



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 18, 2021

LAFCU announces winners of ‘Love & Equity’ art competition

Credit union aims to unite community; 10 art pieces displayed online, across Michigan

LANSING, Mich. —
Looking for some good news? Are you in need of a comforting message of unity and hope?



The colored pencil drawing by Brian Whitfield depicts a story where empathy is desired in each of the letters in the word “Empathy.”

You might be able to just look up or hop online to see those messages. LAFCU, a Michigan credit union, is showcasing the 10 winning entries of its “Act with Love & Equality” art initiative on billboards across Michigan and via LAFCU’s digital channels, including its social media platforms and website.



The digital and ink pen art by Alayna, Brijia and Kayla Fradette features the word “Hope” in color to symbolize how hope can overcome life’s struggles, represented by a busy B&W background that includes words of support.

important in daily life.

There is also growing community support of the project, too. Eaton Theatre, Charlotte, and Lansing Lugnuts are among the businesses sharing the images on their platforms.

“We are honored these artists are allowing us to share their creative work to help inspire a community in which love and equality flourish,”



Isabella Spagnuolo created a digital piece for the word “Humanity” that illustrates how shared compassion makes human beings a successful collective.

said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU chief marketing officer and chief diversity officer. “As a credit union with nearly 70,000 members, we have an obligation to use our platforms for good. Art is a powerful communicator. It can show us what words alone cannot.”

The words and the artists who graphically depicted them are:

- Change — Nevin Speerbrecker, Lansing
- Empathy — Brian Whitfield, Lansing
- Heal — Laura Dixon, Clarklake; Mike Holcomb, Okemos; Lisa O’Connor, Mason
- Hope — Alayna, Brija and Kayla Fradette, Grand Ledge
- Humanity — Isabella Spagnuolo, Williamston
- Kind — Larissa Moyer, East Lansing; Kellie Swiger, Grand Ledge
- Love — Madison Miller, Charlotte
- One — Erika Noud, East Lansing
- Peace — Riley Griffin, Holt
- Unity — Theresa Levett, St. Johns

The winning artwork along with the respective artist statements are posted on the LAFCU website at www.lafcu.com/loveandequality.

An example of an artist statement is Brian Whitfield’s, in which he notes that each letter in his colored pencil drawing of the word “Empathy” illustrates a story where empathy is desired. These include depictions of the sick and the caregiver, violence by guns, violence toward the Asian community, the loneliness of loss, and faith and hope through beliefs.

The winning artists will be celebrated at a virtual event May 19.

About LAFCU

Chartered in 1936, LAFCU is a not-for-profit financial cooperative open for membership to anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in Michigan and to businesses and other entities located in Michigan. The credit union serves more than 69,000 members and holds over \$915 million in assets. It was named a Best Credit Union to Work For in 2020. LAFCU offers a comprehensive range of financial products and services as well as an expanding complement of financial technology solutions. Members enjoy benefits such as low fees, low interest rates on loans, high yields on savings, discounts, knowledgeable employees and nationwide access to fee-free ATMs. A recipient of the national Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award for credit unions, LAFCU enriches the communities it serves by supporting many organizations and causes. To learn more about LAFCU, call 800.748.0228 or visit www.lafcu.com.

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