

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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**NCAI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF CENSUS ART COMPETITION:
NATIVE YOUTH SHOW TRIBAL PRIDE**

WASHINGTON—April 1, 2010—Julius Badoni, a senior at Arizona State University, says he’s been drawing since the day he was born. But his artwork is more than a passion. The 25-year-old Navajo art and business major says he wants to use his work to convey important messages in hopes that people will take action. His latest piece incorporates symbols of perseverance, tribal pride, and strength, while encouraging Native Americans to participate in the Census.

“Even at the lowest point in the 1900s, Native Americans endured,” says Badoni about his piece titled *Resurgence*, a colorful abstract showing the plight of Native people since 1492. “There will be a continued endurance and resurgence of Native Americans.”

Badoni is among **15 winners** of the **National Congress of American Indians’ (NCAI) Indian Country Counts national art competition** for pre-kindergarten to post-secondary Native students. NCAI created the **Indian Country Counts campaign** in partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau to aid tribes with the count and ensure an accurate enumeration of all Native people. Historically, American Indians and Alaska Natives are among the nation’s hardest populations to count because of a mistrust of the federal government, as well as linguistic, geographical, and cultural challenges. American Indians were severely undercounted in past Censuses. The Census Bureau estimates that over 12 percent of Native people on reservations were missed in the 1990 census and over 4 percent in 2000.

NCAI received 85 art entries from Native students ages 4 to 48 representing more than a 100 tribal nations across the U.S. The entries depicted creation stories, tribal symbols, or the American flag, with many incorporating the Census and NCAI’s campaign theme, “2010 Census: Our People. Our Nations. Our Future.” Five judges, including three representatives from the National Museum of the American Indian, volunteered to assist in evaluating each art piece. All of the eligible submissions were judged on five aspects: 1) interpretation and articulation of the theme; 2) originality – freshness of aspect, design, or style; 3) creativity – whether the piece generated new ideas or concepts; 4) composition; and 5) presentation – whether the visual display left an impression.

“NCAI wanted to engage young people in this very important count that determines so many things, including funding for our schools, Head Start, and elderly programs,” NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Johnson Pata said. “One of the most successful messages from the Census is that tribes are thriving and doing well, and the attempts to completely assimilate Native people into mainstream America weren’t successful. This art competition was to showcase that Native people are still here. This is a celebratory activity encouraging some of our youngest tribal members to support their families’ participation in the Census.

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“And NCAI makes this announcement on Census Day on April 1 to encourage American Indians and Alaska Natives to fill out their Census questionnaires,” Pata added.

Sage Logan, the Tlingit/Seneca second-place winner in the Grades 4-6 category from Bremerton, Wash., said she didn’t know about the Census until she entered the contest.

“My dad told me that most tribes didn’t think it was important,” Logan, 10, said. “I hope more people know about it since (NCAI) did the contest.

“It’s important,” she added.

Tanya Mabin, mother of first-place winner in the Grades 7-8 category, Naomi Mabin, an Oglala Lakota in Allen, S.D., was elated that her daughter won.

“I’m so proud of her. She loves to draw. She’s also handicapped but she is out there doing things that no one expects her to do,” said Tanya Mabin, adding that her daughter had rickets, a disease that affects children’s bones. “She is going to be so happy.”

Contest winners include:

Pre-K-Kindergarten (ages 4-5)

First place,
Gavin French, Sault Ste.
Marie Tribe, Plymouth, MI



Second place tie,
Kelsey Kester,
Cherokee, Westville,
OK



Second place tie,
Lilli Jordan, Cherokee,
Stilwell, OK



Grades 1-3

First place, Trevor French,
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe,
Plymouth, MI



Second place,
Kinley Soap,
Cherokee, Stilwell,
OK



Grades 4-6

First place,
Shayla French, Sault Ste.
Marie Tribe, Plymouth, MI



Second place,
Sage Logan,
Tlingit/Seneca,
Bremerton, WA



Grades 7-8

First place,
Naomi Mabin, Oglala
Lakota, Allen, SD

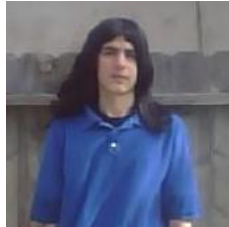


Second place,
Rae-Anne Mitchell,
Penobscot, Indian
Island, ME



Grades 9-10

First place,
Joseph Rojero, Keweenaw
Bay, Escondido, CA



Second place,
Senobio Baltierra, Jr.,
Pascua Yaqui, Mesa,
AZ

Grades 11-12

First place,
Odessa Lozano, San Carlos
Apache, San Carlos, AZ



Second place,
Macklin Becenti,
Navajo, Houck, AZ

Post-Secondary

First place,
Kristelle Ulrich, Oneida,
Milwaukee, WI



Second place,
Julius Badoni, Navajo,
Phoenix, AZ



Art contest winners in grades pre-k through kindergarten will receive a Leap Frog Leapster2 Learning System or a Tag Learn Read Storybook Pack. Winners in grades 1-3 will win a Nintendo DSiXL or a Leap Frog Tag Dr. Seuss Reading Gift Pack, and grades four and above will receive a Wii or an iPod Nano.

Pictures from the contest winners are available for viewing on the Indian Country Counts website at: www.indiancountrycounts.org/artcompetition/gallery.

The **National Congress of American Indians** is the oldest and largest organization serving American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments. In 2009, NCAI received funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to partner with the U.S. Census Bureau and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund to create a public education and outreach strategy for the 2010 Census. The **Indian Country Counts** campaign includes a website with a downloadable tool kit for tribes, news about the Census, contact information for federal workers, and Census job postings. Website visitors also can share ideas about outreach in their communities, post their own stories, download free banner ads to post on their own websites, and learn about what is happening in other Native communities to encourage participation and plan events. Website visitors can also sign up for updates. For more information, go to the **Indian Country Counts** website at www.indiancountrycounts.org.

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