

For Immediate Release

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HOMESCHOOL STUDENT FROM KNOXVILLE WINS \$2,000 DISCUS SCHOLARSHIP

Jason van der Merwe was named the February 2011 Discus Scholarship winner by the Discus Awards, a national program that provides recognition and scholarship opportunities for multi-talented students who demonstrate excellence both inside and outside of school

<http://www.discusawards.com/>

Bethesda, MD (March 1, 2011) – Jason van der Merwe, a senior in a home school program in Tennessee, was named the recipient of the February 2011 Discus Scholarship, a national college scholarship that provides \$2,000 to ten multi-talented high school students each year who demonstrate excellence both inside and outside of school.

Jason has mastered the left and right side of his brain, combining an innate creativity with an aptitude for technology. Mix in his selfless devotion to community service and you have the recipe for a well-rounded high school student.

On his multimedia Discus Awards winner profile, Jason writes of his community service activities, “One of my largest projects involves S.O.A.R., a youth program in inner city Knoxville. I have taught photography classes, computer workshops and started a 4-H club there. I have also acquired donations to renovate the computer lab and 10 cameras donated so that I could teach the students photography. This year, I started a sponsorship program so that people can financially support students at S.O.A.R.”

The foundation for his service is his skill in technology and photography. Jason has competed in, placed, and won multiple technology competitions, including The Global Challenge Award Contest in which he built a cell phone that recharges itself. In the arts, Jason runs a professional photography business through which he takes pictures for customers around his community, including a band based out of Nashville.

Jason embodies the mission of the Discus Awards (www.DiscusAwards.com), the organization behind the Discus Scholarship. Launched in November 2009, the Discus Awards looks beyond test scores, grades, and athletics to recognize students whose multi-dimensional talents and passions span three of ten attributes, including community service, work, technology, athletics, academics, and the arts.

The \$2,000 Discus Scholarship is awarded to one Discus Award winner each month of the school year. In addition to becoming eligible for a Discus Scholarship, Discus Award winners are profiled on the Discus Awards site (www.discusawards.com/winners) and [Facebook page](#), providing them with a powerful new tool for showing colleges the full range of their diverse strengths and interests. Students can apply for a Discus Award throughout the year.

Since its soft launch in November 2009, the Discus Awards has attracted tens of thousands of nominees from every state in the U.S. plus D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. Winners are selected by a judging panel of teachers, counselors, and education professionals.

“With his energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to technology, community service and arts, Jason exemplifies everything the Discus Scholarship stands for,” said Devin Schain, CEO of the Discus Awards and Campus Direct. “At a time when it’s harder than ever to pay for college, we’re giving recognition and

support to the kind of leaders who will thrive in a world that increasingly requires creative thinking, dedication, and a wide range of strengths.”

Students may nominate themselves for a Discus Award at www.DiscusAwards.com, or be nominated by parents, teachers, counselors, coaches, or friends. They are then asked to submit references and write short essays describing their accomplishments in three out of ten major categories, or attributes, of student life: Academics, Arts, Athletics, Community Service, Faith, Government, Green, Technology, Work, and Other Achievements.

To show that they are more than just words on a page, nominees also are encouraged to upload photos and videos that illustrate their achievements.

The Discus Awards was created by Campus Direct, a burgeoning boutique global education company, and Recognition Media, the owner and producer of major awards programs including The Webby Awards and The Telly Awards.

To nominate yourself or someone you know, please visit www.DiscusAwards.com.

About The Discus Awards

The Discus Awards (www.DiscusAwards.com) is the only awards and scholarship program honoring active and engaged high school students who excel in and out of school. Looking beyond grades, test scores, and win-loss records, the Discus Awards recognizes students for achievement in at least three areas, from community service and work to faith and the arts. Winners are selected by a panel of teachers, counselors, and education professionals, and each winner is eligible for a \$2,000 college scholarship awarded each month of the school year. The Discus Awards is presented by Campus Direct, a burgeoning boutique global education company, and Recognition Media, the owner and producer of major awards programs, including The Webby Awards and The Telly Awards.

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