

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – CORRECTED VERSION

October 18, 2024

STARK JFS' HEART GALLERY TO OPEN AT MALONE UNIVERSITY ON NOV. 4

Canton, Ohio - Stark County Job & Family Services is excited to announce the opening of the 2024 Heart Gallery with a free public reception on Monday, Nov. 4, 2024 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Malone Art Gallery in the Johnson Center, Malone University, 2600 Cleveland Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44709. 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.

The community is invited to attend the public reception to enjoy refreshments, view the outstanding artwork, mingle with artists, and learn more about foster care and adoption in Stark County. Staff from the Division of Children Services will be on-hand to answer questions during the event.

The Heart Gallery is presented during the month of November to coincide with National Adoption Awareness Month, 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 with nearly a quarter who are in permanent custody and eligible for adoption.

The exhibition will be on display at the Malone Art Gallery from Nov. 4 through Dec. 13. It will then travel to the Canton Museum of Art from Dec. 20 to Jan. 10, Massillon Museum from Jan. 25 to Feb. 16, and The Little Art Gallery at North Canton Public Library from March 24 to April 11.

This year's Heart Gallery features the following youth and artists:



Ronald, by Kat Francis.

- **Aiden, by Andrew Wells.** Aiden is a sweet and creative 9-year-old. He enjoys art, especially using paper and cardboard to draw and create robots, pets, and vehicles. Aiden's other favorite activities include building with Legos and playing games on his tablet. Artist Andrew Wells (Wavy_Scribbles_Art on Instagram) has always had a deep passion for art. He is a proud graduate of Alliance High School, where he was fortunate to have amazing teachers who inspired him to attend the Columbus College of Art and Design. Andrew strives to make art that people enjoy visually and emotionally.
- **Angel, by Heather Bullach.** Angel is a middle-schooler who describes herself as happy and creative. In her spare time, she likes to play video games, listen to music (especially Justin Bieber), take walks, and play guitar. She is also interested in fashion and would love to design dresses when she grows up. Artist Heather Bullach (HeatherBullach.com) is a portrait and landscape painter who works in oils. She is inspired by her Ohio surroundings and frequent visits to Charleston, SC. Heather earned her Bachelor of Arts (BA) from Malone University.



Cameron and Camri, by Maureen Magner-Sylak.

- **Cameron and Camri, by Maureen Magner-Sylak.** Cameron and Camri describe being part of a family as “a special thing” and look forward to being part of family activities. Cameron is social, energetic, and describes himself as helpful. Camri loves dancing, swimming, and playing with Barbie dolls. Artist Maureen Magner-Sylak

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(SylakFineArts.com) is a Cleveland-based landscape and portrait painter whose work reconciles realism with imagination and heart. The subjects of her paintings are grounded in who and what she loves about life.

- **Croy, by Tim Carmany.** Croy is an energetic 3-year-old who is always on the go! He enjoys swimming, coloring, painting, and traveling. When he's not doing something active, you can find him watching Paw Patrol, Miss Rachel, or Toy Story. Artist Tim Carmany (TimCarmany.com) specializes in reverse glass paintings and largescale murals. In 2013, he founded The Hub Art Factory, a non-profit arts organization located in Canton's Arts District at 336 6th St. NW.
- **De'Vonte, by Kaley Weaver.** De'Vonte is a very good runner who has dreams of running track in the Olympics. He likes all kinds of sports and says one of the most amazing things he's ever done was attend a Cleveland Cavs basketball game! Artist Kaley Weaver is based in Canton, OH. In 2021, she earned her bachelor's degree in art education with a minor in painting from Kent State University.
- **Khloe, by David Sherrill.** Khloe is a funny and fearless middle-schooler who enjoys socializing, doing hair, and throwing the frisbee with the dog. Her perfect day would be spent riding roller coasters at Cedar Point or visiting the water park at Kalahari. Artist David Sherrill (ArrowHeadGoods.com) creates art full of fun and wonder. He uses found objects and vintage art pieces to create something new. David and his wife are the owners of Arrowhead Vintage and Handmade Goods in downtown Canton.
- **Kylie, by Madison Miller.** Kylie is a two-year-old with special needs who loves Minnie Mouse and cartoons. Her smiles are contagious and when she laughs, she kicks her legs into the air like a dancer. Artist Madison Miller is an arts educator. She is a graduate of Kent State University and holds a certification in The Impact of Trauma on Learning from the Lesley Institute.
- **Ronald, by Kat Francis.** Ronald is curious about everything! He loves to play with toys, especially Legos and dinosaurs. Some of his favorite activities include swimming, fishing, playing video games, going to the trampoline park, and hanging out with his older foster brother. Artist Kat Francis (KatFrancis.com) works in contemporary mixed media and collage. She has a passion for drawing and fascination with her surroundings and social history. Kat holds a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) from the Columbus College of Art and Design and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) from The Ohio State University.
- **Treshaun, by Alexa Polinori.** Treshaun, whose nickname is "Tre", is a teenager who describes himself as kind. He likes playing sports, swimming, riding his bike, and playing video games. Tre's favorite snack is Hot Takis. Artist Alexa Polinori (alex.a.polinori on Instagram) is an oil painter who creates portraits in funky colors. She holds degrees in fine arts and art history from Malone University and is a regular contributor to the Backroom Zine, as well as a colorist for a webcomic. Alexa lives with her husband and two cats, Frank and Beans.
- **Tyree, by Alaska Thompson.** Tyree is an active, rambunctious, and sweet ten-year-old. He enjoys coloring with markers, watching Paw Patrol, and putting together jigsaw puzzles. Tyree likes a challenge and is a hard worker. Artist Alaska Thompson is deeply connected to the local arts community and currently serves as director of the Patina Arts Centre, located in Canton's Arts District. Her work is imaginative and often depicts both existing and non-existent cosmic structures and galactic imagery.
- **Xzavier, by Heidi Fawver.** Xzavier, whose friends call him Xzav, is easy to talk to and very friendly. He enjoys playing dodgeball, playing with his Transformers action figures, and riding around on his hoverboard. Xzav's favorite food is macaroni and cheese. Artist Heidi Fawver is a 2018 graduate of GlenOak High School and is currently a resident artist at The Hub Art Factory. Her work involves the process of pyrography or pyrogravure, the art of decorating wood by making burn marks.

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.