



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WMPG's Blunt Youth Radio announces the winners of the first Great Northeast Radio Rally Audio Slam

January 19, 2011—Blunt Youth Radio Project is delighted to announce the winners of the first-ever Great Northeast Radio Rally Audio Slam. The Slam brought together 26 contestants at SPACE Gallery in Portland on Sunday evening, January 16th to compete for a \$500 prize and the glory of winning the first Audio Slam ever. Radio producers from New York City to Belfast, Maine, from teenagers to sixty-somethings, competed for a \$500 prize. Judging the slam were five media professionals: Josie Huang, Reporter, Maine Public Broadcasting Network; Bill Nemitz, Columnist, Portland Press Herald, Paul Santomena, Founder, Strategic Narratives, Kerry Donahue, Assistant Professor, Columbia School of Journalism, and Suzi Piker, Multimedia Producer, Portland Press Herald and alum of the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies.

The winners are: 1st Place: AJ Frazier, Radio Rookies, WNYC, 2nd Place: Vikky Cruz, Radio Rookies, WNYC, 3rd Place, Patrick Presby, Blunt Youth Radio, WMPG, 4th Place, Jesse Newcomb, Independent producer, Portland, Me.

How the Audio Slam worked: each producer entered 4 minutes of produced audio, and these entries were played and judged live at the Slam in a series of one-minute rounds. Round one had 26 contestants, all hoping to hang on until the final round. Only 8 contestants moved up to round two, and only 4 slammers moved to the final round. Round four was exciting, with very close scores -- the winner won by only 1/10 of a point. Two members of the New York City-based Radio Rookies took the two top spots. Two Maine natives took third and fourth places.

First Place: Amon "AJ" Frazier - Radio Rookies, WNYC, New York, New York Amon Frazier, also known as AJ, was born in Miami, Florida. After 4 years, he moved to New York for 7 years, lived in South Carolina for 2 years, and then moved back to New York. AJ spends most of his time reading and writing or just chilling with his family. He is a 10th grader at the Bronx Academy of Letters.

Second Place: Vikky Cruz - Radio Rookies, WNYC, New York, New York Victoria "Vikky" Cruz was born in the Bronx, NY, but raised in Pennsylvania. She lives in the Bronx and attends Boricua College, graduating in June 2011. Her goal is to pursue a career in Broadcast Journalism or mainly anything to do with radio. Victoria also aspires to become a media producer; her career interest started from when she participated in the WNYC Radio Rookies program. She has worked on a few stories for WNYC Radio Rookies: "New Voters," "Best Couple," and "My Mother's Disease." All three stories have different tones, but her work has helped her define who she really is.

Third Place: Patrick Presby - Blunt Youth Radio, WMPG, Portland, Maine Patrick Presby grew up in Old Orchard Beach and participated in Blunt Youth Radio as a teenager. With Blunt, he produced radio pieces about juvenile detention, the life of Nelson Mandela and a remembrance of his late step-mother, Barbara Jean. For his Nelson Mandela piece he interviewed producer Joe Richman and was proud to have spoken directly to someone who's shared a meal with Mandela. He is even more proud of his baby son, Cameron. Pat will be re-joining Blunt as a volunteer staffer very soon. He now lives in Gray, Maine.

Fourth Place: Jesse Newcomb - Independent Producer, Portland, Maine Born and raised in Maine, Jesse Newcomb, has called Portland home since fall 2009. She spends her time serving coffee, helping to build a curvy sculpture house in the woods, making forts with kids, and providing basic services at the Preble Street day shelter. New to the field of radio production, she has a strong interest in the power of stories and their role in creating broader understanding and a more just world.

More information on Blunt Youth Radio Project may be found at bluntradioradio.org. This event was funded through the generosity of the Maine Arts Commission.

For interviews and sound clips, contact:

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