



WHITE HOUSE NEWS PHOTOGRAPHERS ASSOCIATION

NEWS

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WHNPA Announces Education Grant Winner: Mary Calvert of The Washington Times

(WASHINGTON, D.C. – April 10, 2009) – Mary Calvert, staff photographer for *The Washington Times*, has been chosen as the recipient of the White House News Photographers Association 2008 Project Grant. The grant, recently increased to \$10,000, with a matching amount from PNY Technologies Inc. will fund "Forgotten Victims: Rape as a Tool of War", which Calvert plans to produce in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been engulfed in on-again-off-again warfare for years.

Recent fighting in the eastern Congo has sparked fears of a civil war in the country - known as Zaire for several decades and originally named the Belgian Congo.

The Second Congo War that began in 1998 is sometimes referred to as the "African World War" and despite the 2003 peace accords, fighting continues in eastern Congo - where the prevalence and intensity of rape and other sexual violence has been described as the worst in the world. The war is the world's deadliest conflict since the Second World War with more than five million people killed.

"Ugly topic, but a story that needs to be told," said WHNPA education committee chairman Leighton Mark in announcing the award. "Not only do we wish Mary the best of luck with her project but hope she stays safe. The Congo has been a nasty place for a long time. We know she'll return with stellar photos."

Tony Gomez, vice president, sales and marketing, at PNY Technologies adds, "Journalists are truth seekers and at times the truth reveals atrocities. These stories need to be told and someone needs to have the courage to uncover them and share the grim reality with the world. Mary shines a light on the dark side of war in Africa and thru her lens the plight of the African people comes into focus. We honor Mary for her work and dedication to her craft."

In commenting about the grant award White House News Photographers president Dennis Brack said, "The WHNPA grants are our way of enabling our members to take on projects that as journalists they feel they need to do. As is evident in Mary Calvert's award subject, these are not vacations to wonderful places. They are for serious work, which will produce important stories. The matching grant from PNY, gives the award winner the time and resources needed to make their project a successful journalistic achievement."

For more information please contact Dennis Brack at dennis@dennisbrack.com (703-622-5949) or executive director Heidi Elswick at heidi@whnpa.org (301-606-8251). For further information about 'The Eyes of History™' and to view images of Mary's work visit the website at www.whnpa.org.

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