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For Immediate Release

Student Filmmakers Win National Award

University Park, September 6, 2006 - Recognizing that there are some very uncomfortable and uncompromising truths in art, Seth McClellan of Crete and Elizabeth Fruth of Chicago created an award winning 18-minute documentary film, "Fading," which exposes these truths for examination and understanding.

"Fading" was honored recently at the Education Channel's 2006 Independents' Film Festival as winner in the student category for documentary film. Directed by McClellan and edited by Fruth, the film was recognized as a brave study of the triangulated relationships of a mother, father, and son in the aftermath of a car accident.

According to McClellan, "This film explores the effects of a traumatic brain injury on a woman and her family. It changed the woman, my mother, both professionally and personally, and altered our family as well."

As director, McClellan filmed interviews with his parents and himself. Using a cross-cut editing technique, Fruth wove the story together.

"By cutting in between the interviews, we were able to use intimate moments to tell a larger more complex story pretty simply," adds McClellan. "It was really hard to make so personal a story. On one level, I enjoyed telling the truth about my mother who cannot tell it herself. But it is not a pleasant truth. Art and film should not always be pleasant."

Fruth attended the awards ceremony and film screening in Tampa, Florida in September. "The world premier of "Fading" went very well," said Fruth. "The audience laughed a lot at some of Seth's comments. But you could hear a pin drop in the theater during the last couple of minutes."

Fruth also noted that the film looked great on the big screen of the historic Tampa Theater. "I don't think watching it on my 19 inch television will do it justice anymore."

One reason the movie looked so good, according to McClellan, was the filming method used.

"There has been a large shift in film production from analog, the old style celluloid stuff, to high definition video. Digital is now getting good enough to produce really wonderful images. Governors State University is a leader in small digital production."

McClellan and Fruth created the film as part of a media workshop taught by Daniel Nearing, professor of media communications at Governors State University.

"We are very proud. Seth is a brilliant young filmmaker and Liz is an exceptionally gifted editor. Together they took Seth's stream of conscious approach and gave it the dramatic structure we appreciate."

The success of "Fading" has encouraged McClellan and Fruth to continue work on their next project. They are currently developing a documentary on Martin Luther King and the 1966 Chicago Freedom Movement.