

## Student of the Month December, 2017

VSA Florida is proud to announce **Rubelio M.** and **Summer Lambert** as the December 2017 Students of the Month.



9-year-old Rubelio was nominated by Keith Barber, an art teacher at Pinecrest Elementary School in Immokalee. Mr. Barber writes, “[Rubelio] tries hard at everything he does and has an excellent ‘can do’ attitude.” Rubelio and his mother recently moved to Collier County and are pleased to be settled in Immokalee. Prior to enrolling at Pinecrest Elementary School, Rubelio had not been in a formal classroom. Rubelio is blind and even though he has experienced many more obstacles than most in his 9 years, Mr. Barber has been able to effectively alter Rubelio’s path. Through adaptations, Mr. Barber has been able to ensure Rubelio is able to participate in most art projects, and uses art to teach important general curriculum. These

adaptations and modifications have enabled him to learn shapes, textures and vocabulary. Others that have helped pave the way for Rubelio’s success are Mrs. Alfaro, his assigned aide, and Ms. Morgan, his vision specialist. Rubelio recently won the Superintendent’s Art Award. This honor for outstanding effort and achievement goes to one student in each school per semester. Barber writes, “Rubelio showed both in his picture of a rainbow in the sky, entitled ‘Beautiful Day’.”



14-year-old Summer was nominated by Susan McVeigh, the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Parent Specialist for Flagler County School District and host of a VSA Florida After-School Community Art Class Program since 2012. Ms. McVeigh writes, “Through the years, Summer has completed over 20 art projects using a multitude of varied medias.” Under the tutelage of VSAFL Teaching Artist Chris Kastle, Summer and numerous other students who have been part of this after-school creative session have blossomed through the arts. Now in high school, Summer continues

to define herself and refine her artwork through her sea creature illustrations in Ms. Kastle’s continuing classes. Summer also volunteers in the Flagler Palm Coast BrainChild Club, where she tutors other students with disabilities after school. Her own specific learning disabilities (SLD) become incidental when she shares her own gifts.

In the coming weeks, VSA Florida is looking forward to presenting Rubelio and Summer with their gift certificates and personalized trophies for winning this prestigious award.

The VSA Florida Student of the Month Program is designed to increase public awareness and recognize the impact arts make on students with disabilities statewide. Students who participate in the arts develop creativity, have increased self-confidence, understand teamwork, have increased language and math skills and are generally more engaged.