

NEWS RELEASE
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Bristol, New Hampshire Teen Wins National Student Art Contest

Teen's Artwork is Displayed on Limited-Edition Beverage Label



Bristol high school student Elora Scimone is one of two winners of Torani's national Art for Kids label design contest. This fall, Torani Sugar Free French Vanilla syrup will sport a new, limited-edition art label designed by Scimone, a member of the Newfound Regional High School's Art Club. The 16-year-old's artwork was selected from hundreds of entries submitted by afterschool students around the country, and her work will be celebrated at a pizza and Italian soda party sponsored by Torani at the afterschool program today.

Torani, the number one specialty syrup in North America, will donate five percent of sales of Torani Sugar Free French Vanilla and Torani Raspberry with limited edition labels from September through December to the Afterschool Alliance. This is the eighth year that Torani has sponsored the Art for Kids contest in support of afterschool. The other winner this year is from a California afterschool program; Benny Tran designed the label for Torani Raspberry syrup.

"Year after year we are so impressed by the fantastic art created by youth in afterschool programs," said Lisa Lucheta, Torani principal and family-owner. "Torani has a long history of bringing splashes of color and creativity into people's everyday lives. We are thrilled that our partnership with the Afterschool Alliance and the Art for Kids contest allows us to brighten many more lives, and helps young people throughout the country participate in exciting, colorful experiences after the school day ends."

"We have been saddened to see so many schools cut back on the arts and limit creative opportunities for students as budgets have tightened. Afterschool programs have always embraced the arts, often supplementing or even replacing arts programs in schools," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "Sadly, recent cuts have meant that, in many school systems like in Bristol, afterschool programs are one of the few outlets left to nurture the creative talents of students. That is why we are especially happy to be able to partner with Torani on Art for Kids. These colorful labels provide a perfect way to showcase the talent nurtured in afterschool programs. This contest and Torani's remarkable generosity support afterschool programs that keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and help working families."

Due to budget cuts, some art classes have been cut at Newfound Regional High School for the 2012-2013 school year. Since the Art Club is funded through a separate funding stream, the afterschool program has been able to continue to offer high-quality art instruction.

Scimone said that participating in Art Club was the first time since elementary school that she had been involved with an afterschool program. She praised the Art Club's flexibility – allowing high school students to drop in at will. She said that she was surprised when she heard she had won the national contest. "I couldn't wait to get home to tell my parents that I won the contest. I knew they would be excited too!"

Before participating in Art Club, Scimone was "bored a lot" after school. She wasn't old enough to have a job, so would go home alone. "Art Club gives me something productive to do with my time. I'm not just sitting at home. It helps me get help in furthering my art skills," she added.

Afterschool programs at Newfound Regional High School serve approximately 300 of the 430 students each year, offering tutoring and homework help, arts and crafts enrichment, computer courses, outing, movie and film, zumba, auto mechanics, origami, robotics, anime, musical instrument making, cooking, service learning and college and teen trips and, much more.

"When Elora first began attending Art Club she was shy and only attended infrequently, but thanks to the confidence she's gained from participating in Art Club and in a week-long summer art program, Elora is all over the art room, interacting with other students and learning new skills," said Art Club leader Laura Hutchins. "Art Club has really brought Elora out of her shell."

Torani's Art for Kids contest supports afterschool programs, which offer young people safe, enriching, fun and engaging places to spend their afternoons. Youth in afterschool programs have been shown to perform better in school and have greater expectations for the future, while children who are unsupervised in the afternoons are at greater risk of becoming involved with crime, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy.

Afterschool programs are under intense pressure. The Afterschool Alliance's *Uncertain Times* survey project, the only research effort to examine how the economy affects afterschool programs, found that nearly two in five afterschool programs (39 percent) report that their budgets are in worse shape today than at the height of the recession in 2008. More than three in five afterschool programs (62 percent) report that their funding is down "a little or a lot" from three years ago. Even in communities where local economies and program funding are faring better, program leaders express significant concern about their financial outlook and their inability to reach all children who need afterschool.

Research conducted for the Afterschool Alliance has shown that only 16 percent of New Hampshire's kindergarten to 12th grade students are in afterschool programs, while six percent of elementary, 35 percent of middle and 63 percent of high school children are responsible for taking care of themselves after school.

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The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at www.afterschoolalliance.org

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