FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2025

Kirkwood and St. Louis Students Win Prizes in C-SPAN's National Documentary Competition

Students explore issues most important to them and their communities in messages to the president of the United States

Climate, education policies, and health care among top topics addressed

WASHINGTON (March 12, 2025) — Today C-SPAN announced that students in Kirkwood and St. Louis, Missouri, are 2025 winners in C-SPAN's 21st annual StudentCam competition.

Nora Schroeder, a student at Kirkwood High School, is a second-prize winner and will receive $1,500 for the video, "The Radioactive Waste Crisis: A Hidden Hazard." This documentary will air on C-SPAN on April 3 at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day.

Rowan Herr, a student at Kirkwood High School, is a third-prize winner and will receive $750 for the documentary, "Invasive Carp."

The following students are honorable mention prize winners:

Lily Driscoll will receive $250 for the documentary, "Equality Printed in the Constitution: Racial Bias in Wrongful Convictions."

Kylie Kohl will receive $250 for the documentary, "Nutritional Education."

Riley Devers and Evie Deckert will receive $250 for the documentary, "Bridging the Divide."

Claire Krob will receive $250 for the documentary, "The Injustice in the Mental Health System."

Ryan Pinkerton, Hunter Smith and Drake Clifton, students at Christian Brothers College High School in St. Louis, will receive $250 for the video, "The Search to Reduce Crime in Saint Louis."

C-SPAN also recognizes educators Eric Turley, Janet Depasquale and Adam Rowland at Kirkwood High School and Dan Dilber at Christian Brothers College High School, who served as advisers in the StudentCam competition.

C-SPAN, in cooperation with its cable and satellite television partners, asked middle and high school students to address the theme — ***"Your Message to the President: What issue is most important to you or your community?"***

Now in its 21st year, this project-based learning experience asked students to explore and analyze matters of personal, local or national importance. In response, C-SPAN received over 1,700 entries and nearly 3,500 students participated from 42 states and Washington, D.C. The most popular topics addressed were:

- Climate, Environment, and Land Use (11%)
- K–12 Education Policies and the Cost of College (10%)
- Health Care and Mental Health (10%)
- Gun Violence, School Safety, and Firearm Policies (9%)
- Inflation, Taxes, Government Spending, and the Economy (9%)

“Congratulations to all of the incredibly talented young students who won awards in this year’s competition! Through in-depth research and interviews with an array of topical and technical experts, you have crafted impactful short stories that capture issues of wide public interest and importance,” said C-SPAN’s Director of Education Relations Craig McAndrew. “Your documentaries set a very high bar for future StudentCam filmmakers, and you should be proud knowing your work will inspire your peers and foster thoughtful consideration from all audiences. We can’t wait to see what you do next!”

C-SPAN is funded by America’s cable and satellite television companies as a commercial free public service. In Kirkwood and St. Louis, C-SPAN is available through Spectrum, our local partner in StudentCam.

“As a long-time supporter of StudentCam, we are continually inspired by the curiosity and creativity students bring to C-SPAN’s annual competition,” said Adam Falk, Senior Vice President of State Government Affairs for Spectrum. “The program provides a unique opportunity for young people to showcase the critical thinking, problem solving and civic engagement skills essential for informed and active communities. We celebrate this year’s winners and look forward to watching them continue to follow their passion for storytelling through this medium.”

In addition to the grand-prize and first-prize winners, C-SPAN is awarding 16 second prizes, 32 third prizes and 97 honorable mention prizes. These winning videos will receive cash awards of $1,500, $750 and $250, respectively. The StudentCam competition has awarded over $1.6 million in prizes since 2004.

High school students competed on a regional level, with the United States divided into three regions: East, Central and West. Middle school students were judged on a national basis. The grand-prize winner was selected nationally among all regions and grade levels.

The 150 winning videos can be viewed at studentcam.org and may be used in a broadcast with attribution to C-SPAN. To schedule an interview with one or more of the winning students, please contact Pam McGorry at pmcgorry@c-span.org.

The annual StudentCam competition is funded by the C-SPAN Education Foundation. Videos were evaluated by a panel of educators and C-SPAN representatives based on the thoughtful examination of the competition’s theme, quality of expression, inclusion of varying sides of the documentary’s topic, and effective incorporation of C-SPAN programming.

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About C-SPAN Classroom:

C-SPAN Classroom uses the network's programs on public affairs, coverage of Congress, nonfiction books and American history to create free digital tools for teachers, students, and the public to use in classrooms, in projects or for research. C-SPAN Classroom's website provides social studies teachers with access to thousands of free resources, including short current events videos, Lesson Plans and Bell Ringers, plus Constitution Clips and On This Day in History events. Engage with C-SPAN Classroom on X and Facebook.

About C-SPAN:
C-SPAN, the private nonprofit public affairs media organization providing Americans with unfiltered access to government proceedings, was created in 1979 as a public service by the cable television industry and is primarily funded through fees paid by cable and satellite television companies that provide the C-SPAN Networks to subscribers. C-SPAN connects with millions of Americans through its three commercial-free TV networks, C-SPAN Radio, C-SPAN podcasts, the C-SPAN Now app, a new connected-TV streaming app C-SPAN Select, C-SPAN.org and various social media platforms. The C-SPAN Networks' video-rich website contains nearly 300,000 hours of searchable and shareable content. Engage with C-SPAN on X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Threads, and YouTube, and stay connected through weekly and daily newsletters.

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