

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STUDENTS FROM MARYLAND SCHOOLS WIN  
TOGETHER WE'RE BETTER CONTEST**

Students from elementary, middle and high schools in Maryland won in the eighth annual Together We're Better Poster and Essay Contest conducted by The Arc of Maryland in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, and the Maryland Department of Disabilities. The contest, held in conjunction with National Inclusive School Week, celebrates the diverse abilities of all students and highlights the importance of providing equal opportunities for children with disabilities. The winners will be recognized at a special Awards Reception on February 17, 2008 from 6:00 - 8:00 pm in Annapolis, MD.

The contest includes two levels: Class Poster and Class Poem categories for Elementary Schools and Essay, Art and Video categories for Middle and High School students which are judged separately. The posters and poems were judged a class project while the essays, art projects and videos were individual submissions. Awards were given in the following categories:

Elementary Class Poster winners include: First Place, Hall's Cross Roads Elementary School, Mrs. Tedra Harris's Kindergarten Class (Harford County); Second Place (tie), Pinewood Elementary School, Ms. Briget Koch's Fourth Grade Class (Baltimore County); Second Place (tie) Cedar Lane/Fulton Schools, Ms. Mary Lou Reynolds's and Ms. Nicole Stanleigh's Music Class (Howard County); and Third Place, Joppatowne Elementary, Ms. Sharon Pardew's Fifth Grade Class (Harford County).

Elementary Class Poem winners include: First Place, Westover Elementary School, Ms. Rosa Doxtater's Kindergarten Class (Montgomery County); Second Place, Westover Elementary School, Ms. Deborah Eskenazi's Fourth Grade Class (Montgomery County); Third Place, Summit Hall Elementary School, Ms. Gretchen Beckman's Fifth Grade Class (Montgomery County), and Honorable Mention, Shady Side Elementary School, Mrs. Tremel's and Mrs. Keenan's Fifth Grade Class (Anne Arundel County).

Middle School Essay winners include: First Place, Samantha Krumbhaar, George Fox Middle School (Anne Arundel County); and Second Place, Catherine Premraj, Kenmoor Middle School (Prince George's County).

The High School Art winner was Alyssa Fowler, Tuscarora High School (Frederick County).

High School Essay winners included: First Place, Christina Alane Davis, Gwynn Park High School (Prince George's County); Second Place, Kevin Hudson, Century High

School (Carroll County); and Third Place, Jennifer Kuo, Thomas S. Wootton High School (Montgomery County).

Winning entries will be on display in at the Award Reception in February. You will also be able to view the winning posters, poems, videos and essays by visiting [www.thearcmd.org/programs/education\\_advocacy.html](http://www.thearcmd.org/programs/education_advocacy.html). Each winner will receive a House or Senate Citation. Winning classes will be treated to a class party and their teacher will receive a gift certification. Middle and High School winners receive cash awards or gift cards.

Together We're Better Contest is sponsored each year by The Arc of Maryland in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, and the Maryland Department of Disabilities with a call for entries each fall. The program has been a catalyst for similar statewide campaigns in states such as Pennsylvania and Louisiana. For more information on the annual program, visit [www.thearcmd.org](http://www.thearcmd.org) or contact The Arc of Maryland toll-free at 1-888-272-3449. For more information on National Inclusive School Week, visit [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org).

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*The Arc of Maryland is the leading statewide organization dedicated to improving the rights and quality of life of persons with cognitive and developmental disabilities. We join with our ten local chapters in Maryland and The Arc of the United States to promote local, state and national opportunities for persons with disabilities. For general information or questions, contact The Arc at 800-860-0791 or visit [www.TheArcMD.org](http://www.TheArcMD.org).*