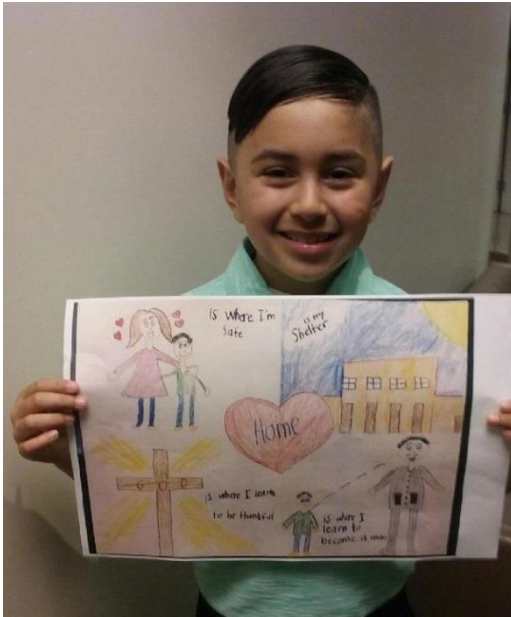


Community Spotlight March 2018 – Vincente Sani



All artists struggle with lack of inspiration sometime, but 10 year old Vincente Sani doesn't let this hold him back. "I didn't really know (what to draw)", he says, thinking back on the creation of his prize winning poster, "I just start drawing and hope that it becomes good."

Vincente is the first place winner of the 2017 "What Home Means to Me" poster contest, held by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, at the Sacramento and northern California region levels. As a result of his first place victory at the regional level, Vincente was able to attend the 2018 Martin Luther King Celebration dinner where he met local leaders like Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg. This contest, made possible by Promise Zone partner the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency, encourages youth in grades K-12 living in assisted and affordable housing to artistically express what having a safe, quality, affordable home means to them. Community art programs like this serve Sacramento Promise Zone

residents by providing experiences for artistic expression which meet residents where they are, in location and need.

A major part of the Promise Zone's work in nurturing sustainable communities is creating opportunities for youth and families to be engaged, empowered, and develop a sense of community ownership through the arts. Chances for artistic expression give young people a chance to develop their voice and see beyond their immediate surroundings. Participants can speak their truth in a safe space where their contribution is not only heard but appreciated.

As a public housing resident in the Zone, Vincente's mother Claudine was able to learn of this opportunity to engage her child through targeted outreach to residents where they live. "It was my mom who signed me up," says Vincente. Using pencil and crayons, he describes home as a place of growth, where he learns "to have manners . . . to do the laundry, do my chores, cook when my mom is sick," as well as a place of safety, "where I know nothing bad will go wrong." To Vincente Sani, home is a place of love.