



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

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WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR 2021 ILLINOIS TOLLWAY MAP COVER ART CONTEST

*Thornton Fractional North High School artist's work honoring
Everyday Heroes selected as grand prize winner*

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway today announced that Samantha Cervantes, a sophomore at Thornton Fractional North High School, Calumet City, is the grand prize winner of the 2021 Illinois Tollway Map Cover Art Contest highlighting “Everyday Heroes” who are making a positive impact on people’s lives through the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Samantha’s winning artwork will serve as a reminder that our world is in good hands with everyday heroes like nurses, firefighters and roadway workers working day and night to keep everyone safe,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We posted some great artwork from students at schools throughout Northern Illinois and appreciate the talent and creativity of the students and their teachers.”

The annual Tollway Map Cover Art Contest is sponsored by the Tollway, Blick Art Materials and MB Real Estate Services (MBRE). Students selected as runners-up in the contest include:

- First runner-up – Alison Tykane, a junior at Bolingbrook High School
- Second runner-up – Bryanna Ibarra, a junior at Horizon Science Academy McKinley Park, Chicago

“I am so honored to be given the chance to be recognized for my artwork and to represent T.F. North High School and Illinois,” said Cervantes. “Creating my art piece took so much time and effort, but every second was worth it. I could not have enjoyed this unforgettable experience without the support of my school, family, friends and especially my art teacher Jessica Basinger.”

This year, high school artists were invited to highlight Everyday Heroes – everyday people doing extraordinary things – to be featured on the cover of the Tollway’s 2021 map. Among those are the professionals at the Illinois Tollway who have worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to continue serving millions of customers daily traveling the 294-mile Illinois Tollway system across 12 counties in Northern Illinois, while working closely with construction, design and engineering firms to continue our investments in our regional economy.

Students from high schools throughout Northern Illinois submitted artwork in the contest. Due to the pandemic, the entire contest was managed virtually via the Illinois Tollway’s Official Facebook page, with the grand prize winner and runners-up selected by the number of “Likes” within that gallery.

The annual Tollway Map Cover Art Contest offers young artists the chance to put their talents on display each year by developing artwork for the cover of the annual Tollway map. In addition, the grand prize winner and runners-up will be featured in the Tollway’s annual report.

In addition, the award for the grand-prize winner includes a \$400 gift certificate from Blick Art Materials and \$200 in gift certificates from MBRE to use at oases retail shops and restaurants. Runners-up will each receive a \$200 gift certificate from Blick Art Materials and \$100 in gift certificates from MBRE.

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"MB Real Estate congratulates the design winners and thanks all those artists that submitted designs for this year's art contest," said MBRE Operations Manager Steve Merial. "It's such an encouragement to have high school artists involved in the design process that recognizes everyday heroes that have continued serving others during these challenging times."

"Blick is pleased to continue its support of the Illinois Tollways annual art contest," said Blick Art Materials Chief Executive Bob Buchsbaum. "There are too few opportunities for visual artists to gain the recognition they deserve, and this contest is a great way to encourage and support the efforts of young artists. We congratulate the winner and all the runners-up and wish them great success as they continue to develop their artistic skills."

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. This year, nearly 40 student artists from more than a dozen high schools throughout Northern Illinois submitted artwork in the contest, and nearly 4,700 votes.

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 dickblick.com for more information.

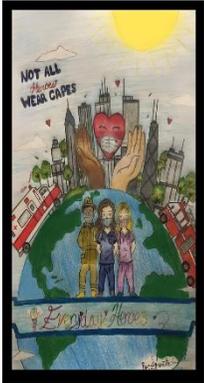
About MB Real Estate Services Inc.

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.

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 roadways 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.

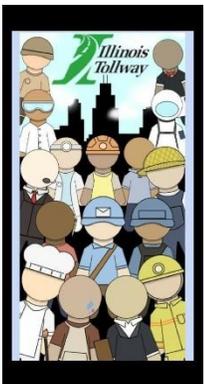
2021 Illinois Tollway Map Cover Art Contest Winners



[Grand Prize Winner](#) – Samantha Cervantes, Thornton Fractional North High School, Calumet City



[First runner-up](#) – Alison Tykane, Bolingbrook High School



[Second runner-up](#) – Bryanna Ibarra, Horizon Science Academy McKinley Park, Chicago

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