



CNN Heroes finalists: Young Wonders

Dallas Jessup created a video that teaches girls how to fight their way out of dangerous situations.

Three teens have been named CNN Heroes finalists in the "Young Wonder" category for their work in the areas of autism, self-defense and race relations.

The three honorees were selected from thousands nominated online as ordinary people whose work has had an extraordinary impact on the lives of others.

All three will be acknowledged during "CNN Heroes: An All-Star Tribute," CNN's live global telecast airing Thursday, December 6, at 9 p.m. ET.

A blue ribbon panel of world leaders and luminaries will select one of the three for special recognition.

Between May and September, viewers in 80 countries submitted more than 7,000 nominations to CNN.com/Heroes.

Dallas Jessup | Vancouver, Washington

After she watched a disturbing video of an 11-year-old girl being led away by the man who would later abuse and murder her, Dallas Jessup was spurred into action.

She realized most girls her age would not know how to defend themselves in a similar situation, but as a tae kwon do black belt with expertise in Filipino street fighting, Dallas had an idea of how to change that.

Dallas, 16, produced "Just Yell Fire," a video designed to teach young women and girls how to escape an attacker. The film, which has been downloaded 300,000 times, is available online for free. It teaches 10 easy-to-learn self-defense moves and includes a "Dating Bill of Rights."

Dallas speaks at schools, summer camps and business luncheons to increase awareness of the issue and her video, and she receives e-mails daily from abuse victims, parents, teens, crisis centers, police agencies and young women who thank her for making them feel safer and more empowered. ■