



120 Mountain Avenue  
Suite 212  
Bloomfield, CT 06002  
Telephone (860) 243-1806  
Fax (860) 243-0100  
[www.covenanttocare.org](http://www.covenanttocare.org)

**Contact: Caryl Hallberg, Executive Director**

860.243.1806 x18

[challberg@covenanttocare.org](mailto:challberg@covenanttocare.org)

## Press Release

### Representative Tony Hwang to judge The Discovered Spirit Project Masks –

Covenant to Care for Children (CCC) is pleased to announce that Representative Tony Hwang has agreed to act as one of the judges for this year's Discovered Spirit Project. This project is for children and youth with any experience in Connecticut's Department of Children and Families, the Foster Care system or the CCC Mentoring Program. The project is intended to give them a voice by encouraging self-expression through art.

Words alone are not enough to express what children feel. This is especially true when they are faced with the complex issues of divorce, grief, violence, abuse, neglect or coping with poverty. The Discovered Spirit Project gives a voice to these children to express a wide range of emotions and help them work through conflicts and traumas. There is an array of outcomes with the children's masks from the whimsical to the evocative. While expressing themselves in this visual way, the children gain a sense of empowerment that can help them develop a positive self-image and improve their self-esteem.

Children created the masks guided by professional Connecticut artists, Donna Frustere, Karen Wright of Hartford, Katrina Franzen of Southport, Marta Cunha, and Julie Nearing of Middletown, who are volunteering their time and talents to the project.

Southport Galleries in Fairfield County will exhibit the masks created by the children, along with examples of the professional artists' work. Sarah Biggers, gallery manager, has generously allowed use of this beautiful new Southport gallery located in the renovation of the village's historic hardware store. At the Discovered Spirit Project gallery opening reception on Sunday, March 28, 2010, the masks will be available for sale with all proceeds supporting the programs CCC. Representative Hwang, along with other celebrity judges, Representative Gary Holder-Winfield, Congressman John Larson and Yvonne Harris of the Hartford Artist Collective, will present awards for the masks showing the greatest originality, presentation, and representation.

After the gallery artists' reception, the masks will be available for viewing and purchase at the gallery through March 31, 2010. During the following ten months, the masks will travel to faith-based sites throughout Connecticut as a traveling exhibit.

For Release 9 a.m. EST, March 4, 2010

The goal of the Discovered Spirit Project is to bring broader awareness of Covenant to Care for Children and the children we serve, offer an opportunity at recognition and accomplishment to the children participating, and build support of our programs.

This is a free invitation event. “We are confident that the support of Representative Hwang and our other judges will help us bring greater awareness of our children and our programs.” says Covenant to Care for Children CEO, Caryl Hallberg.

Southport Galleries is located at 330 Pequot Ave I Southport, [www.southportgallery.com](http://www.southportgallery.com) . For more information, please contact Covenant to Care for Children or visit the website at [www.covenanttocare.org](http://www.covenanttocare.org).

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