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Tampa-area Native Named Critics' Choice Winner in Bridgestone Americas Teens Drive Smart Video Contest

University of South Florida junior receives cash prize for submission

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Aug. 1, 2012) — Mark Araya, a student at the University of South Florida, has been selected as a special Critics' Choice winner in the Bridgestone Americas Teens Drive Smart Video Contest, and will receive a \$2,500 cash prize. Three other students were chosen as winners and will be awarded college scholarships.

Araya was one of 10 contestants selected in the national scholarship competition. The contest challenges 16-to 21-year old students to create short videos about safe driving and ways to make better decisions behind the wheel. Araya's video was chosen from 2,322 entries received by Bridgestone Americas.

The advertising major's video, "My Distractions," takes a clever look at everyday distractions drivers encounter on the road. Using animated characters, the driver reminds viewers, "I make sure I keep my distractions where they belong: off the road." Araya's video can be viewed online at www.teensdrivesmart.com.

"I've been illustrating for a few years now and I loved making the characters for this film," said Araya. "So many videos out there focus on scare tactics so I thought it would be cool to use animation in something that wasn't quite so serious."

"We loved this year's winning videos, and it was a fierce battle for the top three spots," said Angela Patterson, Manager, Teens Drive Smart Program, Bridgestone Americas. "But more importantly, we're proud of these teens for their hard work and dedication to making the roads safer for all of us."

In addition to the cash prize and set of Bridgestone tires, Araya has the chance to have his video used as a public service announcement (PSA) on television stations across the United States.

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About Bridgestone Americas, Inc.:

Nashville, Tenn.-based Bridgestone Americas, Inc. (BSAM) is the U.S. subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation, the world's largest tire and rubber company. BSAM and its subsidiaries develop, manufacture and market a wide range of Bridgestone, Firestone and associate brand tires to address the needs of a broad range of customers, including consumers, automotive and commercial vehicle original equipment manufacturers, and those in the agricultural, forestry and mining industries. The companies are also engaged in retreading operations throughout the Western Hemisphere and produce air springs, roofing materials, and industrial fibers and textiles. The BSAM family of companies also operates the world's largest chain of automotive tire and service centers. Guided by its One Team, One Planet message, the company is dedicated to achieving a positive environmental impact in all of the communities it calls home.

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