



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 12, 2017**

**ILLINOIS TOLLWAY, BLICK ART MATERIALS AND MB REAL ESTATE INVITE  
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO CREATE ART TO CELEBRATE ILLINOIS**

*Winning contest entry will appear on the cover of the 2018 Illinois Tollway map*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – The Illinois Tollway, Blick Art Materials and MB Real Estate (MBRE) this week invited high school art students to participate in the 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest.

In celebration of the state of Illinois' bicentennial in 2018, the Tollway's contest calls on student artists to illustrate the different things that make Illinois a great state and to submit artwork that focuses on what makes them #IllinoisProud.

The 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest is one way the Illinois Tollway is joining the statewide celebration. Illinois became the nation's 21st state on December 3, 1818. A year-long celebration of the state and its accomplishments will begin on December 3, 2017, leading up to the 200th birthday in December 2018. More information about the bicentennial can be found at [illinois200.com](http://illinois200.com).

Areas of focus for the 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest may include, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- History - What people and events have left their mark?
- Landmarks - What are the best places to visit and things to see?
- Commerce and Industry - What is Illinois best known for?
- Transportation - There are so many different modes of transportation - what stands out above the rest?

"This year's contest challenges students to translate what they think is great about Illinois into art," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov. "With people, places and events from the past 200 years to choose from, we can't wait to see what great ideas they deliver to honor Illinois."

More than 300 high schools in the 12 counties served by the Illinois Tollway have been sent information about this year's contest. Art contest entries will be accepted beginning September 12, 2017, and must be postmarked no later than October 13, 2017.

Artwork created by the grand prize winner will be featured on the cover of the Tollway's 2018 map, which is distributed at no cost to more than 75,000 customers. The grand prize winner and 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
- A certificate of appreciation for all students who participate in the contest

## 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest

- Acknowledgment of winners at the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors meeting on November 16, 2017

An Illinois Tollway committee will initially judge all contest entries to determine the top 10. Those top 10 entries will be featured on the Illinois Tollway's website and displayed in galleries at each of the six Tollway oases pavilions during the last week of October. The public will be invited to view the artwork and cast their votes online to choose the top four entries. The grand prize winner and three runners-up will be selected by a panel of judges, including members of the Tollway Board of Directors and representatives from MBRE.

The 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest rules and all required entry forms are posted on the Tollway's website at [illinoistollway.com](http://illinoistollway.com).

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, nearly 90 entries from student artists were submitted and nearly 40,000 votes were cast by the general public to determine the four contest finalists. The 2017 Tollway map features cover artwork from last year's contest winner, Luis Chavez, a junior at Bolingbrook High School in Bolingbrook.

### **About Blick Art Materials**

Founded in Galesburg, Illinois, 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 [www.dickblick.com](http://www.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 [www.mbres.com](http://www.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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