FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sarah Olson named winner of 2013 ACM Nick Adams Short Story Contest

Sarah Olson, a sophomore at Carleton College, has been named the winner of the 41st annual ACM Nick Adams Short Story Contest. Ms. Olson’s story “Truth in Lies” was selected from the 37 stories submitted by students from ACM colleges. Novelist Peter Geye served as the final judge for the contest this year. Professors Steven Hayward from Colorado College and Robert Archambeau from Lake Forest College served as initial faculty readers for the contest, selecting six finalists from which Mr. Geye selected the winner. The Nick Adams Contest carries with it a first prize of $1,000, made possible through a generous gift from an anonymous donor.

In commenting on Ms. Olson’s story, Mr. Geye wrote that it is:

a story that's as beautifully and as carefully written as the paintings the author describes. I was often reminded of the short stories of Richard Ford while I read, a feeling I relished. But this story is not just style. While it feigns aloofness, it actually packs plenty of emotional punch…I only wish the story went on for the length of a novel, so I could relish the author's prose for days instead of hours. Bravo!

Sarah Olson is an English major at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. At Carleton, she is a member of the Carleton Choir and performs with the flute ensemble on campus. Ms. Olson is also passionate about theater and has worked on several Carleton productions. Ms. Olson admits that stories and writing have always been a huge part of her life, but recently she finished a Creative Writing course which helped her become “more diligent about actually writing things down.”

Ms. Olson would like to thank both Greg G. Hewett for “his considerable encouragement and talent” while working with her on “Truth in Lies” and Susan Jaret McKinstry for “providing so much support and guidance throughout my time at Carleton.” Dr. Hewett and Dr. Jaret McKinstry are both Professors of English at Carleton College. Dr. Hewett taught the Creative Writing course Ms. Olson recently completed and Dr. Jaret McKinstry serves as Ms. Olson’s faculty advisor and mentor.

“Truth in Lies” will be posted on the ACM website. On April 12, Ms. Olson will be recognized with other ACM award winners during the 5th Annual ACM Student Symposium on Off-Campus Study in Chicago.

In addition to Ms. Olson’s winning story, an honorable mention was awarded to Bryan Hulse from St. Olaf College for his story, “Hob Carter.” Mr. Geye noted that “Hob Carter” is “that rare story that manages to transcend convention altogether. At once folksy and supernatural, its focus on the title character is a study in obsession without being coy or melodramatic. The author manages to make the matter of time both completely irrelevant and one of the central preoccupations of the narrative, a trick I found most interesting, and satisfying. As I found the entire story.”
Four other stories were selected as finalists by the faculty judges: “Anaadar” by Aditi Roy of Grinnell College, “Have My Cake and Eat It Too” by Hannah Rasmussen of Macalester College, “The Mangroves” by Julia Ohman of Knox College, and “The Way Things Fall” by Saraiya Ruano of Colorado College. This is the third time a story by Julia Ohman has reached the finalist stage in the last three years. Her story, “When the Leaving is Done” was one of six finalists in the 2012 contest; and in 2011, she was awarded an honorable mention for “The Zoo.”

Mr. Geye is the author of two novels, *The Lighthouse Road* (2012) and *Safe from the Sea* (2010), both of which are set on the shores of Lake Superior in northern Minnesota. He is also the former editor of Western Michigan University’s literary journal, *Third Coast*. In 2010, Mr. Geye’s debut novel, *Safe from the Sea*, won both the inaugural Indie Lit Award for Fiction and the Northeastern Minnesota Book Award for Fiction. He lives in his hometown of Minneapolis with his wife and three young children.

The Nick Adams Short Story Contest has been held annually since 1973 by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, a consortium of 14 private liberal arts colleges, which includes Beloit College, Carleton College, Coe College, The Colorado College, Cornell College, Grinnell College, Knox College, Lake Forest College, Lawrence University, Luther College, Macalester College, Monmouth College, Ripon College, and St. Olaf College. The ACM consortial office is located in Chicago.

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