Oregon Chinese Coalition (OCC) has launched the Art Contest for the community in collaboration with the Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge (NWRC) and the Tualatin River NWRC later last year. The art contest aims to bring awareness and engagement between the Chinese American community and nature conservation. It also provides a new opportunity for the youth to creatively express their voice in how they see themselves in nature.

Here are reflections of the young artists during the process of creating their artworks.

Flora Chen from Creative Science School wrote, "My inspiration is human beings live in harmony with nature, nature brings me happiness, because our family loves to go to wildlife refuge nature parks when we have time. We love spending an entire day to explore and make lots of observation over there."

Emily Lian from Sunset High School wrote, "I was inspired by the connection I had with nature and its creatures at an early age, and the pure feelings of kindness and empathy towards it."

Jenny Chen from Lincoln High School wrote, "During quarantine, I couldn't go far outside so I developed an interest in observing birds from my backyard. This painting is a manifestation of my relationship with local nature."

Sophia You from Sun Century Art Academy wrote, "Sometimes, we forget that the beauty of nature is easily within our reach if we stop to look; I drew the hummingbird as a reminder that all kinds of wonderful creatures live at a simple park."

Erika Leung from Lincoln High School wrote, "During quarantine, I faced a lot of stress and burnout as I overloaded myself with work as a distraction from the world around me. It was when I decided to go on daily nature walks with my family that I was able to gradually bring myself back to reality. We would go out on trails and sketch whatever we saw. From monarch butterflies to red columbines to Wapato plants, I grew my love for the native Oregon flora and fauna and in return, my creativity reignited. I emerged from my shell and began painting again, as represented in the pink brushstrokes, and I'm forever thankful for that. "

Thirty-seven K-12 students participated in this inaugural art contest. Sixteen winning artworks will be displayed in newly facelifted Wong Laundry building in Chinatown, just across the street from Lan Su Chinese Garden. The neighborhood is welcoming another cultural event there. The window gallery will get ready for the celebration of Chinese New Year. The exhibition will last the entire February.

The address of window gallery in Wong Laundry building is 219 NW 3rd Avenue, Portland OR 97209

The event details with winning artworks are available at <https://pdxchinese.org/artcontest/>

For any questions about the art contest, please contact

Hongcheng Zhao  
President of OCC  
503-709-3119  
[hzhao@pdxchinese.org](mailto:hzhao@pdxchinese.org)

Bonnie Anderson   
Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
(503)625-5944 x15227  
[bonnieandmarty@comcast.net](mailto:bonnieandmarty@comcast.net)