

Performing Arts

Film



"Waking the Generations" director, Amilia Blackcrow, steps in front of the camera for an interview. Image by MAPS Media Institute

MAPS has BIG NOMINATION news to share!

By MAPS Media Institute

This year has been as full of action for MAPS Media Institute as every year since their doors opened 18 years ago in Ravalli County, but something about 2022 rang differently. The stories from the students MAPS worked with through their free professional education in media arts came back to the same core—their home, Montana.

While this incredible honor is meaningful and celebrated in so many ways, for MAPS and their student creators, the value of the work goes deeper than the acknowledgment. At the start of 2022, eight MAPS student films were nominated for the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS), Northwest Chapter Regional High School Student Production Awards. Seven of those films won. Of those seven, five were nominated for the National NATAS High School Student Production Awards. One of the five won.

"Many of the young people we work with across Montana examine their lives, their communities and their ancestral history under a microscope," said Clare Ann Harff, MAPS executive director. "The stories that emerge are often rooted in their own backyards. It's a beautiful thing to support. If you watch the five MAPS student films nominated for the NATAS National High School Student Production Award, you will feel their deep Montana roots."

In the nominated film, *Waking the Generations*, students from the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation shine a light on the painful and hidden details of their ancestral past to help others understand why their heritage should never be allowed to fade away. This socially relevant film connects how cultural identification today honors the past and cansave and preserve an entire way of life for future generations.

Waking the Generations was the Native Indigenous Student Academy for Cinematic Arts Silver Award winner.

MAPS and students participating in the Helena College Summer Bridge Program collaborated on the national winner, *No Ordinary Time*. In this short-form documentary, students explore the parallels between the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic and the COVID-19 pandemic they experienced.

In the 2020-2021 school year, the Fort Peck Community College CHANTÉ Project invited MAPS to partner with them to bring professional media arts programming into Brockton, Frazer, Poplar and Wolf Point schools on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. This collaboration led to an online film course that met weekly and culminated in a two-week in-person intensive film workshop. This workshop resulted in two nominees, *I Am* (Frazer, MT) and *I Am a Warrior* (Brockton, MT).

After watching these two films, MAPS Media Lab Director Craig Falcon noted, "When these youth took the chance to be vulnerable and share their Montana stories, a bit of film magic happened."

The final nominated film, *Peaceful as the Buffalo*, marks MAPS' second collaboration with The Buffalo Unity Project, a program created by Poplar Middle School on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. In this film, students and community leaders share their perspectives on the importance of the buffalo for the Assiniboine and Sioux people. This project aims to help students learn that communities thrive when united for a common purpose.

"These films are testaments to the creativity, courage and determination of Montana's youth," said Harff. "I look forward to seeing these talented young media artists bring Montana to the world."

For more information about MAPS, and to watch any of the award-winning and nominated films, please visit:
mapsmediainstitute.com

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