FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015

C-SPAN ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2015 STUDENTCAM DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

Students use video cameras to address public policy issues in their communities

WASHINGTON (March 4, 2015) – C-SPAN today announced the winners of the national 2015 StudentCam documentary competition. 150 student and 53 teacher prizes, totaling $100,000 in cash prizes, will be awarded for winning documentaries.

Each year since 2006, C-SPAN has invited middle school students (grades 6-8) and high school students (grades 9-12) to produce short documentaries on an issue of national importance. This year, students used video cameras to answer the question, “The Three Branches and You: tell a story that demonstrates how a policy, law, or action by either the executive, legislative, or judicial branch has affected you or your community.”
In response, C-SPAN received 2,280 video submissions from almost 5,000 students in 45 states and Washington. Students worked in teams or as individuals to address a wide range of public policy issues, from education to healthcare to minimum wage and immigration.

“Now in its 11th year, the competition saw its greatest number of participants ever,” says Craig McAndrew, C-SPAN Manager of Education Relations. “All aspects of these student video productions, including the research, planning, and diverse range of expert interviews, demonstrate the highest levels of critical thought and initiative.”

“StudentCam affords our nation’s youth a platform to express their opinions on national issues, and we’re confident these documentaries will prove eye opening and inspire viewers across the country.”

The most popular topic among the 2015 documentaries was education. Twelve percent of entries were about education issues such as the Common Core, No Child Left Behind, and standardized testing, followed by healthcare (11 percent), and the economy (10 percent).

High school students competed on a regional level with the U.S. being divided into three regions, West, Central, and East. Middle school students were judged on a national basis. The Grand Prize winners were selected nationally among all regions and grade levels.

Anna Gilligan, Katie Demos, and Michael Lozovoy, eighth graders at the School for the Creative and Performing Arts in Lexington, Ky., will share $5,000 as Grand Prize winners in C-SPAN’s national 2015 StudentCam competition for their video entitled, "The Artificial Wage," about minimum wage. This video will air at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day on April 29, 2015.

Severiano Romo, Alexis Rainery, and Molly Kerwick, seniors at the Metropolitan Arts Institute in Phoenix, Ariz., will share $3,000 as First Prize winners in the West region for their documentary, "An IDEA for Tomorrow," about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This video will air on C-SPAN at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day on April 24, 2015.

McKinleigh Lair, a senior at Jenks High School in Jenks, Okla., will receive $3,000 as First Prize winner in the Central region for her documentary, “Dam it, Tulsa! Fix the River,” about federal funding for natural resource management. This video will air on C-SPAN at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day on April 27, 2015.

Matthew Post, John Caporaletti, and Keza Levine, freshmen at Sherwood High School in Sandy Spring, Md., will share $3,000 as First Prize winners in the East region for their documentary, “School Lunches – Healthier Hunger-Free Kids,” about the School Lunch Program. This video will air on C-SPAN at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day on April 28, 2015.

Anna Pinkerton and Elizabeth Budin, eighth grade students at Eastern Middle School in Silver Spring, Md., are national First Prize winners in the Middle School division. Anna and Elizabeth will share $3,000 for their First Prize documentary, “Dare to Dream,” about Medical Research Funding and Cystic Fibrosis. This video will air on C-SPAN at 6:50 a.m. ET and throughout the day on April 23, 2015.

In addition to the Grand Prize and four First Prize winners, C-SPAN is awarding 16 Second Prize winners, 32 Third Prize winners and 97 Honorable Mentions. These winning videos will receive cash prizes of $1,500, $750 and $250 respectively.
This year C-SPAN also awarded a secondary prize of $500 for the entry that was deemed the “Fan Favorite.” For five days, the public was presented with the opportunity to cast votes for their favorite documentary among the top five winners. McKinleigh Lair received 119,258 votes for her video, “Dam it, Tulsa! Fix the River” and so has been named C-SPAN’s 2015 StudentCam Fan Favorite.

Each winning video is available at http://www.studentcam.org/winners15.htm and may be used in a broadcast with attribution to C-SPAN. To schedule an interview with one or more winning students or with C-SPAN education staff, please contact Pam McGorry, Education Programs Specialist, at 202.626.4861.

The annual competition is sponsored 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 is a free membership service dedicated to supporting educators’ use of C-SPAN programming and websites in their classes or for research. Members of C-SPAN Classroom may access free Timely Teachable Videos and video clips for use in the classroom, as well as lesson plans, handouts and ways to connect with other C-SPAN Classroom members. C-SPAN Classroom has reached more than one million students since its inception in 1987. For more information on C-SPAN Classroom visit the website: http://www.c-spanclassroom.org/ or follow on twitter: @CSPAN_Classroom.

**About C-SPAN:** Created by the cable TV industry and now in 100 million TV households, C-SPAN programs three public affairs television networks in both SD and HD; C-SPAN Radio, heard in Washington DC and nationwide via XM Satellite Radio; and a video-rich website which hosts the C-SPAN Video Library. Visit http://www.c-span.org/.