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Engage & Exchange Challenge Winners Announced

Aurelia Spaulding

Western Kentucky University, aurelia.spaulding@wku.edu

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Aurelia Spaulding
Communications & Marketing Coordinator
WKU ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships
Phone: 270.782.0824
Email: aurelia.spaulding@wku.edu

For Immediate Release

Engage & Exchange Challenge Winners Announced

Three Western Kentucky University students were named the winners of the first Engage & Exchange Challenge (EEC) on Tuesday, March 30th. After the judges deliberated, the five students in the Fijis Across America project won the multi-media category, while Chad Willis won still photography, and Kaitlen Osburn's reflection on work with the Center for Courageous Kids and Hospice won the writing category.

"My professor, Dr. Dana Bradley, introduced the project to our class early this semester and I thought my recent work with Hospice and the Center for Courageous Kids would be good inspiration for my essay. I was also attracted to this contest because it challenges students to use their talents to give back to the community -- something that I think we can all work on," Senior Acting/Directing Major, Kaitlen Osburn said.

The purpose of the EEC is to highlight student engagement activities and share the impact WKU students make in the community. The goal of the challenge is to Engage students and Exchange ideas on how they can make a difference.

WKU Honor student and Phi Gamma Delta member, Tyler Jury, came up with the idea, Fijis Across America, in honor of his late grandfather, Barrett Cummings. The multi-media production brought to light an effort being made by the fraternity to raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's disease. The students plan to ride their bikes across the country to raise \$75,000 for their cause.

"When I saw a flyer about the Engage and Exchange Challenge I thought it seemed like an excellent opportunity to showcase what we are doing within the WKU community, as well as a chance to win some money to help cover expenses for the ride. It ended up being a good experience and helped out our cause by encouraging us to create an informational video about what we are doing," Jury said. Other participants on the multi-media project included Chaz Vittitow, Justin Cave, Wade Haga, Jake Ryle and Andrew Bennett.

Willis' still photography project highlighted student volunteers at the Hildreth Adoption Center. Willis, Sophomore Biology major, said, "I was not aware of the adoption center until given the idea by a friend... It is very enjoyable and I wouldn't have to 'volunteer' to do it."

View the winning photography and multi-media pieces online at www.wku.edu/alive/eec.html. Osburn's piece will be featured in the WKU ALIVE Center's 2010 Spirit of Engagement publication. The Engage & Exchange will begin promoting the 2011 Challenge this spring with a few changes to the guidelines. Rules and information will be made available online soon.