

HOMEWOOD -- Katie Busby, a third grade student at Gardendale Elementary School, is the winner of this year's congressional holiday card design competition for Alabama students with visual impairments sponsored by the U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus and the UAB School of Optometry. Bachus has sponsored the event every year since he was first elected to Congress in 1992.

Katie, the daughter of Phillip and Liz Busby, has neurofibromatosis, a genetic disorder which causes tumors to grow along nerves which has affected her vision. She was recognized for her outstanding art talent by Bachus at a ceremony on Wednesday at the Homewood Public Library. Bachus and his wife Linda will show Katie's artwork, Snowman, on their holiday cards.

"Katie is an exceptional girl and I'm proud that her talent will be featured on the holiday cards Linda and I send out this year," said Bachus. "All the students who entered the competition, their parents and their teachers are to be commended for their hard work."

Katie likes math, choir and Braille reading. Her vision teacher is Peggy Hoffman with Jefferson County Schools. Katie's winning artwork was done with mud, sugar and fingerpaint.

Several students who participated in this year's competition are winners of previous competitions, including Emily Hill, a 12th grader at Oak Mountain High School, Andy Wood, a 6th grader at Berry Middle School, and Dana Folds, a 5th grader at Clay Elementary School.

"The continued involvement and participation of these previous art winners is inspiring and most appreciated," said Bachus.

Other students who participated in the art competition are:

Michael Mabry, Hope Christian School, 5th grade

Tanika Patton, Center Street Middle School, 7th grade

Cody Holt, Deer Valley Elementary School, 1st grade

Charles Clay "CC" Perry, Bragg Middle School, 8th grade

Lakendra Johnson, Hayes Middle School, 8th grade

Hope Sherrell Williams, Bragg Middle School, 6th grade

Timothy Carver, Hoover High School, 12th grade

Brooke Chumley, Oak Mountain Middle, 6th grade

Anna Grace Deale, Hewitt-Trussville Middle School, 5th grade

Jake Smith, Corner Elementary, 4th grade