

RMC STUDENT ARTIST'S MURAL EARNS A YEAR OF FOOD

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BILLINGS – A daughter, following in her father's footsteps, got a bigger reward from the mural she created at Rocky Mountain College than the prize for winning an art competition.

Sure, a meal ticket for campus breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks was a great prize and welcome for any budget-minded student.

"But what's really neat is my art is in the same place as my dad's," she said. "It's cool to follow my father like that."

Rebecca's art is a three feet by 10 feet mural in the student dining hall of Bair Family Student Center that depicts "student life at Rocky," she said. Her dad – RMC Fine Arts Professor Jim Baken – has a painting displayed over the fireplace in Fraley Lounge, adjacent to the dining hall. A life size-horse painted by him is also in Fraley.

A senior majoring in art, Rebecca, 22, was notified in May that she won the mural competition, sponsored by the campus food service contractor, Sodexo. The prize is a meal ticket worth \$1,800, according to Curt Boehm, Sodexo general manager.

"We don't have a lot of money, but we do have food," Boehm remarked. "We thought this was a good way to involve students in creating a welcoming place to come for meals."

The mural competition was open to faculty, staff and students. The only condition was the design be as detailed as possible and should reflect life at RMC.

"We narrowed down the entries to three for the student body to vote on," Bohem said.

For Rebecca, winning is a vindication that her art is on the right track.

"It means a lot to me besides free meals, which is great," she said. "But I love knowing that I'm leaving something at Rocky that students will see for years."

Photos of Rebecca working on the mural may be seen at photos.rocky.edu.