Galveston, TX - Judging for the 2012 Congressional Art Competition: An Artistic Discovery took place last week in Friendswood. High School students from across the 10 counties encompassing the 14th Congressional district participated in the competition.

The winning piece was created by Eric Pennington, an Angleton High School 11th grade student. His art work, titled "Midnight Rendezvous," portrayed a young girl embracing her horse. He used prisma color pencils to create the piece.

Eric is the son of Brett and Debbie Pennington of Angleton. His art teacher is Kim Caskey. Eric's art work will be on display in the Capitol Building Tunnel in Washington D.C. for one year. He will also receive two round trip plane tickets, provided by Southwest Airlines, to attend the ribbon cutting/opening ceremonies of the art exhibit in Washington D.C., and a scholarship to the Savannah College of Art and Design.

While only one overall winner could be chosen to represent the 14th District, the judges had a few favorites that we also wanted to recognize.

First runner up: Lydia Batcheldes; 12th grade; Manvel High School; Teacher: Lisa Savage

Judge's Favorite: Amy Callaway; 11th grade; Angleton High School; Teacher: Kim Caskey

Judge's Favorite: Omar Llanas; 11th grade; Dickinson High School; Teacher: Colleen Steblein

Judge's Favorite: Jason Peltier; 10th grade; Angleton High School; Teacher: Kim Caskey

The judges for this year's competition were, Saralene Tapley, an accomplished artist and art instructor at Alvin Community College; Ruby Allen, a local accomplished artist; Arden Stone, president of S & S Consulting; Jackie Liddell, an art instructor at the University of Houston Clear

Lake and Jeffrey Bowen, an art appreciation instructor at the University of Houston Clear Lake.

Congressman Paul was pleased with the increase in student participation this year, along with the talent of local students.

"We have some extremely talented students in our district," said Congressman Paul. "I know the judges had a difficult time choosing just one overall winner," he said. "My staff and I would like to thank all who helped with the Congressional Art Competition this year. It takes experienced and supportive teachers, parents and community members to help these young artists flourish," Paul said.