

## Young artist wins worldwide competition

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Anna Wright stands by her artwork, "United in a Quest for Knowledge," in Bayfront Park in Sarasota. The seventh-grader's work won the Best in Show Student Award in the 2019 "Embracing Our Differences" juried art competition. Islander Photo: Courtesy Cory Wright

Cory Wright is a Holmes Beach artist who is getting quite the challenge from her daughter.

Anna Wright, a seventh-grader at Johnson-Wakeland School of International Baccalaureate in Bradenton and an Anna Maria Elementary alumna, created winning artwork for the 2019 "Embracing Our Differences" juried art competition.

Anna's work, "United in a Quest for Knowledge," won the Best in Show Student Award. The competition had 11,791 entries from 111 countries around the world. Judges chose 45 entries to be displayed as billboards.

The winning artwork is on display at Sarasota's Bayfront Park. The exhibit will be held through March 15.

Anna told *The Islander* her inspiration for the drawing, which depicts a classroom in America and another in Africa, was inspired by reading the book "I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives."

The book, published in 2015, contains the writings of two young pen pals, Caitlin Alifrenka from America and Martin Ganda from Africa, who exchanged letters for six years.

"We all have things in common. I want to embrace that and show that we are all different, but we can unite to make a better world," Anna said.

Anna said her drawing took her three-four days to complete.

She learned she had won on Nov. 29 when her art teacher called with the news.

"My art teacher, Jeannie Mendez, called my mom and told her and she told me. I started crying and my mom did, too," Anna said.

The prize included \$500 for Anna and \$500 for her school's art department.

— *Sandy Ambrogi*