QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Where Our Future Begins

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

February 24, 2026

KIHS STUDENTS EARN STATEWIDE SWEEP AT DISABILITIES DAY ART AWARDS

Mrs. Schulte, Elliana, Zoe, Addison & Principal Harding

KENT ISLAND, MD - Queen Anne's County Public Schools (QACPS) proudly celebrates an extraordinary achievement by Kent Island High School art students, who earned a near clean sweep of statewide honors at The Arc of Maryland's "Together We're Better" Art Awards at Disabilities Day at the Legislature this year in Annapolis. Their powerful artwork, created in support of inclusion and awareness, captured **1st place, 2nd place, a 3rd-place tie**, and multiple honorable mentions at the high school level.

Click here to view the Awards Ceremony Video on YouTube.

Award recipients include:

- **1st Place:** Zoe Mann (Grade 11)
- **2nd Place:** Addison Payne (Grade 9)
- **3rd Place Tie:** Elliana Dandy (Grade 10)

- **Honorable Mentions:** Sara Capriles (Grade 9) and Gracie Hartlove (Grade 12)

Judges noted the exceptional quality of submissions statewide this year, highlighting the creativity, empathy, and artistic voice demonstrated by these students.

Joining the celebration from QACPS were **Andrea Schulte**, Art Department Chair at Kent Island High School; **Dan Harding**, Principal of Kent Island High School; and **Michael Bell**, Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts for QACPS. Their presence reflected the district's continued commitment to both arts education and inclusive community partnerships.

Schulte, a former Arc Maryland statewide Inclusion Award recipient and **QACPS 2023 Teacher of the Year**, brings a deeply personal perspective to this work. After experiencing profound hearing loss, she continues to advocate for accessibility and inclusion while inspiring students through her teaching and leadership.

Bell, a longtime champion of the autism community, also shares a personal connection to the mission of Disabilities Day. Harding — a Maryland Fine Arts Administrator Award recipient with a background in special education — has similarly championed opportunities that connect the arts, student voice, and inclusive practices.

"These students used art not just to create images, but to tell meaningful stories," Bell noted. "Their success reflects not only talent, but empathy, awareness, and the power of arts education to connect communities. The recognition Mrs. Schulte shares with the entire KIHS community is truly heartwarming."

Community Invitation — ArtScene 2026

View these award-winning works, along with copies of the Arc Maryland coloring book featuring selected artwork, at:

ArtScene 2026
April 30, 2026 | 5:00–8:00 PM
Kent Island High School

The annual ***ArtScene*** K–12 student exhibition highlights achievement across visual and performing arts throughout Queen Anne's County and serves as a celebration of creativity, student voice, and community connection. Also look for a special April episode of ***ArtScene | The Podcast*** spotlighting a national award-winning student artist with their art teacher.

QACPS congratulates these outstanding students, their families, and educators for representing the district with distinction, compassion, and pride.