



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 28, 2016**

**ONLINE VOTING BEGINS FOR 2017 ILLINOIS TOLLWAY MAP COVER ART CONTEST**  
*Student artwork displayed online and at Tollway oases through November 4*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Beginning today, October 28, through Friday, November 4, the public can go online and vote for their favorite entry in the 2017 Illinois Tollway Map Cover Art Contest sponsored by the Illinois Tollway, Blick Art Materials and MB Real Estate Services Inc. (MBRE). The top 10 semifinalist entries in the student art contest can be viewed on the [Tollway's website](#) and will be displayed at Illinois Tollway oases.

"The talent and creative vision these young artists have shown in this year's submissions are impressive," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov. "We are very pleased to present the contest semifinalists' work and look forward to seeing the results of the public vote."

Recognizing that high school students throughout the region are the next generation of drivers, the Illinois Tollway invited students to submit original works of art that illustrate what a SmartRoad can offer drivers.

The Illinois Tollway is building state-of-the-art roadways to improve travel, reduce congestion and better serve its 1.6 million daily drivers. In 2017, the Tollway will roll out the first SmartRoad on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) incorporating active traffic management, integrating transit and delivering a 21st century corridor. SmartRoad will provide real-time travel information via dynamic electronic signage, integrate Flex Lanes for Pace buses to provide reliable service and include flexible technologies so new smart features can be added as they come online in the years ahead.

Entries submitted by student artists focused on how emerging technology and innovations on the Illinois Tollway will benefit drivers by:

- Providing new and improved services
- Creating a more efficient, reliable way to communicate with drivers
- Ensuring greater safety

The top four contest entries will move on to the next level of judging. The grand prize winner and three runners-up will be selected by a panel of judges that includes members of the Tollway Board of Directors and representatives from MBRE.

**2017 Tollway Map Art Contest Semifinalists**

Vanessa Arenas, Bolingbrook High School  
Luis Chavez, Bolingbrook High School  
Emily Davis, Lincoln-Way West High School  
Alyssa Elborne, Bolingbrook High School  
Haylee Gemeiner, Lincoln-Way East High School  
Kaylee Howell, Lincoln-Way East High School  
Raziel Iumin, Steinmetz High School  
Alanna Ledvina, Lincoln-Way West High School  
Manuella Rodela, Bolingbrook High School

Kate Weithers, Lincoln-Way East High School

Members of the general public are invited to go online to the [Illinois Tollway's website art contest page](#) to view the semifinalists' artwork and vote for the top four entries. The 10 semifinalist entries are also displayed in galleries at six Illinois Tollway oases.

"MB Real Estate is pleased to support the creativity of student artists and to again display the semi-finalists' work at the Illinois Tollway oases," said MBRE General Manager Alma Becerra. "We are excited to see who the public selects as the four finalists from among the many thoughtful submissions this year."

"Blick Art Materials is delighted to again be partnering with the Illinois Tollway and MBRE to provide young artists the opportunity to create visions of the future of our roadways," said Chief Executive Bob Buchsbaum. "We look forward to the outcome of the vote and seeing the winning entry displayed on the cover of the Tollway's 2017 system map."

Artwork created by the grand prize winner will be featured on the cover of the Tollway's 2017 map, which is distributed at no cost to more than 75,000 customers. Three runners-up will be featured in the Tollway's annual report. Awards include:

- Grand prize winner: \$400 gift certificate from Blick Art Materials and \$200 in gift certificates from MBRE to use at oases retail shops and restaurants
- Runners-up: \$200 gift certificate from Blick Art Materials and \$100 in gift certificates from MBRE
- Winners will be acknowledged at the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors meeting on November 17, 2016
- All students who participate in the contest will receive a certificate of appreciation

The Illinois Tollway launched the Map Cover Art Contest in 2011 to highlight the work of talented art students from the communities served by the Illinois Tollway. Last year, more than 27,000 votes were cast by the general public to determine the four contest finalists. The 2016 Tollway map features cover artwork from last year's contest winner, Theresa Kerouac, a sophomore at Lake Forest High School in Lake Forest.

#### **About Blick Art Materials**

Founded in Galesburg, IL, in 1911, Blick Art Materials is one of the largest and oldest providers of art supplies in the United States, with 66 retail stores nationwide. Its products cater to the full spectrum of artists – from the youngest child ready to scribble with his or her first crayon to well-known, gallery-represented professionals. The company's extensive selection, competitive prices and superior customer service make Blick the best choice for art educators, students, artists, architects, designers, hobbyists or anyone requiring quality art materials for work or pleasure. A long-time advocate of art education in the U.S., Blick also provides support of scholastic, collegiate and professional art shows, both financially and through a variety of materials that emphasize the benefits of art education. Blick also supports the communities in which it does business by sponsoring in-store events, local schools, art leagues and community groups across the country. Visit [dickblick.com](http://dickblick.com) for more information.

#### **About MB Real Estate Services Inc.**

Founded in 1982, MB Real Estate is a full-service real estate organization that provides multifaceted expertise in asset/facilities management, leasing services, project/construction management, tenant representation and investment services. Additionally, MBRE Healthcare provides comprehensive real estate solutions for hospitals, health systems and physicians throughout the United States. Headquartered in Chicago, with regional offices in New York, Atlanta, Orlando, Dallas and Denver, MB Real Estate provides these services to corporations, institutions, professional organizations, private investors and non-profit agencies. For more information, please visit [mbres.com](http://mbres.com).

**About the Illinois Tollway**

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 292 miles of interstate tollways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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