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Media Release

Daniel Jenkins Academy Students **Win First Place in Art Contest**

North Charleston, SC (May 7, 2026) – Students at Daniel Jenkins Academy (DJA) recently participated in a student art contest hosted by the [Ross Smith Assistance Fund](#), showcasing their creativity across a variety of mediums.

Participants selected from three themes — “A Good Day,” “Peace Looks Like” or “My Style, My Rules” — and created original works ranging from paintings and drawings to digital art.

Contest winners - sophomore Kumar Cook-Grant and freshman Aylin Rojas - collaborated on their design using Canva digital art, with guidance from faculty members Elyse Rodriguez and Allen Dennison. Both students were recognized and awarded cash prizes of \$200 each on April 20, 2026.

“At first, I was nervous because I was not sure people would like our work, but over the course of the design phase, my confidence grew and I became more excited about the possibilities of winning the contest,” Kumar said. “I was so surprised and thankful to learn that we won and came in first place.”

Rodriguez and Dennison added, “Art shapes, creates and beautifies our world.”

The winning design will be featured on Ross Smith Assistance Fund T-shirts.

The Ross Smith Assistance Fund is a family run organization founded in 2018 in memory of Ross Smith, who was a teacher at DJA. According to staff members there, he had an incredible ability to connect with students and touch their hearts while getting them invested in learning. Smith had a passion for helping kids in need, and inspired them to believe in themselves and to be successful. The fund provides students with snacks at school, food to take home, hygiene products, and clothing on a regular basis. Funds are also available to provide emergency assistance to students and their families.

For more information, contact DJA Restoration Specialist Tarikia White at (843) 747-6609.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique

blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 51,000 students in 90 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse portfolio of educational options and specialized programs delivered to the students of CCSD through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools and programs. Rich educational opportunities for students include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; military; dual credit; and many more.

