



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2025**

Philadelphia Area 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 Atco, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr and Doylestown, Pennsylvania are 2025 winners in C-SPAN's 21st annual StudentCam competition.

Daniel Aasa, a student at Winslow Township High School in Atco, is a first-prize winner and will receive \$3,000 for the video, "Saving Sudan: U.S. Aiding in a Forgotten Crisis." This documentary will air on C-SPAN on April 20 at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day.

Ione Saunders, a student at Science Leadership Academy in Philadelphia, is a third-prize winner and will receive \$750 for the video, "Disappeared in America," about addiction in Kensington, Philadelphia.

Desmond Maggione, Nati Roemer-Block and Jai Lapp Yoder, students at Science Leadership Academy, are honorable mention prize winners and will receive \$250 for the video, "The Battle of Misinformation: Staying Informed in the Modern Age."

Matthew Dougherty, Gage Arcaro and Israel Santiago, students at Central High School in Philadelphia, are honorable mention prize winners and will receive \$250 for the video, "Undocumented," about undocumented immigration.

Hafsa Kanchwala, Emily Sidlow and Emi Maeda, students at The Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr, are honorable mention prize winners and will receive \$250 for the video, "Our Message to the President: Affordable Housing."

Megha Mallavarapu, a student at Lenape Middle School in Doylestown, is an honorable mention prize winner and will receive \$250 for the video, "Clean Water: Not a Luxury, But a Right."

C-SPAN also recognizes educators Gregory Wake at Winslow Township High School, Michael Clapper at Science Leadership Academy, Michael Horwitz at Central High School, Athan Biss at The Baldwin School and Brian Blair at Lenape Middle 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 Atco, Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr and Doylestown, C-SPAN is available through Comcast, our local partner in StudentCam.

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.

###

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](#).

Contacts:

Pam McGorry, Education Program Senior Specialist

202-626-4861

pmcgorry@c-span.org

Robin Newton, Media Relations Specialist

202-626-8910

rnewton@c-span.org