LOS ANGELES—The winners of Congressman Xavier Becerra's 18th annual Student Art Competition were announced yesterday at Children's Institute Headquarters, Otis Booth Campus. This year's competition drew 80 contestants from high schools throughout California's 31st Congressional District, reflecting the theme "Heroes of Our Time."

"At a time when our schools face growing challenges with diminishing resources, I am heartened to see such tremendous talent percolating in our schools," Rep. Becerra said. "I salute the student artists who produced the inspiring works on display today—and especially the teachers who are doing more with less each day. I am proud that today, we were able to reward the hard work and talent of our local student artists."

The first place winner of this year's competition is Brenda Barajas, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School, for her entry "Yesterday's Heroes in You." Brenda will receive a trip for two courtesy of Southwest Airlines to Washington, D.C. to see her work on display in the halls of the United States Capitol, where it will hang for the next year.

Rep. Becerra with first place winner Brenda Barajas, Thomas Jefferson Art Teacher Luis

Genaro Garcia, and President & CEO of Children's Institute, Inc. Mary Emmons. More photos from Rep. Becerra's 2011 competition>>

Other winners of Rep. Becerra's 2011 competition include:

• Second place: Alondra Ramirez, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School, for her entry "Tales of J. Manuel Ramirez." • Third place: Emerita Dela Cruz, a senior at Benjamin Franklin High School, for her entry "Unrecognized Kindness."

• Honorable mention: Sergio E. Marquez, a senior at West Adams Preparatory High School, for his entry "A Dream No More."

• Honorable mention: Yaneli Delgado, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School, for her entry "The Hero's Life Changing Road."

• Honorable mention: Alice Marcial, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School, for her entry "To Those Who Serve Our Country."

All participants received a congressional certificate of recognition and tickets to attend a Dodger game this July, where the top three winners will be featured on Dodger Vision before the game.

Each year, thousands of young artists nationwide participate in the national congressional art competition, "An Artistic Discovery," in which members of Congress across the country have the privilege of finding many of tomorrow's great artists. Since 1982, over 650,000 high school students have entered their works of art for consideration.