

New Bedford High School students producing footwear for \$75,000 Vans Culture Competition

New Bedford High School has been chosen as one of the top 50 schools in the 2019 Vans Custom Culture Competition, which carries a \$75,000 grand prize. Vans Custom Culture was created to inspire and empower high school students to embrace their creativity through art and design and to bring attention to diminishing arts education budgets.

As one of the top 50 semifinalists selected from 500 schools around the country, NBHS art students are asking the community to vote for their design submissions for a chance at the Grand Prize. Vote online at customculture.vans.com. Voters may vote every day through Friday, May 3. Four runners-up will also be selected from the competing high schools, each school receiving \$10,000. Vans will announce the winners on Monday, May 6th.

In addition to their design submissions, the NBHS team had to explain how the \$75,000 grand prize money would be used to benefit their school community if they won. The NBHS team includes Lucas Amaral, Liliana Moreno Cornejo, Jennifer Dinh, Eryn Evangelho, Tiara Hatchett, Nicholas Letourneau, Keegan O'Malley, Aries Robertson, and Jerahmell Valentin.

High school art students across the country were commissioned with two pairs of blank Vans shoes, tasked with illustrating the themes of "Local Flavor" and "Off the Wall."

Lynn Souza, NBPS director of fine arts, noted how art students applied their collective talents to the competition. "This has been a great opportunity for students to follow through on a

project from drafts to a completed product. Students worked together to execute the designs and really had to think about the themes.”

Art teachers used the design templates given by Vans for the students to individually submit ideas. Teachers then discussed the work as a team and reached out to the students who incorporated the strongest design elements based on the themes. Those students, and others interested, chose to work after school to combine their ideas and execute the final designs on the shoes.

Vans, a Division of VF Corporation, is a “leading action sports lifestyle company and the original skate shoe manufacturer since 1966, designing, marketing, and distributing footwear, clothing and accessories.”