



Films by National History Day Students in Missouri Named for Smithsonian Documentary Showcase

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COLUMBIA, MO, June 17, 2020 – Two documentary films directed and produced by students at Central High School in Springfield and Richland High School in Essex are among 35 documentary films selected for an online showcase sponsored by National History Day, the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the Smithsonian Learning Lab. The public can stream the documentary showcase online from June 17 – 24.

Freedom Found on a Bootheel Roadside: The 1939 Sharecroppers Strike is a film directed by Rylee Taylor and Chelsea Swasho of Richland High School and featured in the showcase.

"As we are witnessing history right now in our time, recent events have really put the struggle of the African-American sharecroppers in 1939 into context. We are honored to have our video shown on a national stage and we hope that it will do justice to the brave men and women who stood up for change," said Taylor.

Ian Morgan, a freshman at Central High School, directed the film *Gaines v. Canada: The NAACP's Legal Strategy to End Segregation in Education*. Morgan said he is excited that his film was included on a topic that is often not covered in-depth in American history classes. Morgan's film explores a landmark US Supreme Court decision involving the State of Missouri that any state in the union which provided a school to white students had to provide in-state education to blacks, as well.

"I found the legal strategy used by the NAACP particularly interesting. Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada was the beginning of this strategy and it was fascinating to explore how it affected later cases," said Morgan.

The showcase runs concurrently while the National History Day contest is happening this week online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To view the films selected for the showcase, visit s.si.edu/NHDSHOWCASE2020. Missouri students competing at the National History Day contest this week will be announced following its conclusion. The State Historical Society of Missouri sponsors and organizes the National History Day in Missouri program, which involves several thousand Missouri students each year.

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