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**Heartland Truly Moving Pictures Announces Winners of First  
High School Film Competition**

*Heartland encourages young filmmakers with cash prizes and awards*

**INDIANAPOLIS (Aug. 18, 2010)** – Heartland Truly Moving Pictures announced the winners of the inaugural Heartland High School Film Competition today, honoring aspiring, young filmmakers from across the country.

Grand Prize winner John Gordon of Dallas, Texas took top honors with his film *Clay*. Gordon's short film embodies the 2010 Competition's theme of HOPE and tells the story of a boy trapped in the rubble after the Jan. 12, 2010 Haitian earthquake. By recalling happy memories, the boy strives to hold onto hope in order to stay alive.

"My short film takes place during the traumatic event of the Haitian earthquake, and was made to instill a quiet sense of hope in the audience," said the now 18-year-old Gordon, who was a senior in high school when he made the film. "When I received the call to inform me that I had won, my heart was beating at the speed of light...and I was glad that my work had been recognized."

As the Grand Prize winner, Gordon will be awarded \$2,500, paid travel and accommodations for him and one parent/guardian to attend the 2010 Heartland Film Festival, along with two FEST Passes to the 2010 Heartland Film Festival where *Clay* will be screened as part of the Heartland High School Film Competition shorts program. He will also be honored onstage during the 2010 Heartland Film Festival Awards Gala.

Gordon, who is now enrolled in the Film program at Full Sail University in Winter Park, Fla., plans to save the money he won to make another short film during college or immediately following.

"We believe that the best way to encourage young filmmakers is to provide them with opportunities and resources," said Jeffrey L. Sparks, president and CEO of Heartland Truly Moving Pictures. "That's exactly what the Heartland High School Film Competition does: it provides the opportunity for aspiring filmmakers to showcase their work that displays integrity and heart, and it rewards them with the financial resources necessary for them to continue pursuing their dreams."

Other winners include the four finalists: Regina Nicholson of Long Beach, Calif. (*Glimpse of Horizon*), Sarah Johnson of Matthews, N.C. (*I am Afraid*), Melody C. Miller of Canyon, Calif. (*A Hat, Some Change and a Shoe*) and Evan Trout of Fishers, Ind. (*Lady and the Champ*).

Johnson, Miller, Nicholson and Trout will each be awarded \$500 and two FEST Passes to the 2010 Heartland Film Festival where their films will be screened as part of the Heartland High School Film Competition shorts program. They will also receive recognition during the 2010 Heartland Film Festival Awards Gala.

During Heartland's inaugural High School Film Competition, aspiring high school filmmakers were given four months to concept, shoot and edit their own 10-minute film that embodied the 2010 theme: HOPE. The competition was open to all currently enrolled high school students who had not graduated prior to the spring of 2010. Film submissions were judged on criteria similar to that of the Heartland Film Festival, including artistic excellence, technical merit and representation of Heartland's organizational values such as: hope, integrity, tolerance and courage.

Winners' films will be screened as part of the Heartland High School Film Competition shorts program during the 2010 Heartland Film Festival, Oct. 14-23 in Indianapolis, Ind. The complete schedule of films and special events will be announced Sept. 23. Tickets go on sale Sept. 24. For additional information, visit [HeartlandFilmFestival.org](http://HeartlandFilmFestival.org).

The 2011 Heartland High School Film Competition theme is COURAGE. The call for entries will open Jan. 15, 2011.

*Heartland Truly Moving Pictures™, a national, independent, non-profit arts organization, was established in 1991 to recognize and honor filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life. Its flagship event, the Heartland Film Festival®, launched in 1991 and runs each October in Indianapolis, screening independent films from around the world. Each year, the Festival awards more than \$100,000 in cash prizes and presents its Crystal Heart Awards to the top-judged submissions. Heartland has awarded more than \$2.2 million to support filmmakers during the last 18 years. The organization's Truly Moving Picture Award was created to honor films released theatrically that align with Heartland's mission. By bestowing a watermark to honored films, the award allows studios and distributors to inform audiences of a film's uplifting message and appeal. Heartland is also dedicated to its relationship with the National Collaboration for Youth and its expanding F.I.L.M., "Finding Inspiration in Literature & Movies," Project. For more information, visit [TrulyMovingPictures.org](http://TrulyMovingPictures.org).*

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