

# NEWS



Edward A. Diana  
Orange County Executive

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **OC Human Rights Commission to Celebrate Human Rights Day With Public Art Exhibit Showcasing Work of HS Students**

*11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Invited to Submit Pieces that Raise Awareness of Human Rights*

**Goshen** – In recognition of December 10 as Human Rights Day, the Orange County Human Rights Commission will be hosting a Celebration of Human Rights art exhibit displaying the work of high school juniors and seniors. “An Artist’s Response to Human Rights” invites 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students from Orange County high schools to submit an original work of art depicting any one of the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Pieces will be on display at the SUNY Orange Middletown and Newburgh campuses.

The goal of the art exhibit, which is being co-chaired by Human Rights Commissioners Kathleen Francese and Fred Cook, is to raise awareness among high school students of the importance of human rights. “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is focused on promoting human dignity, non-discrimination, equality, and fairness and applying those values to everyone, everywhere,” said Commissioner Francese. “We encourage teachers to use the art exhibit as an opportunity to share and explore these values with students and express them in their own way.”

“Our young people are our future,” said County Executive Edward A. Diana. “The lessons they learn today lay a critical foundation for tomorrow. That’s why it’s so important that they understand the importance of human rights and dignity and respect for others. Through their art they can share that message with others and make a meaningful difference in their lives,” continued Mr. Diana.

“An Artist’s Response to Human Rights” is open to any high school junior or senior attending school in Orange County. All submitted pieces must be original and created in 2011; any medium will be accepted as long as the piece can be safely exhibited. Submissions must be made to school art teachers no later than December 1. A complete list of exhibit rules and the submission application are available on the Human Rights Commission page of the Orange County website at [www.orangecountygov.com](http://www.orangecountygov.com) or by contacting 615-3680 or [humanrights@orangecountygov.com](mailto:humanrights@orangecountygov.com).

“Many great artists, including Goya, Picasso, and Chagall, have been champions of human

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rights and expressed their commitment to this important issue through their creativity,” commented Commissioner Cook. “I hope art teachers will encourage students to take part in this ‘artist’s response to human rights’ so that they too may use their creativity to spread the message of dignity and respect for all.”

“As a veteran artist and teacher, I was inspired when solicited to take part in the Human Rights Exhibit celebrating Human Rights Day,” said Ward Lamb, an art teacher at Minisink Valley Central School District. “In a time when many rights are obscured and de-personalized it gives educators and students a chance to express and prioritize their concerns. This project teaches them to humanize their perspectives.”

The artwork will be on display at Orange Hall Gallery, SUNY Orange, Middletown campus and The Great Room, Kaplan Hall, SUNY Orange, Newburgh campus from December 9 through 18. An opening reception will be held at the Newburgh campus on December 9 from 5 to 7 p.m. and at the Middletown campus on December 10 from 5 to 7 p.m.

“An Artist’s Response to Human Rights” is presented by the Orange County Human Rights Commission in collaboration with SUNY Orange and the Orange County Arts Council.

The Orange County Human Rights Commission was established in 1970 to foster mutual respect and understanding among all racial, religious, and nationality groups in the County. For more information about the exhibit or the Human Rights Commission, visit the Commission’s pages on the Orange County Government website at [www.orangecountygov.com](http://www.orangecountygov.com) or call 615-3680.

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***Samantha Nunez, Minisink Valley High School student, and art teacher Ward Lamb.***



***Brittany Fizette, Minisink Valley High School student, and art teacher Ward Lamb.***