

## Young Artists selected for Okeechobee Main Street's First Mural Project.

Judging of the Okeechobee Main Street's Young Artist Mural Contest has been completed. Ten young local artists out of 35 entries were selected to participate in the painting of Okeechobee Main Street's First Mural Project. First place in the competition went to Taneisha Mitchell, 14; second place went to Gabrielle Velie, 19; and Third place went to Rachel Muros, 14. Special merit awards went Brianna Nunez, 10; Lindsay Crum, 14; Jack Radebaugh, 11; Nick Valcaniant, 10; Rocky Huddleston, 11; Hannah Sadler, 10; and Donny Sheldon, 10. All 10 artists will work directly on the mural under the direction of Bridgette Waldau and other professional artists. Prizes and awards will also be given to all selected artists at the Mural Presentation Program.

Bridgette Waldau, Director of the Mural and Visual Arts Committee of Okeechobee Main Street, was very pleased with the response to the contest. Bridgette and Lonnie Kirsh judged all the art. The judges did not know the identity of the artists during the judging process. The Mural and Visual Arts Committee wanted to ensure all artists that the judging would be impartial. All artists were required to submit a portfolio of their work, an artist biography, and artist statements on each piece of art.

Bridgette stated that the judging process was difficult as all the young artists showed talent. Both judges were impressed to see that all the artist's statements were very well thought out and showed the love they have for the arts. Bridgette is looking forward to the starting the mural and working with all the young artists.

The location of the first mural will be on Haynes and Susan Williams office building located at 206 North Parrott Avenue. The historical theme is that of a cattle drive which went though the main street of Okeechobee back in the late 1930's. At age 7, Haynes Williams took part in the cattle drive along side of his grandfather. Haynes, riding his shetland pony, remembers how long and hard the cattle drive was. Okeechobee Main Street is grateful to the Williams for their support in getting the mural program started. The mural process is slated to start in February.

### Winning artists artwork:

#### First Place: Taneishi Mitchell, age 14

**Art title:** *Different* (media - Pencil)

**Artist Statement:** "I enjoy drawing in my spare time. Different designs and colors inspire me to create art of my own."

**Statement on art (*Different*):** "Shading is the main focus of this artwork.

From dark to light I tried to describe with art how everything is so "Different".

#### Second Place: Gabrielle Velie, age 19

**Art Title:** *Shine on Me* (media - Pencil & Water color)

**Artist Statement:** "My aunt could paint anything! I would watch her for hours. I loved her work and so I started it."

**Statement on art (*Shine on Me*):** "Last November I went to South America. I saw so many awesome things there. But this one church was breathtaking so I started to draw it."

#### Third Place: Rachel Muros, age 14

**Art Title:** *Morgan or Avril?* (media- Pencil, Crayon, oil pastel)

**Artist Statement:** "It (art) lets me express myself. I have been doing art since I was little. Life itself inspires me and especially my Uncle Drew."

**Statement on art (*Morgan or Avril?*)** "I find drawing faces different ways interesting. My friend Morgan is one of my favorite subjects, she also looks so much like Avri"