**STUDENT FILMMAKERS HONORED IN FIRST-EVER FESTIVAL
JAN 28, 2013**

****

The best of the Community College of Rhode Island’s film work recently was honored at the first-ever CCRI Student Film Festival sponsored by the college’s New Media Group. Close to 100 students, CCRI faculty/staff and family members attended the festival on Dec. 20 at the Knight Campus.

The best student films in fiction, nonfiction and experimental genres were honored with a “Knightie,” which is like an Academy Award for CCRI. Awards also were presented for writing, directing, cinematography and editing.

“The enthusiasm that was in the room was fantastic,” said Assistant Professor of Computer Studies and Communication Department Adjunct Sandra Luzzi Sneesby, who is one of the New Media Group’s faculty advisers.

“The students cheered each other on and I was pleased that we had such an outpouring of support.”

Brent Henderson, who won a Knightie for his experimental film “Edward Meets Charles,” said he was happy about the festival’s high turnout.

“It was the first year so there were a few hitches, but overall it was a success,” he said. “I was surprised we got as many submissions as we did and also by the quality of them.”

Henderson’s film uses the images of the 19th century photographer Eadweard Muybridge, who is famous for groundbreaking photographic studies of motion. Henderson combined Muybridge images of a monkey, a child, a man walking and a man riding a horse, then animated these as the frames in a motion picture.

Audio for the film is in the form of dialogue samples from the actor Charlton Heston and actress Edie Falco. At the end of the one-minute film, the man falls off the horse, “symbolizing a cynical view of evolution.”

Henderson has been studying film at CCRI for about a year.

“It started out as a way to express myself,” he said. “I have that writer’s personality where I’m better if I compose my thoughts, not just spitballing on the spot, so I think video really lends itself to that. I just love creating something that will affect people.”

Some of the honorees at the film festival have only just started taking classes in the medium.

Steve Olsen, winner in the fictional narrative category, made movies on his own before coming to CCRI but recently completed his first communication course, Foundations of Video and Audio Production. Olsen’s film, “The Girl,” is about a chance encounter that brightens the protagonist’s rather rough day.

“I’ve always loved filmmaking,” he said, adding that there was a lot of good work on display at the film festival.

Ashley Medrano is another rookie filmmaker who was recognized at the festival. She won honorable mention in the Fictional Narrative category for her film “Closer.”

This movie, filmed in downtown Providence, is about a young woman who is chased by a mysterious figure. She completed it on her own rather than for a class assignment.

“I never won an award in my life before this, so it felt really good,” Medrano said. “It made me happier and more motivated to continue on with my studies in film.”

Medrano, who serves as treasurer of the New Media Group, just completed her first semester at CCRI and is returning this year as a full-time student.

“It was my first semester and I really wanted to get the college experience,” she said. “I’m looking forward to the next film festival and hoping to participate in that as well.”

Sneesby said she hopes the Knightie awards will be given regularly to the college’s outstanding student filmmakers. Interest in the college’s expanding suite of film courses, she said, “… is confirmation for us as faculty that we’re doing the right thing in bringing these kinds of courses here to the college. These classes are opening doors of opportunity for our students.”

Here is the complete list of Student Film Festival winners.

WINNERS BY CATEGORY

* Fictional Narrative: Winner: “The Girl,” Steve Olsen
* Honorable Mention: “Closer,” Ashley Medrano
* Documentary Narrative Winner: “Youth Worship Promo,” Angel Rodriguez and Caleb Tineo
* Honorable Mention: “DECA at CCRI,” Manoug Barsoumian, Zach Dolber and Dylan Longwill
* Experimental Winner: “Edward Meets Charles,” Brent Henderson
* Honorable Mention: “Alien Baby,” William Sprague

 ACHIEVEMENTS

* Editing: Scene from “Loosies,” Nick Fontaine
* Directing: “Become,” Kyle Connolly
* Cinematography: “The Score,” Ryan Makin
* Writing: “The Stairs of Life,” Sean Hennessey