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**September 1 is Opening Date for Student Submissions  
for International Ocean Film Festival**

**Student Filmmakers around the world encouraged to submit works that inspire people to appreciate and care for the ocean by revealing its wonders through independent films.**

**Cash prize of up to \$500 for each category**

**15<sup>th</sup> annual celebration of features films about marine life, the ocean, coastal cultures and conservation takes place in San Francisco March 8 – 12, 2018**

**[www.oceanfilmfest.org](http://www.oceanfilmfest.org)**

23 August 2017 - San Francisco, CA: “The winds, the sea, and the moving tides are what they are. If there is wonder and beauty and majesty in them, science will discover these qualities,” wrote **Rachel Carson** in her landmark book *The Sea Around Us*. “If there is poetry in my book about the sea, it is not because I deliberately put it there, but because no one could write truthfully about the sea and leave out the poetry.” For 15 years, the **International Ocean Film Festival** has been finding the poetry of the sea and putting it onscreen. **Beginning on September 1** student filmmakers from around the world are encouraged to find that poetry as well: submitting works that inspire others to a love and respect the ocean. Open to middle and high school students internationally, the contest offers prizes of up to \$500 per category. The winning entries will be featured at the **Festival’s 15<sup>th</sup> annual celebration March 8 – 12, 2018**. Entry details may be found online at [www.oceanfilmfest.org](http://www.oceanfilmfest.org).

“The ocean is the greatest teacher on earth,” said **Ana Blanco, Executive Director for the International Ocean Film Festival**. “This is an amazing opportunity for student filmmakers to simultaneously teach and learn about our planet’s greatest, and largest, national resource. Our youth are the next generation of ocean conservationists. This next generation, intuitively, understands the need for ocean protection and invariably will list a call to action in their films.”

All submitted films must be five minutes or less in length, and done entirely by students, or groups of students. The subject matter must be about the earth’s oceans. The top finalists will be screened in a dedicated program during the Festival, open to all with free admission, on Sunday, March 11, at 10am. All submissions are due January 9.

For the 2017 Festival, 98 submissions were received from around the world, including films from the USA, Turkey and the Philippines. The top three winners in each category from 2017 are posted online at [www.oceanfilmfest.org](http://www.oceanfilmfest.org)

Submissions may include films of all genres – documentaries, narratives, shorts, and animation films of all lengths. Subjects may focus on all oceanographic themes including but not limited to: ocean exploration, wildlife, environmental, conservation, oceanography, seafaring adventures, maritime issues, ocean sports and coastal cultures.

Since its launch in 2004, the San Francisco-based International Ocean Film Festival has attracted thousands of spectators of all ages from around the world, including film enthusiasts, sea athletes, educators, and environmental supporters. Since then, the Festival has presented over 50 films from 15 different countries and featured post-film Q&A sessions with visiting filmmakers, special panel discussions with content experts, and the Annual Free Student Education Program. It was the first event of its kind in North America, inspired by the well-established ocean festival in Toulon, France, which has continued to draw large audiences for more than 40 years.

“This is one of the most important opportunities we offer,” said Blanco: “offering young people an opportunity to explore the creative field of filmmaking while telling their story about the ocean.”

Sponsors for the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual International Ocean Film Festival include **Bank National Marine Sanctuary** and **Hotel Zephyr, Official Hotel Sponsor** for the Festival.

The 15th Annual International Ocean Film Festival will take place March 8 – 12, 2018 at San Francisco’s Cowell Theatre at Fort Mason. The International Ocean Film Festival is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit.