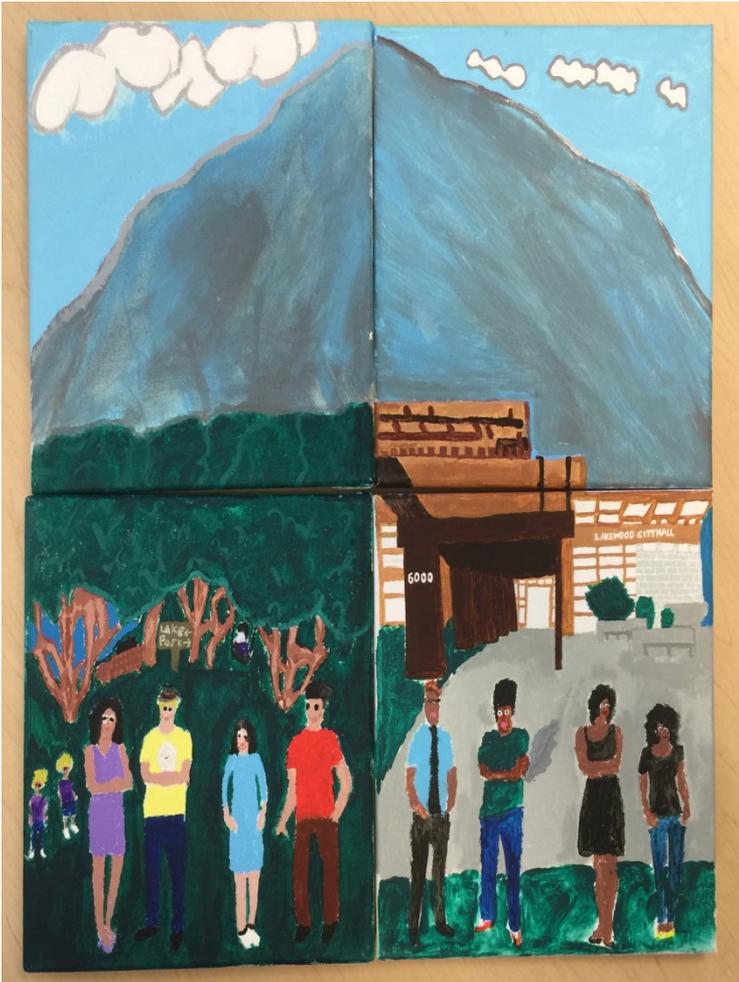
Nichole Victoria Atizon Hannah Mohr
Yvonne Gonzalez-Mejia Omar Mendoza-Cruz
Clover Park High School



Fernanda Cruz Douglas Monterroso Kevin Del Cid
Samantha Gonzalez-Martinez Rey Molina
Clover Park High School



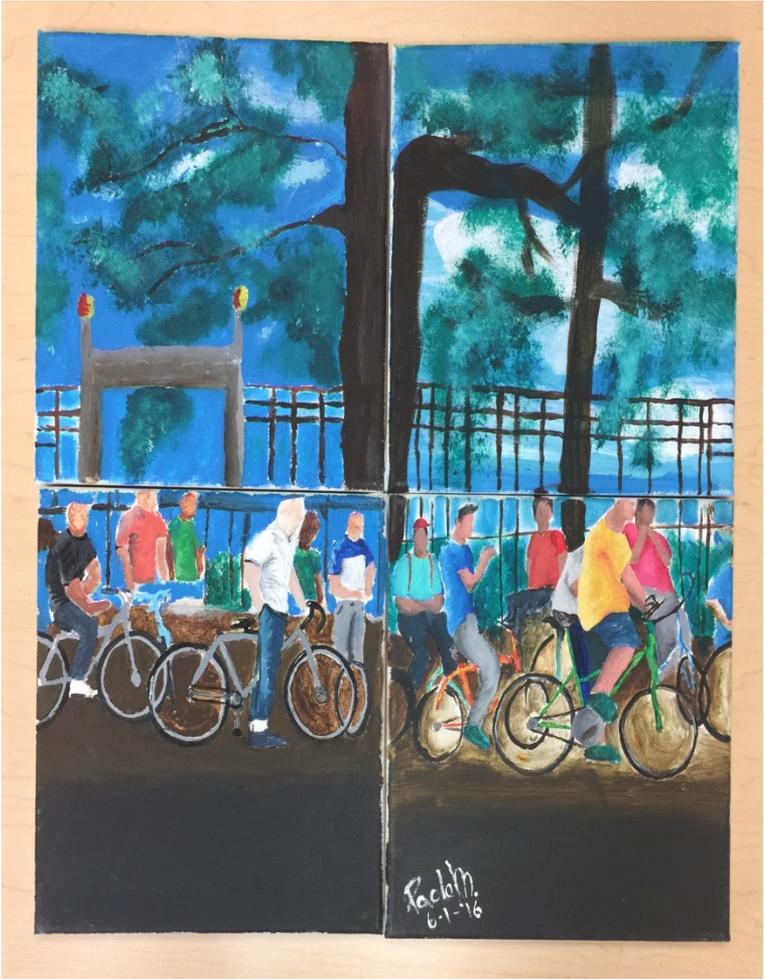
Dexter Agony Ben Bernardo
Clover Park High School



Joy Hohn Wendi Gomez
Anthony Santos Juan Diaz Salas
Clover Park High School



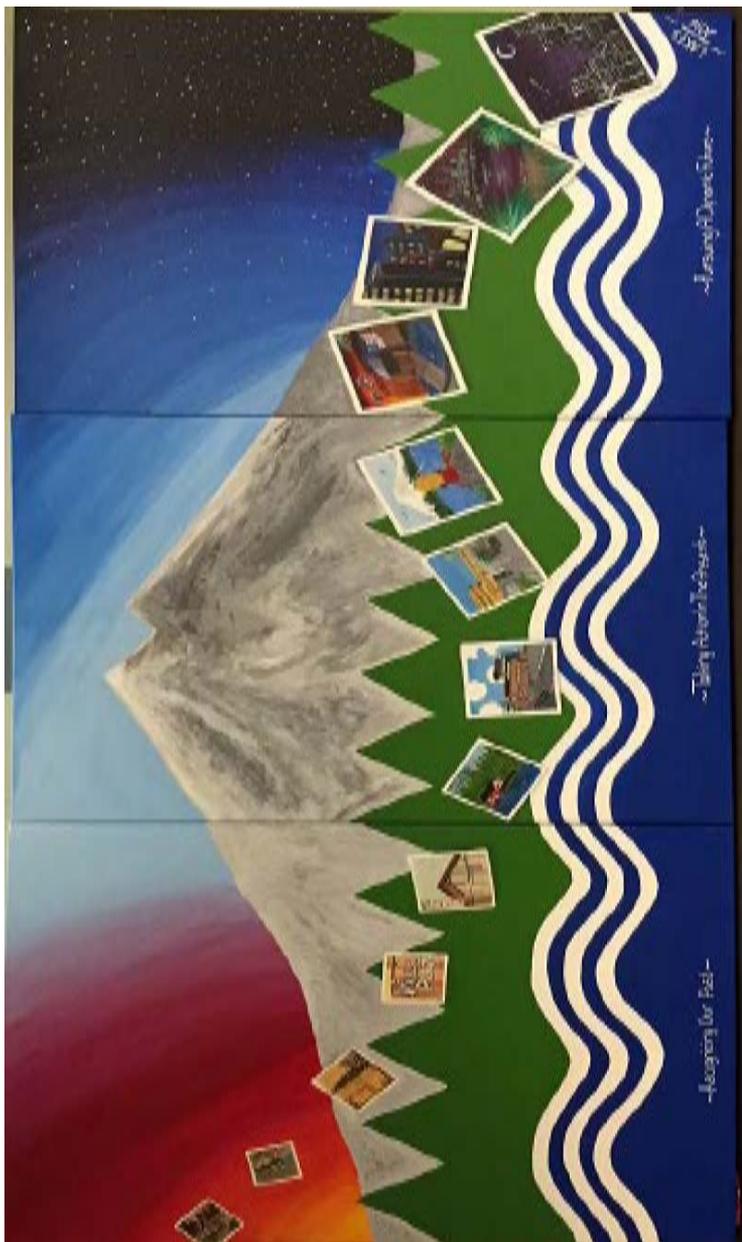
Ethan Sarolu Banesa Ramos
Clover Park High School



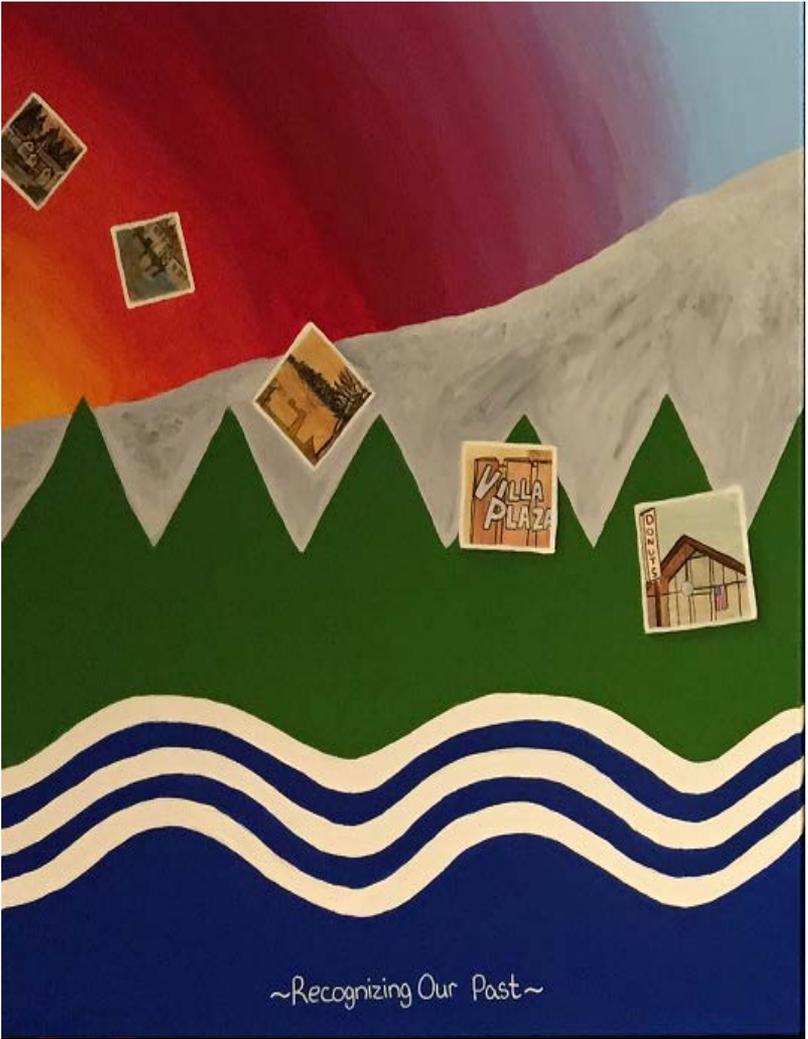
Caleb Garibay Matias Velasquez Gary Vallecillo
Paolo Monterroso
Clover Park High School



Adam Domingues – Top Left
Max Escobida - Top Right
Cassady Eng – Bottom Left
Katie Lutton – Bottom Right
Lakes High School

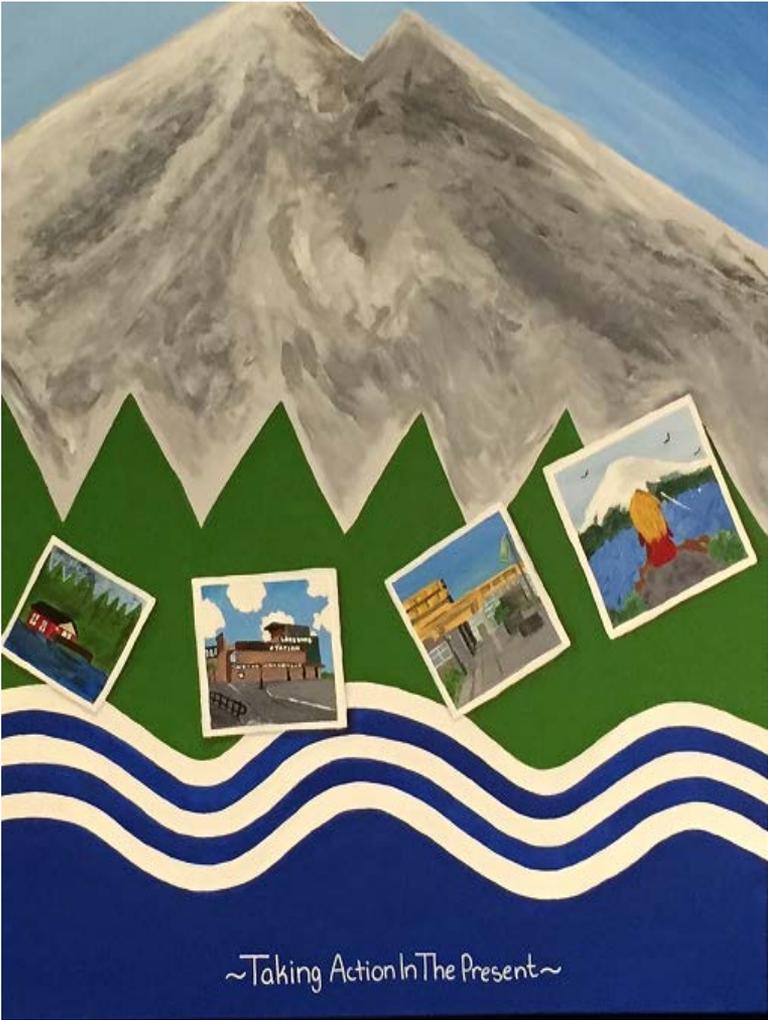


Jay Brown Sarah Trichel—Recognizing Our Past
Ali Garside Haeun Lee Haley Connell—Taking Action In the Present
Tori Suzik Anna L.—Pursuing A Dynamic Future
Lakes High School



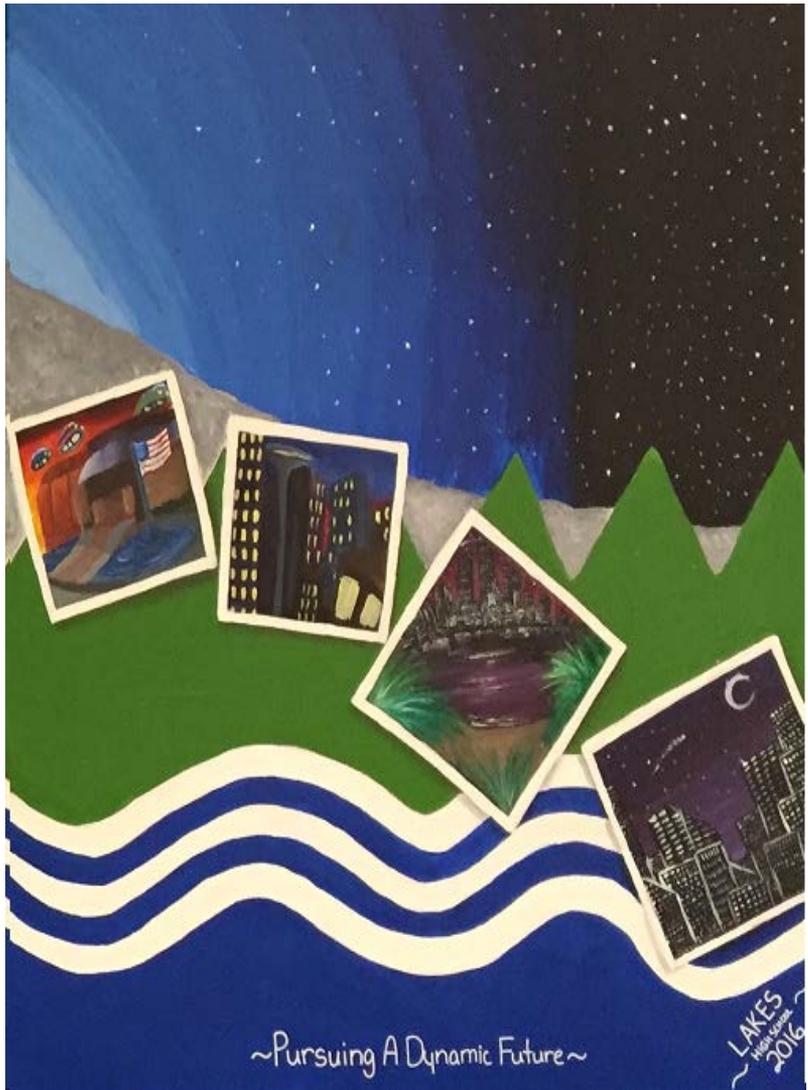
Jay Brown Sarah Trichel—Recognizing Our Past
Lakes High School

Smaller paintings (left to right): Thornewood Castle, Oaks Pavilion, Lake Scene, Villa Plaza and Original House of Donuts



Ali Garside Haeun Lee Haley Connell–Taking Action In the Present
Lakes High School

Smaller paintings (left to right): Lake Scene, Lakewood Station, Lakewood City Hall, Lake Scene



Tori Suzik Anna L.–Pursuing A Dynamic Future
Lakes High School

Smaller paintings (left to right): Lakewood Towne Center,
Futuristic City, Futuristic City, Futuristic City



Jada Kosche-Daley – Top Left
Elana Pierce – Top Right
Genesis Belding – Bottom
Lakes High School