

INSIDECsulb

National Monograph Student Contest Winners Announced

Published: October 3, 2011

A Columbia University student has been named winner of the Richard A. Clarke Graduate Student Monograph Contest commemorating the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The competition was sponsored by CSULB's Center for First Amendment Studies and 911plus.org.

Graduate students in master's or doctoral programs at United States colleges and universities were invited to take part in the contest, which asked for monographs of no more than 50 pages on the following questions: What lessons have we learned from 9/11? Given the lessons learned, what policy changes would make America more secure?

Sara Moller, studying in Columbia's Department of Political Science, captured first-place honors and a \$20,000 scholarship for her monograph titled "Lessons Learned and Unlearned: The Tenth Anniversary of September 11, 2001."

Two other prizes were also awarded. Dimitar Georgiev of the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University, garnered second place and a \$10,000 scholarship for his monograph on "Failure of American Strategic Thought and 9/11," and Jennifer L. Freer from the Department of Communication at the Rochester Institute of Technology, who earned third place and a \$5,000 scholarship with her entry, "The Patriot Act and the Public Library: An Unanticipated Threat to National Security."

"We received entries from colleges and universities all across the country including University of Texas, Harvard University, USC, Georgetown, Columbia, and the like," said Craig R. Smith, director of CSULB's Center for First Amendment Studies. "The three winners were selected by a panel of anonymous judges, all with Ph.D.s, who assessed the monographs in blinded form. That is, the judges did not see who wrote the essays nor what university they came from."

The goal of the contest was to analyze the information leading up to 9/11, the United States' subsequent invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, and related government decisions and actions in order to provide thoughtful analysis and public policy recommendations to make America more secure.

"We wanted to provide an opportunity for the best graduate students in America to explore the lessons we have learned from the attacks of 9/11 and to suggest reforms that might prevent such a tragedy from occurring again," Smith explained. "The three finalists represent three very different approaches and assessments of the implications of 9/11. Ms. Moller's study focuses on policy recommendations. Mr. Georgiev's study draws lessons from his detailed history of events. Ms. Freer's study focuses on the impact of the Patriot Act on libraries and their customers."

Smith noted that the contest was made possible by a generous grant from Steven C. Markoff, who conceived and compiled the on-line database, www.911plus.org. Additionally, the contest was named in honor of Richard Clarke, who came to widespread public attention for his role as

counter-terrorism czar in the Clinton and Bush Administrations in March 2004, when he appeared on the “60 Minutes” television news magazine, released his memoir about his service in government, “Against All Enemies,” and testified before the 9/11 Commission. In all three instances, Clarke was sharply critical of the Bush Administration’s attitude toward counter-terrorism before the 9/11 terrorist attacks and of the decision to go to war with Iraq.

In September, all three winners joined Clarke, Markoff, and Smith to receive their awards at a commemoration of 9/11 hosted by New Jersey Rep. Rob Andrews on Capitol Hill in the Rayburn House Office Building.

The winning monographs will be posted on the [Center for First Amendment Studies website](#).

–Rick Glady



California State University, Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90840
562.985.4111

