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McCormick Freedom Project Announces Winners in National Student Expression Contest

Contest Enables a Look at the First Amendment Through the Eyes of Teens

CHICAGO, March 10, 2010— The McCormick Freedom Project is celebrating youth voices by rewarding 12 talented high school students for their depictions of contemporary freedom issues. In the Freedom Project's national student expression contest, *Seen & Heard*, students express their thoughts on contemporary social, political or economic issues using four media outlets: editorial cartoon, film, photojournalism and Web design. Each category includes a first, second and third prize winner. The winning students will receive a cash prize as well as a trip to Chicago for themselves, a parent, and their teacher to attend an awards ceremony at the *Seen & Heard* exhibit in May.

"The goal of our annual student expression contest is to debunk the adage that 'children should be seen and not heard,'" said Nathan Richie, director of programs and exhibits, McCormick Freedom Project. "We were pleased to receive nearly 500 terrific entries this year. It is often said that students' voices are among the most powerful in the nation, but also among the most censored. Since we are an organization dedicated to freedom and the First Amendment, it is our goal to give teens an outlet to make their voices heard."

"It's a great experience to have your artwork showcased," said Jacob Colon, 2009 *Seen & Heard* award winner. "It's also important as a young person to be aware of what the First Amendment truly means and its significance to Americans."

The 2010 *Seen & Heard* winners include the following individuals:

Editorial Cartoon Category

- First Place: John McKeever, *The Governator*, Western High School in Davie, FL
- Second Place: Megan Elizabeth Hotard, *Death Toll*, Belle Chasse High School in Belle Chasse, LA
- Third Place: Misael Rojas, *Magic 8 Ball*, Eisenhower High School in Houston, TX

Film Category

- First Place: Greg Hyde and Eric Wawrzyniak, *Civil Rights*, Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein, IL
- Second Place: Katie Schroeder, *We Shall Be Free*, Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein, IL
- Third Place: Diana Burgess, *Freedoms Worth Fighting For*, McCallum High School in Austin, TX

Photojournalism Category

- First Place: Corrie Koper, *Morphing*, Analy High School in Sebastopol, CA
- Second Place: Grant Thompson McClure, *Student Achievement Gap*, McCallum High School in Austin, TX
- Third Place: Leah VonEhrenkrook, *Freedom to love her*, Analy High School in Sebastopol, CA

Web Design Category:

- First Place: Haroon Badat, *From Subsistence to Surplus*, Eisenhower High School in Houston, TX
- Second Place: Ger Chang, *Dream Act*, Weber Institute in Stockton, CA
- Third Place: Kathleen Buckley, *The Trauma of Television*, Seminole High School in North Seminole, FL

The 12 finalists from each category were selected by a panel of guest judges assembled by the Freedom Project staff. Each winner will receive a cash prize and an all-expense-paid trip to attend an awards ceremony at the Newberry Library, where their winning entries will be displayed in a special exhibit. In addition, an overall contest winner will receive the *Mary Beth Tinker Student Choice Award* and a \$1000 cash prize. This student will be chosen by a student panel convened by the Freedom Project.

“The Freedom Project hopes that this contest and exhibit showcase the benefits of free expression enabled by the First Amendment,” said Richie. “When young people practice their First Amendment rights, enhanced appreciation follows, along with a greater commitment to defending those rights in the future.”

Special Exhibit:

On April 17 Freedom Project hosts a temporary exhibit, at the Newberry Library in downtown Chicago, showcasing students’ work from across the country and depicting their thoughts on contemporary freedom issues. The exhibit reveals that the First Amendment flourishes in our nation’s schools and among its students. Through student media and expression, the Freedom Project hopes to inspire other teens and citizens to value the role the First Amendment plays in protecting freedom for future generations. The exhibit runs through May 28.

About the McCormick Freedom Project

The McCormick Freedom Project, formerly the McCormick Freedom Museum, enables informed participation in our democracy by demonstrating the relevance of the First Amendment and the role it plays in the ongoing struggle to define and defend freedom. Through extensive outreach initiatives our audiences improve their understanding of the First Amendment and its importance to our democracy, engage in civic dialogue, and prepare for their role as citizens. The McCormick Freedom Project is part of the McCormick Foundation. To learn more about the Freedom Project’s new outreach program visit FreedomProject.US.

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