***Carmel High School Student Mira Malcolm's painting, "Nature's Peace" receives top honor***

**Washington, DC –** Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) today announced that Carmel High School student, Mira Malcolm, is the winner of the 2011 Congressional Art Competition, An Artistic Discovery. The winning painting, "Nature's Peace", will be displayed in the halls of the Capitol along with winning art from across the country.

"I want to congratulate Mira Malcolm and all the participants for engaging their imaginations and displaying their great artistic talents," said Congressman Sam Farr. "Every year this competition reminds us of the rich artistic culture and talent that continues to thrive on the Central Coast. The arts are integral part of our nation's cultural fabric, and I am encouraged that our area's youth stand eager and ready to paint, draw and sculpt their part."

Mira Malcolm will travel to Washington, D.C., courtesy of Southwest Airlines, to be honored at a Congressional Reception. Mira will also receive a $1500 renewable scholarship from the Savannah College of Art and Design.

San Benito High School student, Diana Fonseca was named the 2nd place winner with her art piece "The Old Farmer". Diana's artwork will be prominently displayed in Congressman Farr's Washington, D.C. Office. Everett Alvarez High School student, Alicia Rojas, was named the third place winner, with her artwork "In Response to Wagner". Alicia's art will be displayed in Mr. Farr's Salinas office.

The Congressional Art Competition was open to all local high school students in the 17th Congressional District, by submitting up to three pieces of original student artwork. This year, a total of 20 entries were submitted from 10 schools in the area.

The Artistic Discovery competition encourages and recognizes the rich artistic talents of young Americans. Students are allowed to submit various styles and types of art, ranging from paintings and drawings to photography and mixed media pieces. The winners are determined using criteria based on originality, skill of execution, excellence in use of materials and conceptual strength of the project.

The Congressional Art Competition began in 1982 to provide an opportunity for members of Congress to encourage and recognize the artistic talents of their young constituents. Since then, over 650,000 high school students have been involved with the nation-wide competition.

Last year, Georgiana Bruce Kirby Preparatory School student from Santa Cruz, Hanna Seltz, was awarded first place for her entry, titled “Buejuv, Zanzibar”. To view last year winning painting visit, http://goo.gl/DsJ1N .

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