



## USC SHOAH FOUNDATION FOUNDER STEVEN SPIELBERG ANNOUNCES IWITNESS VIDEO CHALLENGE

**Contest challenges secondary school students to honor the legacy of *Schindler's List* by engaging in community service inspired by survivors' testimonies and showcasing their action in an IWitness video essay.**

February 27, 2013 - Los Angeles, CA - USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education today invited middle and high school students attending public, private or home schools in the U.S. and Canada to take up its IWitness Video Challenge. Steven Spielberg, who founded the Institute nearly 20 years ago following his work on *Schindler's List*, made the announcement.

The contest challenges secondary school students to act on the legacy of *Schindler's List* and do something positive in their community that exemplifies the movie's message that one person can make a difference. Students will be guided in their community service projects by the testimonies they watch in IWitness, the Institute's free educational website. IWitness brings the human stories of its Visual History Archive to teachers and their students via engaging multimedia-learning activities.

As part of the IWitness Video Challenge activity, students will be asked to create a one-to four-minute video essay with an easy-to-use video-editing tool on the IWitness website, allowing them to link their voices to those in the archive who inspired them to act.

"It was my goal when I established the Shoah Foundation that future generations would learn from the incredible life stories preserved in the Visual History Archive," said Spielberg. "I've seen how students connect with survivors through watching their testimony, and the impact it has on them. They experience a kind of learning that is profound and personal. And they take that with them into their lives."

The challenge was announced in conjunction with the *Schindler's List 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Limited Edition* Blu-ray™ release. Universal Studios Home Entertainment, under the supervision of Steven Spielberg, meticulously restored the original 35mm film negative to create an unparalleled, high definition Blu-ray™ experience. Exposing the film to an entirely new generation, the *Schindler's List 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Limited Edition* will be released on March 5, 2013 and include the USC Shoah Foundation Story with Steven Spielberg as well as the documentary "Voices from the List" featuring testimonies from Holocaust survivors.

IWitness, which the American Association of School Librarians has named as a top website for teaching and learning, provides students with guided exploration to full-life histories and testimonies of nearly

1,300 survivors and other witnesses to the Holocaust and other genocides. Students watch testimonies and use them in individual or group multimedia projects; teachers can assign activities as classwork or homework, and can even custom-build their own lessons and activities. The testimonies are searchable by more than 9,000 keywords, enabling students to pinpoint exact moments of interest within each testimony. The built-in IWitness video editor gives students the ability to construct video essays, editing testimony clips together with footage from other sources as well as photos and maps, voiceover audio, music, and text.

Stephen D. Smith, Executive Director of the USC Shoah Foundation, believes that IWitness will transform learning for students now and in the future. "By integrating testimony-based education with the development of media literacy, digital citizenship, and other 21<sup>st</sup>-century competencies, IWitness can help students understand the power of their words and actions and prepare them to be global citizens who add value to society."

Teachers interested in signing up their students in the IWitness Video Challenge must do so by June 30, 2013 and video essays must be submitted by October 31, 2013. USC Shoah Foundation will fly the IWitness Video Challenge winning student, a guardian/parent and teacher to Los Angeles in March 2014 to screen the video essay as part of the Institute's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities.

For more information about the IWitness Video Challenge, visit [iwitness.usc.edu](http://iwitness.usc.edu).

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#### About the USC Shoah Foundation

USC Shoah Foundation — The Institute for Visual History and Education is dedicated to making audio-visual interviews with survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides, a compelling voice for education and action. The Institute's current collection of 51,696 eyewitness testimonies contained within its Visual History Archive preserves history as told by the people who lived it, and lived through it. Housed at the University of Southern California, within the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the Institute works with partners around the world to advance scholarship and research, to provide resources and online tools for educators, and to disseminate the testimonies for educational purposes.

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