



CITY OF VENTURA  
**NEWS RELEASE**

501 Poli Street  
Ventura, CA 93001

**Embargoed for Release at 10PM, March 22, 2017**

Craig Jones, 805-223-4378

Shana Epstein, 805-652-4503

Contest Info: Rachael Shapiro, 310-991-9568

**Water: Take 1 Online Short Film Contest Announces Winners --  
Channel Islands National Park hosts Awards Ceremony in honor of World Water Day**

Ventura Water announced the winners of its 5th Annual Water: Take 1 Online Short Film Festival at a free community event at Channel Islands National Park Robert J. Lagomarsino Visitor Center on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, in celebration of World Water Day. The top 10 water-focused finalist films were presented, followed by the winners of the Audience Choice Award, the Award for Best Student Film, the Palmdale Vision Award, The Ventura Vision Award and the Grand Jury Prize.

“We are extremely pleased to host the award ceremony for this annual short film festival which will hopefully inspire each of us to better appreciate the importance of our water resources,” said **Russel Galipeau**, Superintendent of Channel Islands.

Ventura Water General Manager **Shana Epstein** provided highlights of this year’s festival, welcoming new sponsors Ferguson Waterworks and the Palmdale Water District, and new strategic partner Shorts TV. This year’s festival showed a marked expansion in the reach of our message with the addition of a new partnership with broadcast channel **Shorts TV**. A one-hour block of festival films, from past and present, will air on Shorts TV all month long and can be seen in the U.S. on DirecTV and other platforms in Europe, bringing a higher level of visibility to the films and the topic of water as a whole.

Selected from among the 50 films entered from around the globe, the winners are:

The Audience Choice Award, selected online by the public, was given to local Ventura resident, Paul Meehan, for his film “**Drought Wars: The Family Fights Back.**” The presentation was made by Curtis Hopkins, of Hopkins Groundwater, co-sponsor of the award together with new sponsor Ferguson Waterworks. The winner received an iPad.

The Award for Best Student Short Film, chosen by our jury of entertainment and water industry experts, was given to Beryl Alee, from Portland Oregon, for her three-film campaign “**Citizen of your Watershed: Litter/Runoff/Pesticides**” created by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Beryl received a GoPro camera and was awarded the prize by Lydia Holmes of Carollo Engineers.

The Palmdale Vision Award, sponsored by the Palmdale Water District, continues the partnership with like-minded agencies and was awarded to the film that best represented the mission and objectives of The Palmdale Water District. The winner, "**Saving the Saviour**" directed by Jalal Ud Din Baba of India, received a cash award of \$500.00 and the presentation was made by Palmdale Water District's Laura Gallegos.

The Ventura Vision Award was given to local filmmaker Paige Vasquez-Housley, for her film "**Aquanaut: A Journey to the Pacific**." The award was presented on behalf of the Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach, who sponsors this award, and recognizes films shot in and around the city of Ventura. The winner received a cash award of \$500.00 and will be showcased on an upcoming segment of the CAPS TV show "Sustainable Ventura."

And, the final award of the evening, The Grand Jury Prize, was presented by the event's sponsor, Mary Lynn Coffee of Nossaman, LLP. The award of \$1500.00 was given to Sven Harding, from Cape Town, South Africa, for his moving film "**Place of Sweet Waters**."

"Water: Take 1 continues to provide a global stage for the story of water to be told through the visual medium of film, inspiring audiences to collaborate, protect and preserve water for future generations " said Ventura's Mayor **Erik Nasarenko**.

The Water: Take 1 Online Short Film Festival aims to elevate the value of water by inviting filmmakers from across the globe to submit short films less than five minutes, in any genre (animation, comedy, documentary, drama, experimental, or sci-fi) that address the topic of water. All film entries are available for viewing at [www.watertake1.com](http://www.watertake1.com).

Visit [www.facebook.com/watertake1](http://www.facebook.com/watertake1) or [www.cityofventura.net/watertake1](http://www.cityofventura.net/watertake1) for more information.

This release can be found on the City of Ventura's website at [www.cityofventura.net](http://www.cityofventura.net). ###