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## Local arts contest celebrates its 6th year

By Kristi Conner



The LYAS team, from left: Charlie Keohane, Stella Bobrowsky, Isabel Rurka, and John Kalil.  
Photo Jenn Keohane

Know any middle school students looking for a fun winter break activity? The Lafayette Youth Arts Society has opened its sixth annual middle school competition, open to middle schoolers living or attending school in Lafayette who can enter photographs or writing pieces to a panel of professional judges. The lucky winners will take home fabulous prizes worth hundreds of dollars.

The goal of LYAS is to help bring enjoyment into the arts, and to let middle schoolers explore their creative side. The contest gives students an incentive and a goal while leaving the path to the contest entirely up to the middle schooler to navigate.

Students can choose from a variety of prompts including Vibrancy and Early Morning for photography to "You discover you have a superpower!" and "You found a time machine. Where do you go first?" for the writing category.

"The contest gave me the confidence to keep writing and faith in my abilities," past writing winner and current LYAS President Charlie Keohane said. "LYAS has really inspired me to keep writing!"

The LYAS is completely non-profit and was founded in 2012 by high school students Uma Unni and Linnae Johansson. It is fully run by passionate teens who want to help others embrace their creative juices. They rely solely on donations from generous Lafayette individuals and businesses like The Rotary Club, Realtor Lori Legler, and Diablo Rapid Print.

The contest opened Nov. 12 and will accept entries through Jan. 31. If you know a middle schooler who enjoys creative writing or photography, encourage them to enter at [www.lyas.org](http://www.lyas.org).

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