Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

"The earth is art, the photographer is only a witness."

Yann Arthus-Bertrand



©Maya Shimokura-Lee,
Lake Washington High School
2026 1st place, ANIMAL

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
April 24, 2027 by 3 PM

facts

What is the Washington State High School Photography Competition?
An annual print competition designed to showcase the finest photographers in Washington State high schools.

Watch a three-minute video about our program:
https://kenmorecamera.com/wshspc-galleries/

Entry Fee and payment information
$3 per entry. A student may enter up to ten entries. Purchase orders and checks only. No bank cards. Please make checks and PO's payable to Kelly Atkinson, or Visual Aid, LLC. If your purchasing department has questions about payment, or needs a W9, please ask them to contact KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com

Who can enter?
Any student grades 9-12 currently enrolled in an accredited public, private or alternative high school in Washington State. Students must coordinate with their school's photography instructor in order to participate.

Why enter?
An opportunity to have your photograph exhibited at the Seattle Art Museum, see your photograph on a Jones Soda bottle, have your photograph expertly matted and framed by Frame Central, and bank a little prize money.

Deadline
All entries must be in my possession by 3PM Saturday April 24th, 2027. If you have any questions, contact KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com. Entries must be sorted by category and delivered in a container. You must include one payment (check or purchase order), a fully completed entry form, and a typed, alphabetized list of competing students.
Failure to complete any of these steps will result in disqualification.

If you're shipping entries via post office, please use this address:
Kenmore Camera PO Box 82467 Kenmore, WA 98028.

For UPS, Fed X, etc., and hand delivery, please use:
Kenmore Camera 6708 NE 181st Street Kenmore, WA 98028. All entries from a single school must be delivered together with a completed entry form, student list, and one single payment - absolutely no exceptions. Please mark boxes attn: ***Washington State Photo***. For operating hours visit www.kenmorecamera.com

Prizes
- Best in Show: $250
- Wallingford Frame Central expertly frames all images in the final exhibit.
- Students placing first in category will receive a check for $50.
- Ten photographs will be featured on 250,000 Jones Soda bottles.

Questions?
Contact Kelly Atkinson at KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com

frame CENTRAL NW Framing · Canon · JONES SODA CO. · KENMORE CAMERA · SAM SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

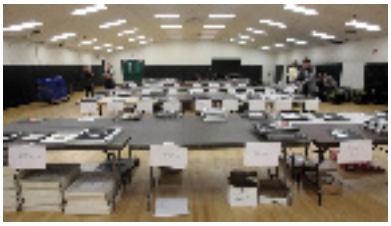
history



Governor Gary Locke presenting a student with a Certificate of Excellence in 1997 at the Seattle Art Museum.



Governor Mike Lowry with sponsors at the Seattle Art Museum awards ceremony in 1996.



We receive nearly four thousand entries every year from high school students in Washington State.



The 2017 awards ceremony.

The Washington State High School Photography Competition (WSHSPC) has a grass roots beginning in the mid 1980's. Formed by a group of high school photography instructors as a way of elevating student photography, the early competitions included only a handful of high schools, a few hundred entries, passionate instructors and eager students. The photographs were collected and organized by the instructors and later judged by an impartial jury. It was small, informal and entirely volunteer.

The event attracted sponsorship and public awareness rose due to exhibits at the Seattle Art Museum, featured articles in the Seattle Times newspaper, a segment on KING TV's Evening Magazine and New Day programs, and a prestigious awards ceremony featuring Washington State Governors Mike Lowry and Gary Locke. We typically receive nearly four thousand entries every year. Every December, the exhibit is featured at the Seattle Art Museum.

Our official sponsors include Kenmore Camera and Canon USA, who contribute operating funds, in-kind support and a web page for our event. Our in-kind contributors include Frame Central, who professionally mat and frame the final exhibit and handle the return of exhibit photographs to students; the Jones Soda Company, who reproduce ten student photographs on 250,000 of their soda bottles; and the Seattle Art Museum, who provide exhibit space. See current and past exhibits at https://kenmorecamera.com/wshspc-galleries

This event remains largely a volunteer effort with many volunteers devoting time throughout the year to ensure its success. With the essential input from photography instructors, and support from our sponsors we will continue to provide a prestigious public platform for student photographic art.

Watch a three minute video about our program:
https://kenmorecamera.com/wshspc-galleries/



©Aidan Whipple, Kentridge H.S.
2023 1st place, LANDSCAPE

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Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

"Photography takes an instant out of time, altering life by holding it still."

Dorthea Lange



©Katherine Tu, Newport H.S.
2026 2nd place, ANIMAL

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
April 24, 2027 by 3 PM

changes

IMPORTANT CHANGES FROM 2026 TO REMEMBER:

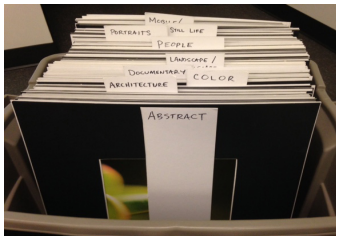
1) Loose prints only. No mounting or matting allowed.
2) The category of ***Traditional Silver Gelatin B&W*** has been eliminated. Traditional Silver Gelatin B&W images may be entered in any other category.
3) The maximum print size allowed is 11"x 17", including border. 8.5"x11" prints are preferred. There is no minimum print size.

• **AI generated image content not allowed**. Any image determined to be the product of Generative AI will be disqualified. Instructors are responsible for insuring that no entries from your school are the product of Generative AI.
You're welcome to send a jpeg of the image and a detailed description of how it was produced to KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com.

I NEED YOUR HELP!

We have only one person handling all of the administrative duties of this statewide event, so I need your help to stay organized. Here's what you can do to help:

PLEASE USE A TAB



Please separate each category with a tab (see photo). I know it sounds simple but this little tab saves me a lot of sorting time and it's easy for you to do.

NO POPCORN, SHREDDED PAPER OR PROTECTIVE SHEETS, PLEASE!

Popcorn and shredded paper are brutal. I have to clean each of your entries due to static electricity. Please do not individually wrap entries, or, place protective sheets of paper in between each entry. I have to handle each entry in order to remove them. Also, no framed prints or prints with glass or plastic will be accepted.

ACCURATELY COMPLETE THE ENTRY FORM AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

If we do not receive a fully completed entry form, alphabetized student list, and full payment, it will result in disqualification. Please insert payment, entry form and student list in an envelope so I don't have to hunt through your container. Thanks!

ID TAGS

Students must use their personal e-mail and phone number on the ID Tags so I can quickly contact them if they are selected for the exhibit. Please do not use your school e-mail or phone number.

PAYING FOR ENTRIES

$3 per entry. We gladly accept checks and purchase orders. If paying by purchase order you must attach a hard copy of your purchase order to your official entry form. Please make checks and purchase orders payable to Kelly Atkinson or Visual Aid, LLC. If you have questions about making a payment, or need a W9, contact KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com.

BANK CARDS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

This helps us keep expenses down so we can continue offering this program.

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SAM SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

tips

"The more pictures you take, the better you are as a photographer."

Robert Mapplethorpe



©Kaylie Shaver, Hanford High School



©Jonathan Walzer, Meadowdale H.S.
2017 1st place, ANIMAL

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES:

Here are a few things students and instructors can do to improve your chance of success in the competition:

SUBJECT MATTER

Think beyond the literal meaning of the category title. For example, in the category of ANIMAL, we receive numerous photographs of cats. Many are simply sitting on a sofa staring at the camera. Yes, that literally fits the category description of ANIMAL, but those photographs don't reveal very much to viewers or tell an interesting story.

It's essential to engage the viewer with an interesting perspective. Examine the photos below. Both are past winners in the ANIMAL category and do a wonderful job of creating a story, engaging the viewer and making us think.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

You can also use a unique camera angle, blurred action, or an abstract point of view to transform an ordinary scene into an interesting photograph. Finally, capture the same subject in a variety of different ways rather than taking just one photograph. When you are photographing, take your time, use your imagination, shoot more and edit later.

THE NUMBERS GAME

A school earns points when a student wins 1st - 6th place in a category (see page 10 for details about scoring). So, if your school is entering less than six entries per category you are decreasing your chance to earn points for your school. With eight categories, your school should be entering a minimum of 48 total entries (six per category) if you hope to earn the maximum number of points available.

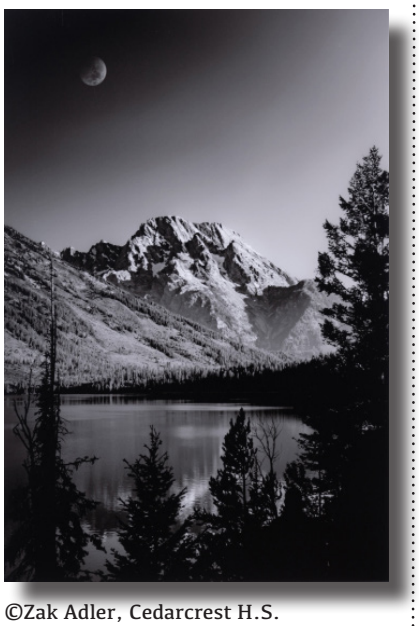
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Consider a category that typically receives less entries. Some of our categories are popular and receive several hundred entries, such as PORTRAIT and LANDSCAPE. But, we receive much fewer entries in the ABSTRACT, ARCHITECTURE and DOCUMENTARY categories. The selection committee chooses six photographs from each category, so you can increase your odds by entering in the categories that typically receive less entries.

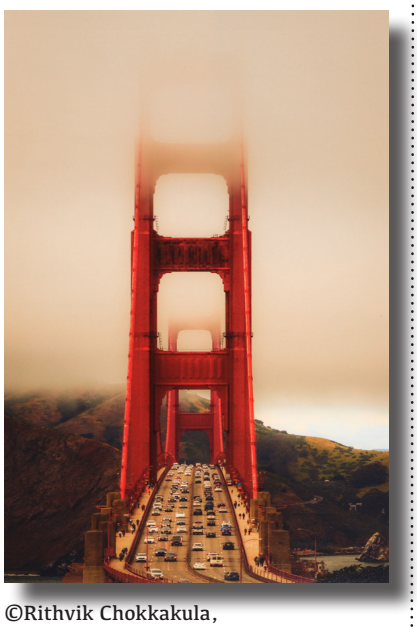
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Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

categories



©Zak Adler, Cedarcrest H.S.
2025 2nd place, LANDSCAPE



©Rithvik Chokkakula,
Glacier Peak High School.
2026 3rd place, ARCHITECTURE

NOTE: The TRADITIONAL SILVER GELATIN B&W category has been eliminated. Traditional silver gelatin b&w images are accepted in any category.

1. ABSTRACT
A photograph which is non-pictorial and/or non-representational and emphasizes design elements and principles.

2. ANIMAL
A photograph of an animal or group of animals.

3. DOCUMENTARY/STREET PHOTOGRAPHY
Images which are documentary or photo journalistic in nature. Photo essays or a photo series featuring multiple images are allowed, provided all images are printed on a single piece of paper not exceeding 11" x 17".

4. STILL LIFE
A photograph of an object or objects found or arranged by the photographer.

5. PORTRAIT
A photograph of a person or group of people in which the photographer controls the pose, setting and/or lighting.

6. ARCHITECTURE
A photograph of a man-made structure which can include architectural details.

7. LANDSCAPE/CITYSCAPE
A photograph of a natural or urban scene.

8. PEOPLE
A photograph of a person or group of people.

NOTE: AI Generated image content is not allowed in any category.

If you have questions about what category to place an image, please send a jpeg of the image and a brief explanation to KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
April 24, 2027 by 3 PM

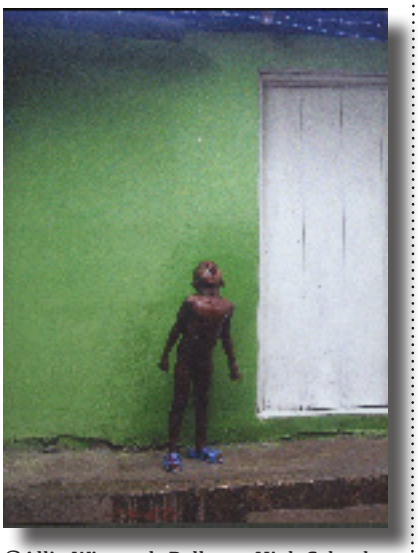
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Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

rules



©Amaru Martinez, Roosevelt HS
2018 Best in Show



©Allie Wiegand, Bellevue High School
2008 Best in Show



©Sarah Truscott, Seattle Academy
2014 Best in Show

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
April 24, 2027 by 3 PM

2027 RULES & REGULATIONS

1. The student entering the image must perform all capturing and printing. All entries must be created by a camera, camera phone, traditional darkroom enlarger (photograms), or scanner (scanography). **Ai generated image content is not allowed**.
2. Only students currently enrolled in grades 9-12 in an accredited public, private or alternative high school in Washington State may participate.
3. All entries must be unmounted and unmatted. Loose prints only.
4. Entries cannot exceed 11"x 17", including border. 8.5"x11" prints are preferred. There is no minimum print size.
5. All entries must include the official ID tag (See page 8). ID tags must be legible and COMPLETELY filled out. Securely affix the ID tag to the TOP LEFT CORNER on the ***back*** of each entry. ID Tag placement and orientation will determine which way the print is oriented for judging, so please place your ID tag carefully, and securely tape it on all four sides.
6. Students must include a personal e-mail and phone number. In the event there is a question about your entry during judging, I may need to contact students for clarification, so do not list a school e-mail address or phone number on the ID Tag.
7. No school name may appear on the front of the entry.
8. Photographs placing 1st - 6th in a previous WSHSPC may not be re-entered.
9. A student may enter up to ten individual images. The same image may not be entered in multiple categories. The fee for each entry is $3.
10. The photo instructor of the school must submit all entries on behalf of students and include one fully completed OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM; one payment (check or purchase order only); and a typed, alphabetized list of participating students. If the school has no photo instructor, an art teacher, counselor or principal will suffice.
11. Mounted or framed images of any kind will not be accepted. Loose prints only.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY RULE CAN RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION.

Liability: Every reasonable precaution will be taken to avoid any damage to or loss of entries. Northwest Framing, Frame Central, Kenmore Camera, Canon, Jones Soda, Seattle Art Museum, Visual Aid LLC, Kelly Atkinson and all approved volunteers and co-sponsors of this event assume no responsibility in the event an image is lost, damaged or stolen.

QUESTIONS? Contact Kelly Atkinson at kellyatkinsonphotography@gmail.com



©David Cardwell,
Mountlake Terrace H.S.
2025 1st Place, PEOPLE

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Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

2027 OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

$3 per entry. Each student may enter up to ten entries.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
APRIL 24, 2027 / 3PM

This official entry form must be FULLY completed by the photography instructor of the competing school. **AI generated image content is not allowed.** Instructors must review all entries from their school to insure there are no AI generated entries. You must also include an alphabetized list of competing students. **Unmounted entries only.**

School _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Photography instructors name _____

phone# _____ Ext _____

e-mail address _____

_____

Checklist

1. Sort images by category.
2. Include alphabetized student list.
3. One payment per school. Check or purchase order only. $3 per entry.
4. If entries are hand-delivered they must be in a container clearly marked with school name.
5. **Loose prints only. No mounting/matting allowed.**

QUESTIONNAIRE

1) What's your annual photo budget?

2) What time of year do you make major purchases?

3) Who is your photographic and digital supplier?

CATEGORY	QUANTITY
1.Abstract	
2.Animal	
3.Documentary	
4.Still Life	
5.Portrait	
6.Architecture	
7.Landscape	
8.People	
Grand total of entries ⇨	

Number of students competing this year _____

EM

PAYMENT INFORMATION

ONLY ONE CHECK OR PURCHASE ORDER PER SCHOOL. $3 PER ENTRY.

❑ Check
payable to Kelly Atkinson or Visual Aid

❑ Purchase Order
payable to Kelly Atkinson or Visual Aid
You must attach a hard copy of your purchase order to this entry form.

No bank cards accepted.

Questions?
If you have questions about payment, or need a W9, please contact:
Kelly Atkinson
Executive Director WSHSPC
KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com

Please check one of the following boxes for retrieving entries after contest:

❑ Please hold my entries at Kenmore Camera and I will pick them up. ***You must retrieve them by June 30th, 2027.*** After that date, all remaining images will be discarded unless arrangements have been made with Kelly Atkinson at kellyatkinsonphotography@gmail.com. If you can't retrieve them, ask a student or parent.

❑ I'm including return shipping fees. ***I have supplied: 1) sufficient return postage; 2) a fully completed return address label; 3) a suitable shipping container.***

❑ Discard my entries. NOTE: some of your entries may have been awarded a ribbon. If you can't retrieve them, ask a student or parent before you check this box.

STORE ADDRESS: Kenmore Camera 6708 NE 181st Street • Kenmore WA 98028
For postal deliveries: PO Box 82467 Kenmore, WA 98028 / www.kenmorecamera.com

All entries must be in our possession by 3 PM Saturday, April 24th, 2027
Questions? Contact Executive Director Kelly Atkinson at KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com

Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

How you place your ID Tag on the back of your print determines how your print will be viewed. Read the instructions on the ID Tag carefully.

$3 per entry

ID tags

2027 I.D. Tag

Securely tape this to the TOP LEFT CORNER on the back of each entry to ensure your print is correctly displayed. $3 per entry.

School:_____

(DO NOT USE INITIALS!)

Student:_____

Student e-mail (required) - DO NOT use school e-mail

_____

Student phone # (required) - DO NOT use school phone#

_____

Category_____

How was your image captured/photographed?

- ❑ traditional film camera
- ❑ digital camera
- ❑ scanner
- ❑ pinhole camera
- ❑ camera phone
- ❑ other:_____

By entering this photograph I guarantee it contains no Ai generated material, and if needed can provide evidence.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

2027 I.D. Tag

Securely tape this to the TOP LEFT CORNER on the back of each entry to ensure your print is correctly displayed. $3 per entry.

School:_____

(DO NOT USE INITIALS!)

Student:_____

Student e-mail (required) - DO NOT use school e-mail

_____

Student phone # (required) - DO NOT use school phone#

_____

Category_____

How was your image captured/photographed?

- ❑ traditional film camera
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Category_____

How was your image captured/photographed?

- ❑ traditional film camera
- ❑ digital camera
- ❑ scanner
- ❑ pinhole camera
- ❑ camera phone
- ❑ other:_____

By entering this photograph I guarantee it contains no Ai generated material, and if needed can provide evidence.

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School:_____

(DO NOT USE INITIALS!)

Student:_____

Student e-mail (required) - DO NOT use school e-mail

_____

Student phone # (required) - DO NOT use school phone#

_____

Category_____

How was your image captured/photographed?

- ❑ traditional film camera
- ❑ digital camera
- ❑ scanner
- ❑ pinhole camera
- ❑ camera phone
- ❑ other:_____

By entering this photograph I guarantee it contains no Ai generated material, and if needed can provide evidence.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

judging



We typically receive about four thousand entries every year, making this the largest event of its kind in the United States.



©Noah Goldman, Seattle Academy
2025 3rd place, ABSTRACT



©Natalie Hollow-Bist
Port Townsend H.S.
2025 2nd place, ANIMAL

THE JUDGING OF ENTRIES

Three jurors are chosen to comprise the selection committee. Members of the selection committee possess a great deal of experience viewing photographs in their profession. The selection committee are instructed not to view the ID tags placed on the back of each entry, so they have no information about the student or the school they represent. Judging will take place on Saturday, May 1st in the gym at Inglemoor High School 15500 Simonds Rd NE, Kenmore, WA 98028 beginning at 9AM. Judging is open to the public and usually ends by 3PM depending on the number of entries.

JUDGING CRITERIA

The judges select photographs representing excellence in these areas:

1. ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

A successful photograph must tell a story or relay a mood. What emotion or attitude are you trying to convey to the viewer? Be sure your photograph provides the viewer with enough information to understand your point of view.

2. TECHNICAL ABILITY

A beautifully printed photograph further enhances the image. Produce a high quality image with rich blacks, brilliant whites, dazzling colors and absolutely no dust spots, fingerprints, scratches, dents or wrinkles.
Students are required to print their own images.

TEAM SCORING

Students accumulate points for their school by earning a 1st - 6th placement in a category. The school accumulating the highest overall team score wins the state title. Points are awarded as follows: 1st place - 6 points; 2nd place - 5 points; 3rd place - 4 points; 4th place - 3 points; 5th place - 2 points; 6th place - 1 point.

SELECT AND FINALIST

All entries in a single category are viewed by judges and they are asked to select entries they wish to advance to the final round. These "SELECT" are the top 10% in the category. In the final round, each judge then chooses six images from the "SELECT". Those eighteen photographs advance for placement where judges decide on 1st through 6th place. The remaining twelve photographs receive a "FINALIST" ribbon.

FINAL EXHIBIT

The top 3 photographs from each category constitute the final exhibit. These final images will be professionally matted and framed by Frame Central. The exhibit stays on tour for one year, and then the framed photographs are returned.

WHEN CAN I FIND OUT THE RESULTS?

Judging is May 1st. Standings should be posted at www.kenmorecamera.com by May 10th. QUESTIONS? Contact: KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com.

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Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

scoring



©Finn Bucher, Inglemoor H.S.
2026 2nd place, DOCUMENTARY



©Lauryn Campbell
Skyview High School (Vancouver, WA)
2018 2nd Place, MANIPULATION

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
April 24, 2027 by 3 PM

TEAM SCORING

Students can accumulate points for their school by earning a 1st - 6th placement in a category. The school with the highest team score at the end of the competition wins the state title. Points are awarded as follows:
1st place - 6 points; 2nd place - 5 points; 3rd place - 4 points; 4th place - 3 points; 5th place - 2 points; 6th place - 1 point.

SELECT AND FINALIST

A photograph receiving a purple "SELECT" ribbon indicates it was in the top 10% of all entries in its category. A photograph awarded a yellow "FINALIST" ribbon indicates it advanced to the final 18 images in its category.

BEST IN SHOW

All photographs in the final exhibit are eligible to win Best in Show. Best in Show is selected by the judges and announced at the awards ceremony in June.

FINAL EXHIBIT

The top 3 photographs from each category constitute the final exhibit. These final images will be professionally mounted, matted and framed by Wallingford Frame Central, and may be reproduced in newspapers, web sites, magazines and marketing materials promoting the event. All images from the exhibit stay on tour for the year, and then are returned to students compliments of Frame Central. Final exhibits from 2009 - present may be viewed on-line at www.kenmorecamera.com.

WHEN CAN I FIND OUT THE RESULTS?

Final results should be posted at www.kenmorecamera.com by May 10, 2027. Your patience is appreciated.

QUESTIONS?

Contact Kelly Atkinson at kellyatkinsonphotography@gmail.com



©Nico Iacono, Eastlake High School
2026 1st place, ABSTRACT

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SAM SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

sponsors

KENMORE CAMERA and CANON

Kenmore Camera offers one of the largest selections of digital SLR's in the Pacific Northwest. They also offer a wide selection of inks, papers, darkroom products, books, used equipment, tripods and camera bags. Kenmore Camera and Canon have been sponsors of this event since 2007. www.kenmorecamera.com

FRAME CENTRAL

You name it, Frame Central can frame it: photographs, posters, fine art, mementos, clothing. Locally owned, Frame Central hand crafts all custom frames right here in the Pacific Northwest. Workmanship on framing is GUARANTEED FOR LIFE. In addition to custom framing, they offer framed art, photo frames, and free design consultations, along with high quality professional art and photo printing on paper, canvas or metal. Frame Central is a member of the Northwest Framing family, an industry leader since 1974. Shop in person or online at: www.pnwframing.com. Frame Central has been an in-kind contributor since 2006.

JONES SODA

Ten photographs from our exhibit are featured on 250,000 bottles of Jones Soda. Jones Soda has been an in-kind contributor since 2007. www.jonessoda.com

SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

The Seattle Art Museum hosts our exhibit every December. SAM has been an in-kind contributor since 1995. www.seattleartmuseum.org

Interested in becoming a sponsor or helping underwrite?

We are grateful for any help you can provide–whether it's becoming a full fledged sponsor or helping to underwrite one of our expenses–we welcome your contribution. For details on sponsoring and underwriting please contact executive director Kelly Atkinson at: kellyatkinsonphotography@gmail.com



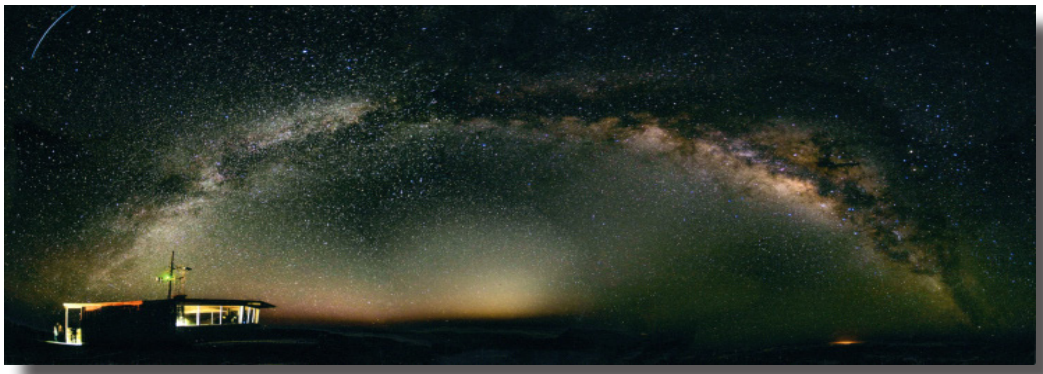
©Ella Banken, Tacoma School of the Arts
2015 3rd place, PEOPLE



©Ian Ostericher, Peninsula H.S.
2009 Best in Show



©Felicia Qiang, Skyline High School
2026 2nd place, PORTRAIT



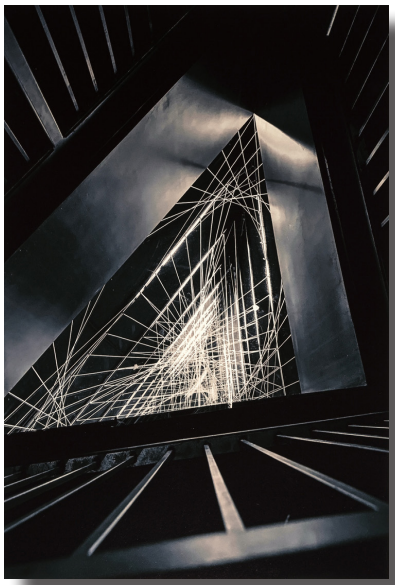
©Riley Jacques, Ferris High School
2017 2nd Place, LANDSCAPE

Washington State High School PHOTOGRAPHY Competition 2027

prizes



Jones Soda selects ten images from our exhibit each year and features them on 250,000 bottles of their soda.



©Indigo Bamba
Kentridge High School
2026 1st place, ARCHITECTURE

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY
April 24, 2027

PROMOTING STUDENT IMAGES

The purpose of this event is to provide a prestigious public platform for student photography. The final exhibit is showcased at the Seattle Art Museum and galleries at Wallingford Frame Central, Kenmore Camera, and on the Kenmore Camera web site at www.kenmorecamera.com.

Student images are also featured in our annual RULES & REGULATIONS publication and seasonal e-publication sublime. For these reasons we require a signed release from the student, or their parents if they are under 18 years of age, to reproduce student images. Reproduced images will always include a copyright, the student's name and their school. If you have questions contact Executive Director Kelly Atkinson at KellyAtkinsonPhotography@gmail.com

BEST IN SHOW

$250 - One photograph from the exhibit will be selected as Best in Show.
Compliments of Kenmore Camera and Canon

FIRST PLACE IN CATEGORY

$50 - Students placing 1st place in a category will be awarded a $50 check.
Compliments of Kenmore Camera and Canon

FRAME CENTRAL

Photographs selected for the final exhibit will be expertly matted and framed compliments of Wallingford Frame Central. After the exhibit is done touring, the framed photographs are returned to students by Frame Central.
Compliments of Frame Central and Northwest Framing

JONES SODA LABEL PROJECT

Jones Soda select ten photographs from the exhibit to be featured on 250,000 Jones Soda bottles.
Compliments of Jones Soda Company



©Nathan Shedd, Stadium H.S.
2025 3rd place, LANDSCAPE



©Shea Morrissey, Kentridge H.S.
2026 3rd place, PORTRAIT

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