

For Immediate Release
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ALLSTON STUDENTS NAMED STATE HANDWRITING WINNERS

First, Fourth, Fifth, and Seventh grade students honored for best handwriting in Massachusetts

Allston, MA—Nicholas Maragos, Elizabeth Kouranov, Thais Traumann-Davis, and Benjamin Rozonoyer were named the 2008 State Handwriting Winners in the National Handwriting Contest sponsored by Zaner-Bloser Educational Publishers. Maragos is a seventh grader, Kouranov a second grader, Traumann-Davis a fifth grader, and Rozonoyer a fourth grader at St. Herman of Alaska Christian School in Allston.

Maragos, Kouranov, Traumann-Davis, and Rozonoyer will go on to compete against State Winners for the title of National Winner selected for each grade level, Grades One through Eight. A Grand National Champion will be selected from all National Winners. This year, more than 177,000 students participated in the contest nationwide.

This is not the first time students from St. Herman of Alaska school have been selected as state winners. In fact, it is the third time Maragos has been chosen as State Handwriting Winner by Zaner-Bloser while attending St. Herman's. Dianne Mira, a Master Calligrapher and one of the homeroom teachers for the school, says "both manuscript and cursive forms of penmanship can be categorized as part of the field of graphic art design because they teach the student basic drawing skills as well as letter formation. Attention to detail, spatial and graphing skills, and free motor development are all acquired while students practice their penmanship." A recent study by Professors Graham and Harris of Vanderbilt University found that the eye-hand coordination needed for penmanship strengthens other areas of learning and students with good penmanship produce better quality written assignments and are better able to express themselves than those who do not. "The art of 'beautiful handwriting' is alive and well at St. Herman's." adds Mira.

"Handwriting instruction improves students' overall performance in reading comprehension and writing skills. Students who write with speed and legibility perform better in testing situations. Students who write legibly feel good about themselves and have an increased academic confidence," says Dennis Williams, National Product Manager for Zaner-Bloser. Williams adds, "Schools that follow a structured handwriting curriculum throughout elementary and middle school—where it is important to maintain good habits—produce high school students who write legibly, and as a result, score higher on standardized tests."

ABOUT ST. HERMAN SCHOOL:

St. Herman School, founded in 1991, is a classical and Christian school for children grades K-8. In our small, multi-aged classes, we provide a setting of individual attention where the relationship between teacher and student is primary. For more information, visit our website at sainthermanschool.org.

ABOUT ZANER-BLOSER:

Zaner-Bloser Educational Publishers, founded in 1888, is the nation's leading publisher of handwriting programs for students in Grades K through 8. The company also publishes spelling, reading, and language arts texts and teaching materials. For more information about our products, visit www.zaner-bloser.com.