



PRESS RELEASE

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**TAYLOR POTTER, THS JUNIOR,
SELECTED AS 2013 AL NEUHARTH FREE SPIRIT JOURNALISM SCHOLAR**



Texarkana, TX – Taylor Potter, Texas High School junior, is one of fifty-one high school journalists, representing every state and the District of Columbia, that will explore the First Amendment and the watchdog role of a free press, when he attends the Al Neuharth Free Spirit and Journalism Conference on July 13-18 in Washington, D.C.

The Freedom Forum, the Newseum's parent organization, directs this annual academic and scholarship program to inspire and equip some of the nation's best and brightest students to pursue journalism and media careers. The rising high school seniors, chosen from hundreds of applicants, attend the conference for free and all receive \$1,000 college scholarships.

Potter was selected to represent the state of Arkansas. He is actively involved in the UIL Journalism Team and serves as Sports Editor for the *Tiger Times* print and online newspapers. He is the son of Rebecca and Tommy Potter.

The Freedom Forum joined with the Journalism Education Association, high school journalism teachers and news organizations throughout the country to promote the program. Applicants were required to submit work samples, letters of reference, a transcript and essays about their interest in journalism and their free spirit qualities.

Through presentations, classes and experiences at the Newseum and elsewhere in Washington, the students will learn about the First Amendment as a cornerstone of democracy and the vital role of a free and responsible press. Students will study the three branches of government and how journalists cover them.

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Students will visit the White House, the U.S. Capitol and the headquarters of *USA TODAY*. They will attend a National Press Club luncheon program about the “State of the First Amendment.” They will participate in a courtroom simulation with a U.S. District Court Judge, watch a taping of NBC’s “Meet the Press,” and have the opportunity to hear from numerous leading journalists and elected officials.

The Al Neuharth Free Spirit program recognizes top high school journalists who also are free spirits. The awards were established by the Freedom Forum to honor Al Neuharth, founder of the Freedom Forum, Newseum and *USA TODAY*.

The Freedom Forum, based in Washington, D.C., is a nonpartisan foundation dedicated to free press, free speech and free spirit for all people. The foundation focuses on three priorities: the Newseum, the First Amendment and newsroom diversity.

The Freedom Forum is the main funder of the operations of the Newseum, an interactive museum of news in Washington, D.C.; the First Amendment Center; and the Diversity Institute. The First Amendment Center and the Diversity Institute are housed in the John Seigenthaler Center at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. The First Amendment Center also has offices in Washington, and the Diversity Institute has offices and programs at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion.

The Freedom Forum was established in 1991 under the direction of Founder Al Neuharth as successor to a foundation started in 1935 by newspaper publisher Frank E. Gannett. The Freedom Forum is not affiliated with Gannett Co. Its work is supported by income from an endowment of diversified assets.

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