

Northern State artist in running for statue in U.S. Capitol

From staff and wire reports

Northern State University senior Ben Victor is one of four finalists in a competition to create a bronze sculpture of Nevada Indian activist Sarah Winnemucca for the U.S. Capitol.



"That's Victor pretty humbling to be a finalist," Victor said. "When I got the word of

Student has commission for statues at Aberdeen airport as well

this, and I'm still a student, I was shocked."

The only Nevada resident in the running is longtime art teacher Sara Sweetwater of Elko. The other finalists are Ed Dwight of Denver and Gareth Curtiss of Olympia, Wash.

When completed, the Winnemucca bronze statue will stand somewhere between 7 and 9 feet in height and be displayed in the Capitol's National Statuary Hall.

Winnemucca, who was born in 1844 and died in 1891, was the daughter and granddaughter of Paiute chiefs. She wrote extensively about the federal government's treatment of Indians.

For the 24-year-old Victor, recognition as a talented sculptor has come at an early age.

The city of Aberdeen commissioned him to sculpt up to three statues commemorating soldiers for Aberdeen Regional

Airport's War Memorial project at the new terminal.

In late spring he completed the first statue—The Victory Soldier. The figure stands 7 1/2 feet tall, holding an American flag with a look of pride and determination on his face.

The statue will be unveiled at the terminal's grand opening Nov. 11, Veterans Day.

The finalists are scheduled to create small-scale versions

of the statue and make a presentation in February.

Each state is allowed two statues in the famous hall at the Capitol but Nevada has only one. A statue of the late U.S. Sen. Patrick McCarran of Nevada was included in 1960.

The Nevada Legislature passed a bill designating Winnemucca for the state's second statue in 2001. The Nevada Women's History Project is in charge of fund-raising and hopes to reach \$150,000.

Online — Nevada Women's History Project: www.nevadawomen.org