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**(S)3 STUDENTSUPERSHORTS.COM ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF INAUGURAL  
MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CONTEST DURING SAVANNAH FILM FESTIVAL**

**SAVANNAH, Georgia (October 27, 2016)** – The (S)3 StudentSuperShorts.com film contest today announced top honors went to STEM Academy at Bartlett (STEM) middle school student Sarah Maher and a team of Savannah Arts Academy (SAA) high school students led by Edward Shelton during an awards ceremony this morning at the Trustees Theater.

Maher won for her short, *The Escape*, which contrasted contemporary challenges of choosing between sometimes isolating technology with human connectedness and nature. Shelton's team won for an experimental short that explored mundane repetitiveness and a shift in perspectives through clever and effective editing techniques.

The contest received an overwhelming 323 submissions from 42 countries. Only shorts produced by students living in the Savannah area were reviewed by the contest.

STEM students Griffin Ellis and Jacob Mitchell also produced the other two top middle school shorts. In the high school category, top-tier recognition went to SAA student Griffin Bliss for his short *The Car*, and to Windsor Forest High School student Sydney Shellhorn's *The Journey of a Soul*.

The top three films in the middle and high school categories were shown before winners were announced. The theme of this year's new film contest was American Poet Walt Whitman's epic "Song of the Open Road." Students were asked to read the poem and submit shorts less than two minutes that best capture their interpretation of the poem.

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The deadline was extended to this past Monday because of Hurricane Matthew. Submissions were reviewed by a 3-member panel of judges, which included a SCAD film professor, the Savannah Film Festival's Technical Director and the Founder of (S)3 StudentSuperShorts.com, who created the new Savannah-based initiative to grow creative storytelling skills and connect young people with Savannah's exciting film industry.

"We want to grow effective, confident 21<sup>st</sup> century storytellers who become the next generation of leading filmmakers, documentary producers, journalists and digital citizens," StudentSuperShorts.com Creator and Founder K.G. Elliott said. "These young filmmakers are doing amazing work. We hope our new (S)3 platform will harness energy and enthusiasm for technology and help teach the importance, self-discipline and reward of thinking through and planning creative ideas across all subjects in all schools."

(S)3 StudentSuperShorts.com promoted the contest through the local public school systems, as well as with independent and religious-based schools. The Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools System was instrumental in reaching students in film programs at Savannah Arts Academy, the STEM Academy at Bartlett and Windsor Forest High School. Students at Hesse and Sol C. Johnson also participated in the contest.

"We were overwhelmed by the support from the public schools system and are excited to connect schools and businesses with the creative storytelling community since we all share entrepreneurial, artistic and community goals," Elliott said. "We've tapped into an untouched marketplace of creative energy and know that if we all work together we can make exciting things happen for our young people and the world writ large by starting something big here in Savannah."

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