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First Lady Mary Pat Christie Announces Artwork Created by Morris Arts' Mentoring Program To Decorate New Jersey's 2013 Christmas Tree In Washington, DC

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Tree Ornaments Designed by Morristown-Based Group's Students



Trenton, NJ – First Lady Mary Pat Christie today announced that artwork of students from the Morris Arts Mentoring Program will once again decorate the 2103 National Christmas Tree display in Washington, DC this holiday season. Professional artists/mentors Dan Fenelon and Susan Faiola, along with students from Morris Arts' Morristown High School Art Mentoring Program and the school's National Art Honor Society designed and created the ornaments for New Jersey's tree which will be displayed in Washington, DC at President's Park.

"The mentoring program at Morristown High School is giving these young adults a tremendous opportunity to develop their artistic skills alongside professional talents like Dan Fenelon and Susan Faiola," said First Lady Mary Pat Christie. "Creative expression is a powerful form of self-discovery and I am so inspired by what these students are accomplishing to empower their futures. The Governor and I are indeed proud to have these beautiful works of art grace our New Jersey state tree."

Each year, local artists and youth groups are chosen to create 24 ornaments to be featured on their respective state tree for the National Christmas Tree display in Washington, DC. This year, students were asked to create designs based on their individual visions for the New Jersey Christmas Tree. Reflecting New Jersey's rich, cultural diversity, the ornament designs are highly varied, ranging from traditional to abstract designs. The mentors wanted each student to feel personally connected to the project and felt that the best way to accomplish this was to trust the creative process of each of the students involved.

"Our students are excited to be a part of something on a national level and will remember this for the rest of their lives," said Dan Fenelon, one of Morris Arts' Mentoring artists for the Morristown High School Art Mentoring Program.

Last year, students created ornaments that represented several of the Garden State's most iconic symbols, including New Jersey's official state bird, the Eastern Goldfinch, and the historic sentinel, the Barnegat Lighthouse.

The Morristown High School Arts Mentoring Program serves disadvantaged juniors and seniors at Morristown High School, providing the students with an opportunity to learn from professional artists and build their portfolios to further their arts education. More information on the Morris Arts Mentoring program can be found at <http://www.morrisarts.org/programs/mentoring-program/>.

The National Christmas Tree Lighting, which began on Christmas Eve in 1923, is one of America's oldest holiday traditions. At the time, President Calvin Coolidge lit a Christmas tree in front of 3,000 spectators on the Ellipse in

President's Park. Since then, each succeeding President has carried on the tradition of what now has become a month-long event presented by the National Park Foundation and National Park Service. Through the years, the annual event has evolved and in 1954, a "Pathway of Peace," 56 smaller, decorated trees representing all 50 states, five territories, and the District of Columbia were planted surrounding the National Christmas Tree. This year's National Tree Lighting Ceremony is scheduled for Friday December 6, 2013. For more information, see <http://thenationaltree.org/>



Captions 1.2.3.4.5.6: Ornaments created by students from Morristown High School Art Mentoring Program to be displayed on New Jersey Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C.

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Press Contact:
Michael Drewniak
Colin Reed
609-777-2600



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Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000