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YOUNG FILMMAKERS CELEBRATED AT

THIMUN QATAR NORTHWESTERN FILM FESTIVAL

March 27, 2016 (Doha) — Talented young high school filmmakers from around the world have been recognized at this year's 7th THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival. The annual international filmmaking competition addresses a range of social issues – globally and locally - while encouraging high school students to develop their filmmaking skills.

The winning films addressed a variety of topics including: teen suicide, illiteracy and child labor in India, social media's impact on society, as well as specific historical events such as Japan's 'Comfort Women.' The winners were chosen from 82 submissions worldwide.

"The festival offers talented high school students a chance to direct their filmmaking skills toward social problems and human issues that need illuminating," said Everette E. Dennis, dean and CEO of NU-Q.

The winners were announced at the Gala Awards Night. The award for best picture was presented to Daniel Kai Shen from Taipei American School in Taipei City, Taiwan for "Our Art, Our Voices." His compelling and emotive film investigates the suppression of indigenous people in Taiwan under the rule of Japan and Kuomintang, and how the act of forbidding anyone from speaking their native tongue has affected their long-term cultural identity.

Ghufrane Daymi from Qatar Academy in Doha, Qatar won both best national picture and best junior film for "Life Between the Grains." A nostalgic depiction of Qatar's Bedouin heritage, which is showcased through different generations discussing the peace of living in the desert, and their connection with the land where it is said their "money and roots were made."

Also presented at the event – and voted on during the evening by the guests – was the "The People's Choice Award." The winner of that award was Mohammed Ali Faisal Valiyaveettil from Birla Public School in Doha, Qatar for his film "Human Capital."

Further filmmaking winners included:

“Best Editing” - Jacob Nicholas Alcala from Winchester Jebel Ali in Dubai, United Arab Emirates for “Connectedly Disconnected” - a topical look at the role of social media and its negative impact on real-life conversations and connections.

“Best Sound” - Kevin Sun Yuanduo from United World College of South East Asia in Singapore for “The Haunting Melody” - highlighting the issue of suicide as a biggest killer of teenagers.

“Best Cinematography” - Mohammed Ali Faisal Valiyaveettil from Birla Public School in Doha, Qatar for “Human Capital” - a deep dive into India’s illiteracy rates and child labor issues.

“Best Story” - Tulein Hamdan from the American Community School in Amman, Jordan for “Grateful” – the story of two different boys, from two different backgrounds, and their approach to appreciating the good in their lives.

“Best Poster” – Seorin Park from United World College of South East Asia in Singapore for “Discomfort Women” – a harrowing film about ‘Comfort Women,’ sexually enslaved by the Japanese military during World War II, telling the story of their modern day struggle for recognition and government action.

Lisa Martin, director, THIMUN Qatar, said: “We have a wonderful display of young talent at this year’s film festival, with some of the most interesting and diverse films having been nominated. The THIMUN Qatar office is honored to continue its partnership with Northwestern University in Qatar. Together we provide a unique opportunity for high school age directors to share their films with the world. It is an inspiring group of students, and we are honored to have them here at the film festival this year.”

Northwestern University in Qatar partners with Qatar Academy’s THIMUN Qatar office in hosting the annual international film festival for aspiring filmmakers. In addition, to the awards ceremony, the three-day event also included workshops and local travel for the participants. One workshop was given by Jaser Alagha, a Northwestern alum (class ’15), that was designed to introduce the students to filmmaking, and which included a trip to the desert to create a short film.

All of the winning submissions, as well as the nominated films, are available on the THIMUN Qatar YouTube channel;

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTiLmY0SwR599aoLw50bFBifBokj98XXm>

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About Northwestern University in Qatar

Northwestern University in Qatar draws from its parent organization, [Northwestern University](#) (Evanston, Illinois), a distinguished history, famous programs and an exceptional faculty. Founded in partnership with Qatar Foundation, NU-Q provides a framework through which students explore the world and, ultimately, shape its future through its distinguished schools of [communication](#), [journalism](#), and [liberal arts](#).