



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 27, 2017**

**ONLINE VOTING BEGINS FOR 2018 ILLINOIS TOLLWAY MAP COVER ART CONTEST**  
*Student artwork displayed online and at Tollway oases through November 3*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Beginning today, October 27, through Friday, November 3, the public can go online and vote for their favorite entry in the 2018 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 at Illinois Tollway oases.

“The artwork submitted by students illustrates what they think makes Illinois a great state,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Greg Bedalov. “The public now has the chance to help us choose from among the best submissions we received which artwork will make the cover of our 2018 map.”

In celebration of the State of Illinois’ bicentennial in 2018, the Illinois Tollway invited students to illustrate the different things that make Illinois a great state and submit artwork that focuses on what makes them #IllinoisProud. More than 120 students from 25 schools throughout the region, from Chicago to Rockford, participated in the art contest.

The 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest is one way the Illinois Tollway is joining the statewide celebration. Illinois became the nation’s 21<sup>st</sup> 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](#).

Areas of focus for the 2018 Tollway Map Cover Art Contest 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?

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.

**2018 Tollway Map Art Contest Semifinalists**

Diego Audiffred, UIC College Prep High School in Chicago  
Luis Chavez, Bolingbrook High School  
Ronald Aldrin Gonzales, Bolingbrook High School  
Audrey Vanderpool, Lincoln-Way East High School in Frankfort  
Alina Park, Lincoln-Way West High School in New Lenox  
Courtney Kurtz, Lincoln-Way West High School in New Lenox  
Lindley Wiesner, Lake Forest High School

Sophie Riley, Rockford Christian School  
Brandie Haas, Rockford Christian School  
Dean Darhoussein, Downers Grove North 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 semifinalists' 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 artwork that celebrates the State of Illinois' bicentennial," 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 2018 system map."

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
- Acknowledgment of winners at the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors meeting on November 29, 2017

### **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 294 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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