

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2023

STARK JFS' HEART GALLERY TO OPEN AT CANTON FIRST FRIDAY ON NOV. 3

Canton, Ohio - Stark County Job & Family Services is excited to announce that the 2023 Heart Gallery will open to the public during Canton First Friday on November 3, 2023 at Patina Arts Centre, 324 Cleveland NW, Canton, Ohio 44702. The Heart Gallery is an art exhibition that pairs local artists with children waiting to be adopted from foster care, to create a series of special portraits.

This year's exhibition will be on display from 5 to 9 p.m. and will feature ten youth portrayed by eight artists. The community is invited to attend the opening and learn more about foster care and adoption in Stark County. Staff from Stark JFS' Division of Children Services will be available to answer questions during the event. Portraits on display will include:

- **Ahna**, by Madison Miller. Ahna is a five-year-old whose favorite colors are pink and purple. She enjoys playing outside, eating macaroni and cheese, and snacking on candy.
- **Alexander and Jaramiah**, by Kat Francis. Alexander and Jaramiah are brothers who have a lot in common - they both like basketball, superheroes, and math class. They also both agree that families should do fun activities together, like shop at Five Below, travel to Disney World, and go out for dinner.
- **Brendon**, by Alexa Polinori. Brendon describes himself with two words: awesome and smart. His favorite activities are swimming, running, and swinging at the playground.
- **Coltyn**, by Kaley Weaver. Coltyn enjoys driving his remote-controlled car, building Legos, and playing board games, especially Uno. When he thinks about family, he imagines people who love and care about each other.
- **Hayli**, by David Sherrill. Hayli is a talkative and outgoing preteen. She loves fashion, playing soccer, watching Stranger Things, and performing TikTok dances.
- **Isaac**, by Heather Bullach. Isaac is a teenager who likes to have fun and make people laugh. He enjoys watching and playing sports, especially football.
- **Jennifer and Jamespeter**, by Tim Carmany. Jennifer is interested in writing, singing, and dancing. She has participated in school plays and plans to write her own book. Jamespeter likes to play football and basketball. His favorite subject in school is Science.
- **Kylie**, by William Keomany. Kylie is a two-year-old with special needs. Her smiles are contagious and when she laughs, she kicks her legs into the air like a dancer. Kylie loves Minnie Mouse, dogs, and cartoons.

After November 3, the Heart Gallery will travel to Canton Museum of Art from November 21 to December 10, The Little Art Gallery at North Canton Public Library from December 15 to January 2, and Massillon Museum from January 9 to February 11.

The opening date of the Heart Gallery coincides with National Adoption Awareness Month in November, a time dedicated to bringing attention to the need for adoptive families in our community. Stark County currently has 500 children living in the foster care system. Nearly a quarter of these youth are in permanent custody and eligible for adoption.

Residents who are interested in becoming a foster and adoptive parent can take the next step by registering for an information meeting. Please call 330-451-8789 or email Jennifer.Loomis@jfs.ohio.gov. Visit StarkJFS.org for additional information about foster care and adoption.



Isaac, by Heather Bullach.



Ahna, by Madison Miller.