

Michigan students helping Michigan schools
● *Build Character* ● *Celebrate Diversity* ● *Promote Healthy Lifestyles*

MEIJER GREAT CHOICES STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL



Gerald R. Ford
Presidential
Foundation



Vander Laan
Family Foundation



VAN SINGEL
FINE ARTS CENTER

Judges



“ABOUT US”

The goal of the Great Choices Film Festival is to encourage Michigan youth to become personally engaged in three challenges of our future: Building Character, Celebrating Diversity, and Promoting Healthy Lifestyles.

The project, creating a :30 PSA (public service announcement), requires students to identify a problem and show the solution that leads to a Great Choice concerning one of the three topics. Within the process, students use their critical thinking skills, writing skills, technical skills, creative talents, and more – all in an effort to demonstrate to their audience what makes a GREAT CHOICE.

In order that ALL Michigan youth give serious consideration to these qualities, the Festival last year expanded the event. Originally a competition for high school students, it now offers classroom grants to encourage K-8th grade students to collaborate and problem solve their way to a great choice with regard to Character, Diversity, or a Healthy Lifestyle.

[Meijer](#) joined in the development and funded the project since its inception. We heard many times that Fred Meijer, who passed away November 25, 2011, always looked forward to seeing the PSA's the students made. He was amazed at the talent and thoughtfulness behind the student work. If you do any research on Fred Meijer, you will see that he embodied all of the traits promoted in the Great Choices Film Festival.

Along with Meijer as the naming host, the festival has Legacy Partners. Our Legacy Partners are known to promote the trait they are representing and encouraging students to adopt and share.

The [Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation](#) is the Legacy Partner of Building Character. When asked one name to describe character, people often give the name of President Gerald R. Ford. Over the course of his life, whether as a U of M football player or as President of the United States, he often stood alone with his decisions that were made from his inner sense of personal integrity and character. He not only demonstrates character, but courage. Steven Ford, actor/speaker and son of President Ford, has become personally involved in the Great Choices Student Film Festival.

[Chemical Bank](#) is our Legacy Partner for Celebrating Diversity. Chemical Bank is the second largest bank headquartered in Michigan. As a Michigan bank, it cares about our State's youth and future. Chemical Bank is known for giving back to its communities by participating in hundreds of events and projects. Along with partnering with the Great Choices Film Festival on Celebrating Diversity, Chemical Bank sponsors the Multicultural Parade and Party in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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[The Vander Laan Family](#) Foundation just recently joined The Meijer Great Choices Film Festival in helping Michigan students promote good choices.

[Celebration Cinema](#) provides its headquarters “Celebration Cinema North” in Grand Rapids Michigan, as our Awards Ceremony Host Site. The Loeks family, owners of Michigan’s Celebration Cinema’s, generously donates the theatre, staffing, and the Wave Room for a winner reception each year so that students and their guests can appreciate their work on the big screen. Attend the Awards Event and you’ll see that they literally “Roll out the Red Carpet.”

The [Van Singel Fine Arts Center](#), Byron Center, Michigan, serves as the Festival Coordinator. The concept of the Statewide Great Choices Student Film Festival originated from the Fine Arts Center. Each year, the Van Singel awarded scholarships to fine arts students at Byron Center High School. After years of seeing incredible film portfolios from students, they saw a need to showcase A/V students from throughout the State of Michigan. With input from the schools and a little brainstorming, came the concept of the Great Choices Film Festival.

The high school festival is a judged competition. Once the PSA’s are received and categorized, they are delivered to Michigan Colleges and Universities with Film & Media Departments that are interested in encouraging and aiding young film makers. The college department heads and their students donate their time to judge the submissions following a rubric that scores the PSA on various points such as originality, technical skills, message, and more. Serving as our judges are:

[Ferris State University](#), [Cornerstone University](#), [Grand Valley State University](#), [Western Michigan University](#), and [Compass College of Cinematic Arts](#).

The competition timeframes for both the high school student competition (judged) and the K-8 classroom competition (on-line, popular vote), run within each school year. The Awards Ceremony takes place each June. Afterward, winning PSA’s are copied to a master DVD and mailed to every school (public, private, charter) in the State of Michigan for use with their Character, Diversity and Health programs. Schools and media are invited to make copies and play the PSA’s at their will to promote Great Choices throughout our state.

For more information, go to www.meijergreatchoices.com

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