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Teen Filmmakers Honored With Project VoiceScape Awards

Best Documentary, Most Inspiring Documentary and Audience Favorite Films Recognized During a Reception at the Newseum in D.C.

Washington, D.C. – Oct. 6, 2011 – The Adobe and PBS Foundations, together with the PBS series POV, announced the 2011 Project VoiceScape Award winners tonight at a reception hosted by journalist, moderator and bestselling author Gwen Ifill, along with PBS President and CEO Paula Kerger, at the Newseum in Washington D.C. Winners for Best Documentary, Most Inspiring Documentary and Audience Favorite were recognized along with 18 young filmmakers who were finalists in the Project VoiceScape national initiative. Awards were chosen by two expert juries and an online vote, respectively.

[Project VoiceScape](#) promotes and honors the work of aspiring young documentarians, ages 14-19. Earlier this year, 15 short films were chosen from among 240 submissions as finalists for the Project VoiceScape awards. Teens producing these films received a \$2,000 grant for their projects and mentoring with professional filmmakers.

Morgan Wilcock, Emileigh Potter and Angel Gatus, tonight's winners for Best Documentary, Most Inspiring Documentary and the Audience Award, respectively, were presented with trophies recognizing their accomplishments. All Project VoiceScape finalists (see complete list [here](#)) were honored with plaques.

"All 15 documentary projects were winners from my perspective," said Kerger. "I am tremendously impressed by the creativity and talent of these young people, as well as the range of subjects they examined. I am proud that PBS and the PBS Foundation are partnering with POV and the Adobe Foundation to encourage and celebrate the work of the next generation of filmmakers."

[Morgan Wilcock](#), winner for Best Documentary, was honored for her film, "[This Gay and Age](#)," which explores the evolving expectations surrounding teen gays and lesbians due to stereotypes and media influences. Wilcock was mentored by filmmaker [Natalia Almada](#), the recipient of the 2009 Sundance Documentary Directing Award for the POV film "El General." Almada is a MacDowell Colony Fellow, a

2008 Guggenheim Fellow and a 2010 USA Artist Fellow. Her other credits include the POV films “El Velador” (2012) and “Al Otro Lado” (2006).

Wilcock, 17, from Minneapolis, Minn., commented, “Using one-on-one interviews, I wished to expose the human side of the teens featured in my film — being gay or lesbian does not define who they are, even though popular culture often creates this illusion.”

“This Gay and Age” was selected by the POV Best Documentary Jury consisting of [Maria Finitzo](#) and [Bernardo Ruiz](#), who cited the film’s “sophisticated and multi-layered approach, and innovative blend of personal filmmaking that also addresses a broader social issue” as the reason it was chosen. Finitzo is a two-time Peabody Award-winning social issue documentary filmmaker. Ruiz is the director and producer of “American Experience: Roberto Clemente” and winner of the ALMA Award for Outstanding Made for Television Documentary.

[Emileigh Potter](#), winner for Most Inspiring Documentary, was honored for her film, “[The DREAMER](#),” a look at the struggles that Benita (Benny) Veliz, the poster child for the DREAM Act, encountered to fulfill her dream.

Potter was mentored by [Jeremy Levine](#), an Emmy Award-winning director, producer and editor. Levine’s credits include the POV feature documentary “Good Fortune” as well as “Walking the Line,” “Everything’s Cool,” “House of Rath” and “Two Towns of Jasper.”

“I want people to know that Benny is an asset to this country,” said Potter, 17, from San Antonio, Texas. “I hope the audience will take away that not all illegal immigrants are ‘criminals.’ They want to live the American Dream. They want to get the best education that they deserve.”

Most Inspirational Documentary was chosen by a POV Executive Jury including POV Executive Producer [Simon Kilmurry](#) and POV Co-Executive Producer [Cynthia Lopez](#).

[Angel Gatus](#), winner of the Audience Award, was honored for her project, “[Musical Warrior](#),” a film about her young brother Austin’s battle with cancer and how he inspires others to care through music and friendship.

[Sharese Bullock-Bailey](#), an educator, producer, strategic consultant and global youth media expert, mentored Gatus in completing “Musical Warrior.” Bullock-Bailey’s credits include the POV feature documentary “Off and Running,” as well as “Beyond Borders” and “Youth Speak Out on Education.”

Gatus, 17, from San Diego, Calif., said, “I dedicated ‘Musical Warrior’ to the story of Austin’s fight against leukemia and hope the film will inspire others. At first it was hard to reopen some of the very difficult moments but as I walked through the memories, I learned to focus on what an amazing person Austin has become.”

The 2011 Project VoiceScape Audience Award was selected by popular vote of visitors to the [Project VoiceScape website](#) Sept. 12-30, 2011.

The three award-winning documentaries will be featured on the [POV website](#), [PBS Teachers website](#) and [Adobe Foundation website](#).

Project VoiceScape

Project VoiceScape is a project of Adobe Youth Voices, Adobe Foundation's global signature philanthropy program; POV, public television's award-winning showcase for independent nonfiction films; and PBS. Project VoiceScape provides funding and pairs leading documentary filmmakers with emerging teen artists nationwide. For more information, visit www.pbs.org/pov/voicescape.

About POV

Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and now in its 24th season on PBS, the award-winning POV is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today's best independent documentary filmmakers. POV, which airs June-September with primetime specials during the year, has brought more than 300 documentaries to millions nationwide. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's social issues. More information is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

About PBS Foundation

The mission of the PBS Foundation is to solicit funding for PBS by seeking extraordinary grants and gifts. Working collaboratively with member stations, the PBS Foundation's fundraising efforts benefit and enhance the system as a whole by providing a source for revenue at the highest level. The PBS Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization and a 509(a)(3) supporting organization of PBS. For more information, visit <http://www.pbs.org/foundation>.

About PBS

PBS, with its nearly 360 member stations, offers all Americans — from every walk of life — the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each month, PBS reaches 124 million people through television and 20 million people online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS' broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS' premier children's TV programming and its website, pbskids.org, are parents' and teachers' most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information about PBS is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org websites on the Internet, or by following PBS on Twitter, Facebook or through our apps for mobile devices. Specific program information and updates for press are available at www.pbs.org/pressroom or by following PBSPressroom on Twitter.

About the Adobe Foundation

The Adobe Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private foundation created and funded by Adobe Systems Incorporated to leverage human, technological and financial resources to drive social change and community improvements.

About Adobe Youth Voices

Adobe Youth Voices is the Adobe Foundation's global philanthropic initiative that empowers youth from underserved communities with digital media skills so they can comment on their world, share their ideas and take action on issues that are important to them. By harnessing the energy and insight of youth 13-

19 years old, Adobe Youth Voices aims to inspire a dialogue for change in their communities. The program engages youth to express themselves through documentary videos, photography, print media, radio diaries, animation, Web communications and other media. Since 2006, the Adobe Youth Voices global network has grown to more than 700 sites, grantees and organizations in 45 countries, and has engaged more than 76,000 youth and 4,000 educators in schools and out-of-school programs. For more information, visit www.youthvoices.adobe.com.