

Andrews Graduates Receive Awards at Film Festival

Five awards were received at the Sonscreen Film Festival

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Paul Kim (second from left) poses with the awards received by the Andrews University student projects at the Sonscreen Film Festival.

By: Gillian Sanner, media communications manager, IMC

Joshua Martin and Nina Vallado, graduates of the Andrews University documentary film program, received five awards at the 2018 Sonscreen Film Festival held at the North American Division Headquarters in Columbia, Maryland, from April 5–7, 2018.

Martin, who also studied photography, won Best Art Experimental and Best Cinematography for his film “125 Pounds.” The film explores Martin’s insecurities about his weight and the importance of getting to know the person beyond the body.

Vallado’s film “Sisterly,” a documentary about autism and sisterhood, won Best in Festival, Audience Choice and Best Documentary Short.

“We are very proud to take the top awards in what I believe was one of the strongest selections of films to ever play at the festival,” says Paul Kim, chair of the Department of Visual Art, Communication & Design and professor of documentary film & communication.

“What’s notable, too, is that the cost of our students’ productions is very low. It appears that the jury is responding to our commitment to artistic merit and to our mature storytelling about things that really matter and connect with the human experience rather than the flash and sizzle of a big fancy production.”

Keith Mattingly, dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, says, “Paul Kim and company are to be congratulated for the wonderful success of Andrews University students and faculty in the Sonscreen Film Festival. The judges were nationally-recognized individuals, which makes winning the awards that much more impressive. We are thankful for Paul’s excellent leadership and the talent he shares with his students.”

The festival was created by the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists to nurture Christian filmmakers in their craft, career development and spiritual lives. This year 47 official selections from student filmmakers were screened during the three-day festival. Schools and student groups represented at the festival included Andrews University (Michigan); Hawaiian Mission Academy (Hawaii); La Sierra Academy, La Sierra University, Loma Linda Academy, Loma Linda University and Pacific Union College (California); Plantation Seventh-day Adventist Church (Florida); Rio Lindo Academy (California); Spencerville Adventist Academy (Maryland); Southern Adventist University (Tennessee); Southwestern Adventist University (Texas); and Walla Walla University (Washington).

Kim says, “Overall, it is remarkable to see the growth of the Adventist film community throughout North America. At the festival, I was on a panel sitting between Dan Jackson [president, North American Division] and Alex Bryant [executive secretary, North American Division], and they were very much advocating in support of the growth and maturation that is happening in Adventist media.”