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Baldwin Park Unified to Screen 12 Student Works during Film Festival

Finalists have been selected from 30 submissions from students at Baldwin Park and Sierra Vista high schools

BALDWIN PARK – Baldwin Park Unified will host its seventh annual Youth Film Festival from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 16, screening 10 short films and two experimental projects that tackle topics as diverse as bullying, punk rock, depression and something terribly wrong with breakfast pancakes.

The works were selected from among 30 entries from students at Baldwin Park and Sierra Vista high schools, including those in the schools' highly regarded media arts programs. The top three short films and the top experimental project will receive awards, including gift cards to local businesses. Those in attendance will also choose a fan favorite.

"Each year, the works presented in our Youth Film Festival astound with their depth and creativity," Superintendent Dr. Froilan N. Mendoza said. "This program builds on our digital arts curriculum and reinforces our goals for 21st-century learning while offering the students the opportunity to share their unique and compelling visions."

The festival is run by Baldwin Park High School's Impact Academy, a career pathway program focused on public service, the arts and technology. Academy leaders Raquel Viramontes and Cecilia Soria took charge of the event this year, working with film production teachers at both high schools.

"Our goal is to empower students to make an impact on our school, community and world by promoting the art and the craft of storytelling with inspiring writers, filmmakers and artists," Soria said.

The short films feature seven submissions by Baldwin Park High School (BPHS) and three from Sierra Vista High School (SVHS) students. The 10 short films were chosen from 24 entries:

- **"One Swing to Home"** by BPHS students Ernie Santiesteban, Simon H. Luong and Wayland Tran: Teenagers with a passion for baseball settle differences with bullies on the playing field.

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- **“It’s in the House”** by BPHS student Isaiah Flores: Left alone for the night, Lauren is coaxed by a friend to watch a scary movie.
- **“The Good Run”** by Sierra Vista High School (SVHS) student Cesar Garcia: A runner faces his challenges and inspires a film editor.
- **“Get Off My Back”** by BPHS student Ismael Avilez: A documentary on how punk rock creates unity; featuring the Beach Bums and local fans.
- **“Iridescent”** by SVHS student Aaron Tann: Danna, a teenager dealing with depression, embarks on an emotional journey while her friend searches for her to offer help.
- **“BP Locals”** by BPHS student Brandon Toledo: Friends skateboard together, spreading positivity.
- **“The Shadow”** by BPHS student Luis Morales: A bounty hunter creates a hostage situation to lure an assassin to his home without knowing how big a mistake that will be.
- **“Unexpected”** by SVHS student Stephanie Diaz: Violet is making pancakes for her older sister Kat’s birthday when Kat realizes something is terribly wrong.
- **“My True Friend”** by BPHS student Jeselle Palacios: Interviews that highlight the positives, truths and happiness of dogs and their owners.
- **“Fade to Black”** by BPHS students Luis Cabrera, Jesus Holguin, Manuel Arellano: A surrealistic film about a motorcycle accident.

Two experimental projects were chosen from six entries:

- **“Kindness”** by BPHS students Carter Nguyen, Bryan Del Real, Adrian Chavez and Anna Venegas: Teenager hands out positive notes to community members.
- **“Traveler of the Revenant”** by BPHS students Zijan Zhou, Karmyn Lance and Kayla Nguyen: He sees a vanished world in her eyes, reignites the light and conquers the darkness.

The screening will be held at Baldwin Park Performing Arts Center, 4640 Maine Ave., Baldwin Park. Tickets are \$3 before the event, available at Baldwin Park High School, and \$5 at the door.

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