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## **Art Pathways Contest Announced for McAllen Youth** ***Paws, Read, Create: Bring Marty the Cat to Life in Favorite Book Scene***

The McAllen Public Library (MPL) is accepting entries for the Art Pathways Contest, a citywide youth art competition created to highlight the creativity of children and teens. The contest is open to residents ages 5 to 18 with an active library card.

Participants are invited to read a book, paint a favorite scene on an 8-by-10-inch canvas using acrylic paint only, and include Marty the Library Cat in the artwork. Marty, the library's official mascot, is a blue tuxedo cat known for appearing at programs and celebrating a love of reading. Free art kits, including a canvas, paint and brushes, will be available to the first 500 registered participants while supplies last. Artwork must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 8, and will be displayed at MPL locations.

Each branch, including Main, Lark and Palm View, will award first, second and third place in three age categories: 5 to 8; 9 to 13; and 14 to 18. First-place winners will receive an iPad and Apple Pencil, second-place winners will receive wireless headphones and third-place winners will receive a \$100 Walmart gift card.

Mayor Javier Villalobos issued a challenge to parents and educators in community to get involved and bring children and students to the library. City Manager Isaac J. Tawil emphasized the program's broader impact, saying MPL continues to design initiatives that invest directly in local youth. "Art Pathways supports literacy while also building confidence and artistic expression," he said. "When we give young people opportunities to share their talents, we strengthen our community as a whole."

"Art Pathways gives our young readers the opportunity to slow down with a book, connect with a story, then express what the story meant to them. We are proud to create spaces where creativity is not only encouraged but showcased for the entire community," said Kate Horan, Library Director.

For more information, contact 956-681-3000 or visit [www.mcallenlibrary.net](http://www.mcallenlibrary.net)

### **About the City of McAllen**

Founded in 1904 and incorporated in 1911, the City of McAllen has grown from a small agricultural community into one of the most vibrant and fastest-growing cities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Known as the "City of Palms," McAllen serves as a hub for international trade, retail, tourism, and culture in the Rio Grande Valley.

Today, the City employs more than 2,600 dedicated public servants across 41 departments, delivering essential services to a community of more than 150,000 residents. City leaders remain committed to transparent governance, fiscal responsibility, and enhancing quality of life through innovation, infrastructure, and community engagement.

For more information, visit [www.mcallen.net](http://www.mcallen.net).