Oregon Youth Authority
Communications Office

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Hillcrest youth display talent in art exhibit

Hillcrest youth art displayed at Bush Barn Art Center in Salem.

By CJ Drake, Oregon Youth Authority
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Several youth at Hillcrest YCF created art that was publicly displayed in March and April at the Bush Barn Art Center in Salem. The youth participated in classes offered by the Salem Art Association and taught by local artists Barry Shapiro and Sonia Allen. Rod Martin, recreation coordinator at Hillcrest, organized and supervised the youth's participation.

Three of the youth artists – James, Doug and DeCourtney – agreed to be interviewed by the *Salem Statesman Journal*, which published an article featuring them March 23.

The youth created graphic art that incorporated poetry. Poems by five youth whose art was displayed are reprinted below.

Poem by DeCourtney

There's a shadow that follows me
There's a shadow that talks to me
There's a shadow that sleeps in me
So please take a nap with me

The fire that burns me to the next chapter
The cold that save the soul of an angel

Watch me close
my eyes if you can
watch the stress bleed
through my hand

Watch me across the room
I'm scared of the bad dreams
that play in my head

Take a nap with me
watch me close my eyes
if you can watch the stress
bleed through my hands

Poem by Sergio

Children all lined up in rows
like an army marching for war.
Drums in the background
as children are singing.
A flag high in the air
with the sun beaming.
Everyone neatly dressed in uniforms.
The breeze of the early morning
numbing their cheeks.
Silent gates of the school locked.

Poem by Doug

A very dark place indeed —
I was, at the moment, only a child
In a picture that looked so very wrong
Imagine, if you will, a boy, lost
His sun-slapped skin burning.
That's me.
A walking paradox
Shivering violently and sweating heavily
A high fever melting my mind to stew
My hands frozen stiff.
Passing out and waking up
while searching for a light
Through the heart of darkness
Thicket thorns and dense brush
Dead tree branches
Black arcs that broke apart the blue
The only shades that night gives
My clothes were ripped and torn
I asked myself, "Hey, am I bleeding?"
'Cause I felt and saw blood
Though I was not
I was in such a dead-dire state
Yet, I was the happiest I had ever been
Scared, having the worst of nightmares awake
Not a care as I died, not a thought in my mind
Just chuckling and stumbling until I was found
A sick puppy survived, made it out with my life
Yet, still, my spirit still wanders inside

Poem by James

My family and I are a part of Portland
Break Away Club which is an off-roading club.
We go to Sand Lake where we quad.
We drive trucks out there.
We go to the water which is on the flats
which is a flat land of sand and hills and trails
on the side of the trails.
You have to have a fire extinguisher, an axe,
a shovel, a first aid kit. You have to have a
rope.
You have to have a CB radio. Your tires
have to be lower down. You have to have a
flag on your quad. You can camp there.
You can stay up and ride all night. It's so
much fun.
There's a lot of trees around. There's deer
there that run around. You can bring your
dogs.
There's camp hosts. There's bathrooms.
There's cement parking spots. There's a
campgrounds
all over. There's camps right next to one
another about ten feet away from each other.

From left: James, Doug and DeCourtney look at photos of them taken by Salem Statesman Journal photographer Tim Gonzalez (right).