



With student scholarship programs, the North American Nature Photography Association is shaping a new generation of nature photographers

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY LOU NETTELHORST

FOCUS ON TOMORROW



Who is the next generation of world-class wildlife photographers? Who are the heirs to such greats as Frans Lanting, Art Wolfe, Jim Brandenburg, Galen Rowell and John Netherton?

No one can say for sure, of course, but it's a good bet some of tomorrow's ace nature photographers will emerge from the high school and college

student scholarship programs sponsored by the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA).

Since 1995, nearly 100 students have participated in NANPA's High School Scholarship Program (NHSSP), which offers an intense week of focus on the art of photographing nature. The goal is to promote awareness, understanding, and an appreciation for the natural environment through photography. During the program, the students meet and study with renowned nature photographers both in the field and in the classroom to sharpen their skills and build confidence.

"This opportunity has allowed me to improve the artistic value of my photographs" explains Lindsay Adler, a 2003/4 scholarship winner from Apalachin, NY. "I learned to become intimate with my subjects—to get to know the personality of a flower, the behavior of water droplets, the images reflected in the dew, and so much more." The students attend regular sessions at the NANPA Summit as well as special programs



designed just for them, such as "Editing with a Purpose" and "The Business of Photography." Some mornings, they wake up to "Breakfast with the Pros," informal eat-and-greet sessions where they get to talk to photographers, editors, writers, and other pros in related fields.

On Saturday night, the week of fun and hard work culminates with the Summit banquet, where the students present their images in a synchronized show for the entire NANPA membership. This emotion-filled finale, typically accompanied by a standing ovation and cheering applause, is also an exciting beginning for those youngsters who have set their sights on a career in nature photography.

For many participants, the experience of living and working together 24/7 for a solid week can have a life-changing effect. "My mom thinks the person she picked up at the airport on the 25th was not the same person she dropped off on the 18th," says Jared Peyton, a 2004 scholarship winner from Slidell, Louisiana.

"She was amazed at all the things I was talking about in the car. She couldn't believe that in just a week I sounded more confident and mature."

Left and opposite: photos by NANPA Student scholarship Gabby Salazar, winner in the youth category in the 2003 Nature's Best Photo Awards Competition.

Below, NANPA students from left to right: Jorel Cuomo, John Yucas and Nate Merz, Mary Postema, Lindsay Adler, NANPA group, Gabby Salazar.

Previous pages and inset above left: Nick Murphy

SEEING THE 'LIGHT'

by Nancy Rotenberg

We start out as children—full of light, creativity, and clear vision. Then, somewhere along the line, many of us close down and nail tight the door to our hearts and the creative process.

NANPA's High School Student Scholarship Program offers an opportunity to open that door and stop the shutdown process. It helps students develop technical knowledge, but just as important, it helps them understand there are times to abandon attachments to methods and theories and equipment.

My philosophy of teaching involves pursuit of the "light" that each of us brings to the photographic process. When your own light becomes an intrinsic part of the image, the experience becomes a bonding of life and art. This is a Gestalt way of approaching photography—a coming together of all parts, resulting in a fuller experience.

Instead of creating mere snapshots of life, you respond with your own light, your whole being, thus bringing much more to every image. This way, seeing is a visceral experience. It is about what you see, how you see, and in what manner you convey the story. Thus the photographic process becomes not just about looking, but about searching, feeling, finding, reflecting, taking in, releasing.



2005 NANPA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Sign up today for the next high school and college student scholarship programs, which will be held on the following dates:

- High school program: January 16-23, 2005
 - College program: January 18-23, 2005
- Both will take place in Charlotte, North Carolina, in conjunction with the Eleventh Annual NANPA Summit, to be held January 19-23, 2005.
- Submission deadlines:
- High school students: September 15, 2004
 - College students: October 15, 2004

NOTE: High school students interested in the program must be nominated by a NANPA member. For nomination and application information, go to <http://www.nanpa-infinityfoundation.org>

Text and photographs by Lou Nettelhorst of Grayslake, IL, NANPA High School Scholarship Program Chair.

