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CIDI Announces 2007 PSAid Contest Winners

Student Filmmakers Win Part of \$20,000 in Cash Prizes

ARLINGTON, VA (April 25, 2007) – The Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI) announced today the winners of the 2007 **PSAid: Public Service Announcements for International Disasters** contest which asked students to create a 30-second PSA conveying the importance of monetary donations following international disasters instead of collected items or in-kind donations. The winners are:

- First place: Sunny Jain with “You Can Help” from the University of Southern California;
- Second place: Alejandro Heiber with “Thinking Outside the Box” from the University of Southern California; and
- Third place: Nico Constantinides, Jeff LaPenna and Brock Alter with “Help Floats” from the University of Southern California.

Last week, seven semifinalists competed for public votes on the psaid.org Web site. The semifinalists were selected from the 37 entries which were submitted from students at colleges and universities nationwide.

“This year’s winners demonstrate immense talent and creativity. These students were able to convey the challenge of appropriate international disaster relief with great skill,” said Suzanne H. Brooks, director of CIDI. Brooks added, “The judges were impressed with the range of the entries that included moving image and animation.”

The winning PSAs will serve as valuable tools to educate the public about appropriate donations. It is widely recognized that cash donations are the most efficient and effective means of response to international disasters, a policy supported by CIDI’s funding partner, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Center’s many allies in the international disaster response community. Cash donations are both efficient and effective whereas donated goods are often environmentally, culturally, or socially inappropriate for a disaster area.

“This contest was meaningful and important. Just being a part of it actually meant that I was making a difference, not just entering another contest,” said Sunny Jain, the first place winner.

Jain’s entry, “You Can Help”, clearly illustrates the importance of appropriate disaster response. The PSA professionally and succinctly depicts the importance of monetary donations, both large and small, while pointing out the numerous problems with collected goods. This creative piece impressed both the judges and the public voters who praised the entry for its professionalism and clarity in highlighting this particular disaster relief challenge.

Winners are awarded cash prizes in the following denominations: \$12,000 for first place, \$5,000 for second place, and \$3,000 for third place. In addition, the winner may have their entry nationally distributed to major television networks and cable channels and for viewing on the

CIDI Web site. The winners, and all entries, can be viewed on the contest Web site at www.psaids.org.

This year's panel of judges included Suzanne Brooks of CIDI; Ben Mankiewicz, the host of *Turner Movie Classics*; Evan McNary, the 2006 contest winner; Chris Palmer, an Emmy award-winning film producer; and Nazik Salih of USAID. The judges selected the semifinalist PSAs based on overall impact, originality, memorable content and delivery and clear message. The national winners were selected based on the highest combined votes they received from the judges and the general public.

About CIDI

CIDI is based in Arlington, VA, and was created in 1988. This CIDI activity is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development. CIDI provides individuals, groups, embassies and corporations with information and guidance in support of international disaster relief efforts. CIDI helps to promote activities and donations that will do the most good for disaster victims around the world. Visit www.cidi.org for more information.

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