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MGA Announces Regional Video Contest Winner

WASHINGTON, D. C. – The Midwestern Governors Association (MGA) announced today that Jerrod Roberts, a resident of Chicago, was selected as the winner in the MGA's video contest, *America's Smartland: Let the Midwest Surprise You!*

"Many excellent videos were submitted to the *America's Smartland* video contest and I want to, again, offer my congratulations to all contestants for a job well done," said Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, the current Chair of the MGA. "In particular, the submission "What is the Midwest?" by Jerrod Roberts drew significant attention to the collective strengths and unique story of the Midwest and those who call it home. Congratulations Jerrod!"

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, Immediate Past Chair of the MGA, said, "Jerrod has done a great job capturing what we know makes the Midwest so special. We are a place anyone can call home. Our diverse culture, economy and geography are a microcosm of the country and we are proud to be Midwesterners."

Roberts said, "First I would like thank my assistant producer Andrew Cioffi and all of the people who helped make this video possible. Since recently returning to the Midwest after living on the west coast, I believe the Midwest's best natural resource is its people. I enjoyed making this video and communicating what the Midwest is from the perspective of Midwesterners."

The MGA also announced the following three honorable mentions, which also did a great job of highlighting the strengths of the region:

- 'Flyover States' by Steven Muntz, a resident of Le Grand, Iowa
- 'The Midwest!' by Chris Wetzel, a resident of Strongsville, Ohio
- 'The Midwest: America's Smartland' by Aaron Johnson, a resident of Minneapolis, Minnesota

The MGA's video contest, as a part of Governor Branstad's agenda as the Chair of the MGA, featured submissions by Midwesterners that tell the Midwest's unique story. The goal of the video contest was to draw attention to the collective strengths of the Midwest and all it has to offer. The region is the crossroads for much of the nation's economic activity with a strong work ethic and climate for business and job growth that reflect a diverse mix of industries.

Midwestern states are proud of their high-quality schools and colleges with tremendous research capabilities; a superb standard of living, which includes vibrant cities and towns, affordable housing, and

cultural, recreational and sporting activities; incredible opportunities in agriculture and the biosciences; and four distinct seasons and breathtaking natural wonders.

To view the winning and finalist video submissions, visit www.midwesterngovernors.org.

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The MGA is a nonprofit, bipartisan organization that brings together the governors of Midwestern states to work cooperatively on issues of importance to the region. Current members of the MGA are Gov. Pat Quinn (Ill.), Gov. Mike Pence (Ind.), Gov. Terry Branstad (Iowa), Gov. Sam Brownback (Kansas), Gov. Rick Snyder (Mich.), Gov. Mark Dayton (Minn.), Gov. Jay Nixon (Mo.), Gov. John Kasich (Ohio) and Gov. Scott Walker (Wis.).