Congressman Jeff Fortenberry and 2011 First Congressional District Art Competition winner Marie Wathen with her artwork, "Worth Fighting For."

Lincoln, NE — Congressman Jeff Fortenberry today announced that Marie Wathen of Lincoln has won the 2011 First Congressional District Art Competition. This nationwide competition began in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1982 and serves as an opportunity for Members of Congress to showcase the artistic talents of high school students within their districts.

"I am pleased to name Marie Wathen the winner of the 2011 First Congressional District Art Competition," Fortenberry said. "Her work demonstrated great skill, thoughtfulness, and creativity." Marie received first place honors for her entry titled "Worth Fighting For." The object of her painting is her older brother, who is a member of the U.S. military and is currently serving in Afghanistan. She drew inspiration from reflections on the sacrifices he and other soldiers make and their steadfast commitment to serve the country.

Marie is the daughter of Jim and Carol Wathen. She is completing her junior year at Lincoln Pius X High School and plans to continue her study of art beyond high school. In June, Marie will attend a reception in Washington, D.C. for competition winners from across the country. She will also have the opportunity to view her artwork at the U.S. Capitol, where it will remain on

display for one year.

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