

# The suspense



# finally ended...



...for hundreds of middle school student photographers last week when the top photographs in three regions, and the top nationwide were chosen by the judges in Washington Mutual's "Home of the Free" photojournalism competition. Middle school students from the Chicago, Denver, New York and New Jersey metro regions have been competing since the beginning of the school year to capture the best photographic image of local civil servants at work. Under the tutelage of Pulitzer Prize-winning professional photojournalists, student teams submitted thousands of photographs, which were whittled down in multiple competition rounds to arrive at last week's final three.



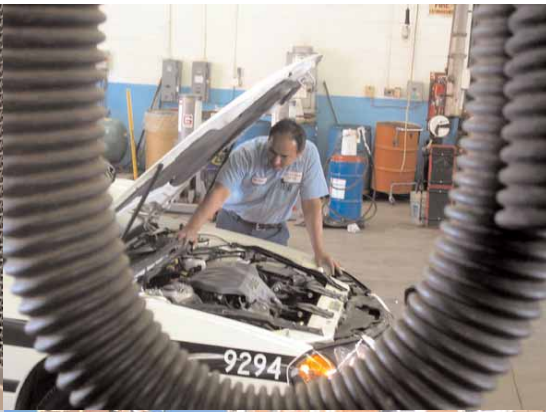


The *Home of the Free* program is led by National Co-chairs David Hume Kennerly and Carol Guzy, two of the country's most distinguished photojournalists. Carol Guzy was one of the first female press photographers and is a three-time Pulitzer Prize-winner. Kennerly, who won his Pulitzer Prize for photographs taken during the Vietnam War, was the official White House Photographer during the Ford Administration and is currently a contributing editor for Newsweek Magazine. Together with photographic directors from Time, Newsweek, the New York Times, People Magazine and the Corcoran College of Art and Design, they formed a panel of national judges that selected the best student photographs at the New-York Historical Society on December 4.

“Seeing the passion and intelligence of these middle school students has really inspired

everyone involved in the Home of the Free program,” commented Carol Guzy, national program co-chair. “The kids have taken their assignments very seriously, and they have captured some indelible images of their local communities. They should be proud of their achievements at such a tender age. Perhaps some will look back on this experience as one of life's defining moments.”

Home of the Free gave seventh and eighth grade students from participating middle schools the assignment to document the daily activities of local civil servants. Each participating school received a high-quality digital camera from Canon, a nationally approved curriculum and a \$500 honorarium. Participating schools were chosen based on their proximity to a Washington Mutual





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Financial Center and the percentage of students receiving free or subsidized lunches.

More than 135 student teams in three regions (Chicago, Denver and New York/New Jersey) participated in the Home of the Free program. In each region, 60 to 70 top photographs were identified and will be on display at the Chicago Historical Society through April 25, at the Colorado History Museum in Denver through May, and at the New-York Historical Society through March. From this group, twenty photographs from each region were chosen for an exhibit at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. this summer. The student teams that captured the three top images will be invited to Washington, D.C. for an exhibit opening, with all expenses paid by

Washington Mutual. The student team responsible for the best photograph overall will be invited on a professional photo shoot at the White House or Capitol Hill with National Program Chair David Hume Kennerly.

“We’re so excited to make it this far in the competition,” said 8th grade teacher Rick Hornberg from Dundee Middle School, Dundee, IL. “The kids can’t believe their photographs will be hanging in a gallery in D.C. this summer. Home of the Free has been a truly great experience for them.”

“The student response to the Home of the Free program really exceeded our greatest hopes,” explained Home of the Free Program Chair David





Hume Kennerly “Although our original plan was to select just one winning photograph from each region, the judges were so overwhelmed by the quality of submissions that we felt compelled to acknowledge six honorable mentions in addition to the winning three.”

All of the photographs can be viewed online at <http://www.wamuhomeofthefree.com>.

**Home of the Free Sponsors**

Along with Washington Mutual, official sponsors of the Home of the Free program include Canon U.S.A.,

who supplied professional quality PowerShot G2 digital cameras to the student teams (the schools were given the cameras after the competition); and the Chicago Historical Society, the Colorado History Museum and the New-York Historical Society, who are hosting the student exhibitions in their respective regions.

“Washington Mutual established the Home of the Free program to help give middle school students greater confidence and keener insight into their local government and the practice of journalism,” said Deanna Oppenheimer, Washington Mutual president of Banking and





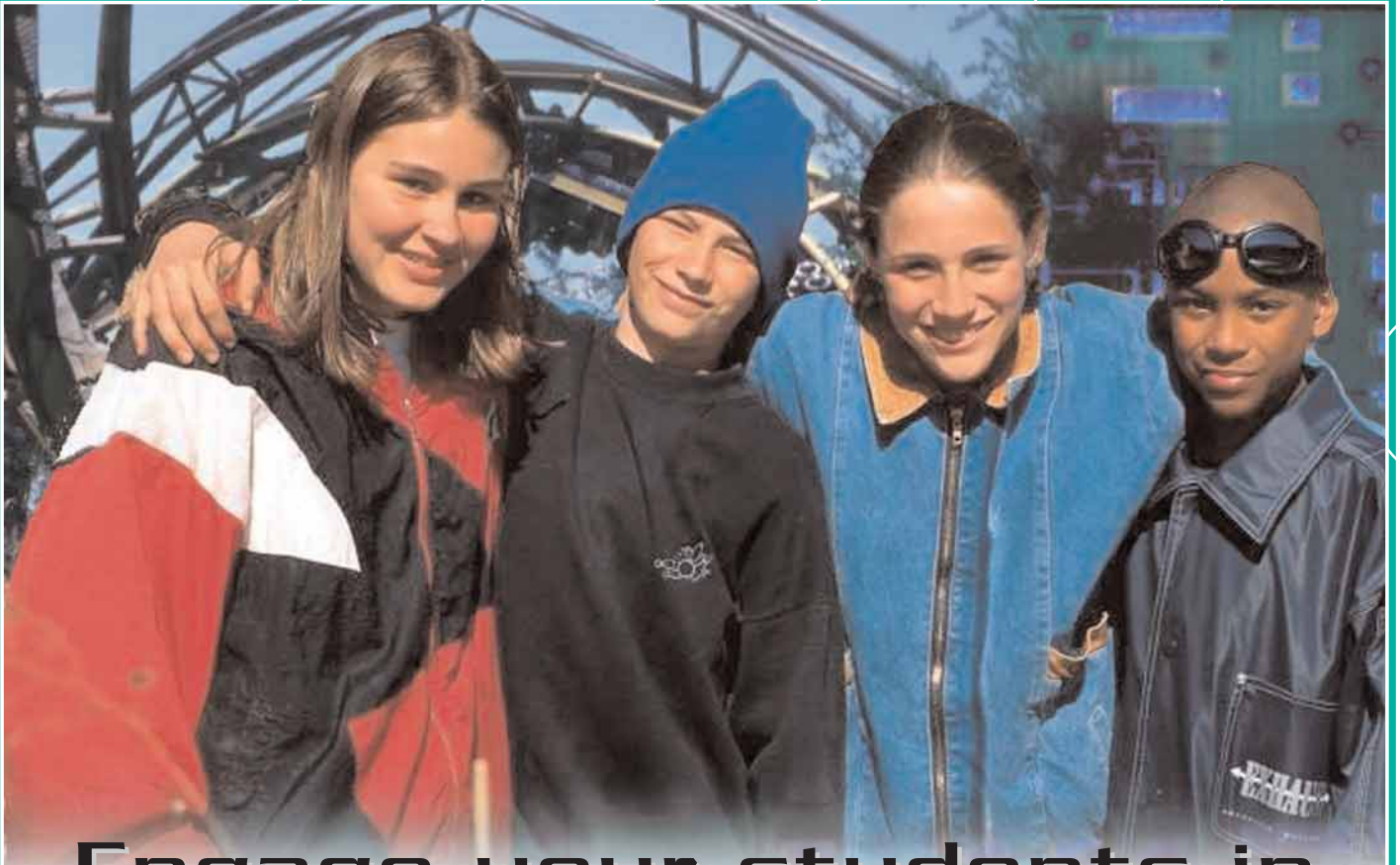
Financial Services. “We could actually see the maturity of these students grow over the course of a single semester. The very personal involvement of all of our Pulitzer Prize-winning photographers and media mentors will clearly have a lasting impact on the lives of our participating students.”

**About Washington Mutual**

Washington Mutual is one of the nation's leading retailers of financial services. A hallmark of the Seattle-based company's more than 100-year history is its unwavering commitment to its communities. This is reflected in the company's pledge to reinvest

\$375 billion in low- and moderate-income communities over a 10-year period, and in focusing the majority of its charitable giving on K-12 public education and affordable housing. Coupled with its employees' commitment to volunteerism, Washington Mutual is actively striving to make its communities better places in which to live and work. Additional information can be obtained from the company's website: <http://www.wamu.com>





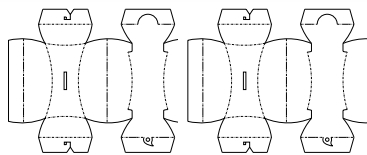
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- Students investigate, design ideas, model solutions and test their designs using the engineering design process.
- The units provide realistic, enjoyable activities that are relevant to society and the work world.
- The activities allow students to see and understand the meaning of the concepts they are learning.

By designing activities from the context of life, the ED&E Project strives to create life-long learners, ones with the desire to continue learning about technology throughout their lives. For more information on these units and professional development workshops, please contact **Henry Harms, ED&E Project Coordinator**, at **609-771-3339** or **harms@tcnj.edu**.



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