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Holocaust Contest Awards to be webcast

ORANGE, Calif., Feb. 28, 2010 -- Year after year now in its 11th straight year one of the most thrilling and moving events held on the Chapman University campus is the annual Holocaust Art and Writing Awards ceremony, presented by Chapman's Rodgers Center for Holocaust

Education. The event is not open to the public, so it's something that few in the community get to see. Chapman's 900-seat Memorial Hall is always packed to the brim with the high school and middle school contest participants, their teachers, and Holocaust survivors, with no room for other spectators. However, this year, for the first time, the award ceremony which will be held this Friday, March 5 at 11 a.m. will be taped for later viewing on the Rodgers Center website, so even more people can view it and feel a sense of participation.

The guest speaker at this year's ceremony is Holocaust survivor Curt Lowens, born in 1925, who served in the Dutch resistance during WWII and whose story is an incredible saga. He is now an L.A.-based character actor who has worked on Broadway and in movies and TV, most recently in the hit film *Angels and Demons*, and is the author of *Destination: Questionmark*. Other participants in the ceremony will include Chapman President Jim Doti, Dean Patrick Quinn of Wilkinson College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Dean Don Cardinal of the College of Educational Studies, and Dr. Marilyn Harran, Stern Chair in Holocaust Education and director of the Rodgers Center, whose brainchild this amazing event was and is.

The Holocaust Art and Writing Contest was launched in 1999-2000 as a partnership between the Rodgers Center and The 1939 Club, one of the largest and most active Holocaust survivor organizations in the United States. Middle school and high school students learn about the Holocaust in class, choose a survivor's testimony from The 1939 Club site or the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's YouTube site, and research that person's life. They then create essays, poems and artwork based on the survivor's history. The entries are judged by a blue-ribbon panel of experts that includes honorary judge Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor, author and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who will be speaking at Chapman on April 25-26.

Each year, the contest has grown to include more schools C public, private and parochial. This year, a record 101 schools, from Orange, throughout Orange County and all over Southern California, are participating. It has become not only one of the largest such contests in the country, but one of the most meaningful educating and affecting thousands of students, hundreds of teachers and many Holocaust survivors.

So, if you see a herd of high school and middle school students swarming on and near the Chapman campus this Friday C surrounding a small but stalwart band of gray-haired folks with the wisdom and pain of experience etched upon their faces you'll know who they are. Say hello and welcome them to Chapman. And for the rest of the story, please view the archived video, which will be posted after Friday on the Rodgers Center website:

www.chapman.edu/HolocaustEducation/rodgers

