

National panel calls Guard film 'extraordinary'

Citing the "extraordinary cinematography of the film," a panel of judges at the Houston International Film Festival recently presented the Army National Guard with its Gold Award for a film produced extensively in Alaska.

The award honors the entry of the film, "Aviation," as the best recruiting/career guidance film in the documentary category.

"It beat out 70 other entries, including one from Walt Disney Productions to win," said Maj. Jeff Calhoun, an Alaska Army Guard recruiting officer.

Calhoun, who was in Houston to pick up the award, said that several dozen Alaskans helped make the film.

"It honors their efforts as much as it reminds people who will see it that Alaska is the air crossroads of the world," Calhoun said.

The nine-and-a-half-minute film features members of the Alaska Army National Guard in a graphic depiction of how they employ their UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters in an operational setting.

The narrative discusses the advantages of getting training and experience in aviation through the Army National Guard.

The film, scheduled for nationwide distribution, will have its Alaska debut in June.

William Livingston Productions, Needham Harper Advertising and aviation elements of the Alaska, Washington, Pennsylvania and Maryland Army National Guard units combined their efforts in the production of the film.