



WILL ROGERS WORLD AIRPORT
OKLAHOMA CITY

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OKLAHOMA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AND WILL ROGERS WORLD AIRPORT HOSTS YOUTH ART GALLERY Exhibit Celebrates the Creativity and Diversity of Oklahoma Students

OKLAHOMA CITY, September 21, 2019 – An exhibit featuring works of art by Oklahoma youth was officially opened to the public today at Will Rogers World Airport. Eighteen framed pieces representing students aged kindergarten through 12th grade, are on display in the ticket lobby of the WRWA terminal building. The collection incorporates a variety of artistic mediums including pencil drawings, watercolors, photography and mixed media.

The exhibit is made possible by the Oklahoma Art Education Association (OAEA), a statewide organization for visual arts educators that develops and promotes art education.

“This is a great opportunity not just for Oklahoma students but for visitors to the airport,” says Michelle Barnes, president, Oklahoma Art Education Association. “The art of these young people is more than just about being creative. The works tell stories, express emotions, depict things that shape their lives. They engage the viewer. And really, that is what art is about.”

From WRWA’s perspective, it is an opportunity to enhance the airport environment.

“Art at the airport is an integral part of creating a connection to our city and state,” says Karen Carney, public information and marketing manager. “The works of these young Oklahoma artists will enrich the traveler and visitor experience at the airport.”

Gallery curators Donna Barnard and Valerie Beck were integral in bringing the gallery concept to the airport.

“We believe a Youth Gallery at the airport provides a unique venue to present creative works to travelers and employees,” says Barnard. “Viewers of the exhibit can be connected to the ingenuity and talent shown by all ages of Oklahoma students.”

The exhibit will be rotated with new student artists every six to eight months. Art teachers across the state will be invited to submit works by their students through OAEA.

“Art is such an important element in a child’s education,” says Barnes. “It helps students use creative thinking to solve problems and make decisions. Art helps build self-discipline and self-esteem. Art helps develop skills that benefit children in all aspects of life.”

Members and friends of the organization from across the state donated frames and supplies for the exhibit. The exhibit is on display in the WRWA central ticket lobby between the Southwest and American ticket counters.

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Will Rogers World Airport is the city’s commercial airport and accommodates over 4.2 million travelers each year. The airport serves 28 nonstop airports with an average of 72 daily departures. Will Rogers World Airport is owned by the City of Oklahoma City. The Oklahoma City Airport Trust oversees the management and operation of the airport.

The Oklahoma Art Education Association is a nonprofit 501 (c)3 organization. The mission of the organization is to provide Visual Arts Educators with a professional organization which facilitates a statewide networking community to develop, promote, and support arts education. OAEA is affiliated with the National Art Education Association. Since 1960 the OAEA has provided to state art teachers professional development and opportunities to present student artwork at all levels in temporary venues that include museum, colleges, and art centers throughout the state.