PITTSBURGH, April 9, 2020 – Earlier this week, the Senator John Heinz History Center announced the winners of the 2020 National History Day competition during a virtual awards ceremony.

Like many educational programs and public events throughout the region, the History Center’s annual National History Day competition, originally scheduled for March 14-15, was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To honor the hard work of students who spent months preparing their projects, History Center staff worked tirelessly over the past three weeks to create an online competition.

Since 1989, the History Center has hosted the Western Pa. regional National History Day competition, one of the largest scholastic history contests in the nation.

Students in grades 6 through 12 competed individually or as part of a small group in categories including documentaries, exhibits, historical papers, performances, and websites. This year’s theme was “Breaking Barriers in History,” and many entries reflected a focus on local history with topics such as WQED, Fallingwater, and Rachel Carson.

For the digital version of National History Day, staff members developed creative ways for students to share their projects online. More than 350 students submitted photos of exhibit boards, scripts of performances, YouTube videos of documentaries, and more for nearly 50 judges to evaluate remotely.

A total of 93 students representing 20 schools were awarded first, second, or third place in the junior and senior competitions and now qualify for the Pennsylvania state competition, which will be held virtually in May. First and second place winners in the state contest will qualify for the national competition in June.

In addition, National History Day participants and their families will be invited to a National History Day Family Day at the History Center, generously supported by Covestro, after the museum re-opens.
The History Center will showcase many of this year’s student projects on its website in the coming weeks. A full list of winners is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org/education/national-history-day.

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