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## ***Fine Art Auction Benefits Child Art Enrichment Program***

### **Nancy Thomas Gallery Hosts Successful Live Auction**

Hampton, VA- Over 60 works of fine art were auctioned at the Yorktown Gallery of artist Nancy Thomas on May 17<sup>th</sup> to benefit the Monart visual art enrichment program operated by Alternatives - a nonprofit youth development agency in Hampton. The auction highlighted a work by Nancy Thomas as well as other noted Virginia painters, photographers, and jewelers. The highlight of the evening, however, belonged to 4 young artists whose art class work was auctioned before an enthusiastic and generous audience. "Flower Study", an 11 by 17 inch multimedia painting on paper by an 8 year - old Monart student sold for \$400. Each youth painting drew rave reviews and bighearted bids.

Proceeds of \$11,000 from sponsors and bidders will go to benefit the Monart Visual Art Enrichment program which reaches over 800 young people ages 4 – 18 on the Virginia Peninsula who are economically at risk or identified with special needs. The need for Alternative's programs continues to grow as funding for arts programming and cultural enrichment programs that benefit youth and those with special needs or disabilities is increasingly being cut from state and local budgets. Monart teaches students the 5 elements of shape and provides a method for them to draw the elements in a way to produce realistic artwork. The method is combined with a philosophy that creates an environment in which students can experiment, learn and feel safe from criticism or critique. Alternatives operates the only licensed Monart studio in Virginia.

Auction sponsors included: Nancy Thomas Gallery, Ferguson Enterprises, The Great Frame Up, Delegate and Mrs. Phillip Hamilton, Senator and Mrs. John Miller, Riverside Medical Group, Canon Virginia, SunTrust Bank, Courtney Gardner, and Witt Mares



**Art for arts sake**—Gallery owner and artist Nancy Thomas (left) poses with Alternatives' Board members, Sandy Donaldson, Courtney Gardner, and Dr. Paul Aravich at the conclusion of a successful benefit art auction at the Nancy Thomas Gallery.

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