

# Two NHS Students Win Art Award

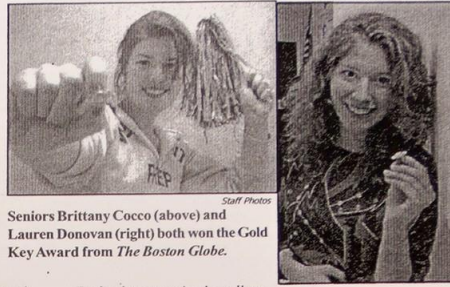
By Annie Bigwood  
Staff Writer

This past month, two Northampton High School Honors Art students proved that they deserve recognition from more than just our student body. Seniors Lauren Donovan and Brittany Cocco were the only two students out of six applicants from NHS to win *The Boston Globe* Scholastic Art Competition's Gold Key Award. The competition, established in 1950, was comprised of 3,560 entries from 398 public and private Massachusetts schools this year. Out of those entries, only 295 portfolios won the Gold Key Award.

"It was nice to finally win something," Donovan said. "I didn't expect anything," said Cocco of her decision to apply for the highly regarded competition.

Both Donovan and Cocco referred to the application process as "stressful." The application called for a 300-500 word written statement explaining the accompanying eight pieces' relation to each other as well as pictures of each.

Art teacher Lisa Leary explained that judges were "looking for exceptional work in all eight pieces," and a "connection between the written and seen portions."

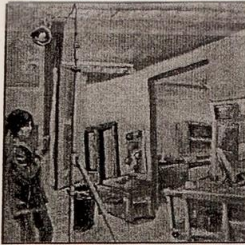


Seniors Brittany Cocco (above) and Lauren Donovan (right) both won the Gold Key Award from *The Boston Globe*.

Each winner received a yellow post card stating that the recipient had won a portfolio nomination award, but it wasn't until the awards ceremony that Donovan and Cocco found out that they had actually won.

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One of Lauren Donovan's pieces that was submitted to the competition.

## Gold Key

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With low expectations for the competition's outcome, Cocco's recent notification of her Silver Key nomination at the national level came as an even bigger surprise. In the past three years, only two of Leary's students have received this prestigious award at the national level: 2005 graduate Mariah Swanson and now Cocco.

Cocco credits the uniqueness of her eight piece series as the reason for her nomination. Each piece was painted on glass, some of them window panes,

collected in junk piles from Northampton residences. Donovan's series includes eight charcoal drawings illustrating a figure interacting with its environment.

Both artists attended the Feb. 11 awards ceremony in Boston. Each Gold Key winner received miniature pom-poms and a pin shaped as a gold key. Cocco hopes to be able to attend the National Awards Ceremony in New York City in May to find out what else the Scholastic Art Awards have to offer.

## Art and music classes shouldn't be treated as frills

To the editor:

I am writing to say that programs in art and music at Northampton High School should not be cut. My daughter, a junior at Northampton High School, is enthusiastic about art and wants to major in art in college.

After my own involvement with NHS for several years, I am especially concerned about the risk of art and music being cut. These programs are not frills. Music, visual arts, and theater programs are central to the education that the school gives through the entire range of the student population, from the top performers to the at-risk students.

For example, in the case of students like my daughter, many colleges look for exposure to the rich and varied cur-

riculum that NHS offers today. We could seriously damage that college-worthiness through budget cuts. Similarly, our at-risk students use art programs to be creative, to use their minds in new ways. Arts help them to succeed, to build confidence, and to stay in school. We should not jeopardize this.

Darien Gardner  
Northampton

## CORRECTION

A letter from Michael DeChiara in yesterday's Gazette incorrectly claimed that Cows Lumber is the biggest landowner in Vermont. The company, however, owns no land in Vermont, according to Cindy Jones, the president of W. D. Cows.

## HOW TO SUBMIT LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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