



## Film festival showcases young local talent

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APPLE VALLEY REVIEW

As the face of a dead and bloodied teenage girl flashed across the movie screen, the sound of sobbing could be heard throughout the packed theater.

Jacob Painter's poignant short-film, entitled "Last Breath," earned the high school senior the Best of Show Award during the Academy of Academic Excellence's 14th Annual Film Festival at the Cinemark Theater in Apple Valley last week.

"I really wanted something that would speak to parents about the dangers of texting and driving, which is a big issue right now," said Painter, who shot his first film five years ago with his parents' inexpensive camera. "I thought my film would be able to move people more than my other films."

The film festival showcased the creative talents of 30 young high school film makers from AAE's Digital Filmworks Studio, where Hollywood film veteran Steven Orsinelli instructs students on all aspects of filmmaking from makeup to editing.

Theater-goers cheered the introduction of each short film, spanning the genre from creature features, music videos, documentary and silent films.

"Tuff Love," the comedic love-story of a young man who wins the heart of a beautiful woman with a tougher-than-nails attitude, won the heart of the five judges who gave senior Liana Crismali the first place trophy.

During the award ceremony, Orsinelli announced the first through third place trophy winners and honorable mentions, and gave credit to Rick Piercy, CEO of the Lewis Center, for starting the festival.

"We are blessed to have a really great facility and the backing of our staff," Orsinelli said. "We're probably the only school allowed to run around with fake guns and fake bazookas."

Hollywood is still the film center of the world, but the creation of YouTube and other online platforms have given his young filmmakers a world-wide audience, said Orsinelli.

"This is a great group of filmmakers because technology is moving along and they are part of the wave. It's intuitive." Orsinelli said.

Low budget films have made a huge impact at the box office, and have inspired a future generation of filmmakers.

"It really doesn't matter what the media is shot on, it's all about the story," Orsinelli said. "The Blair Witch Project" was made for under \$5,000, and it made millions of dollars."

Painter's mother said there were times when she had to remind her son to put down the camera, and to focus on homework.

"He's done well with his studies, for the most part," Angela Painter said. "But I still encouraged him to film because I know it's his passion."

For more information on AAE's digital film studio, click on [www.aedigitalfilm.com](http://www.aedigitalfilm.com).

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