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CCI Alumnus Wins Prestigious Photography Award

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While participating the Community College Initiative (CCI) Program, participants learn how to build technical skills in applied fields and enhance their leadership capabilities, but they also have to learn how to advocate for themselves and their skills when they return to their home countries after their exchange year. For Fajar Kristianto, a 2013-14 CCI alumnus who studied Business at Mesa Community College, his confidence in his art led him to enter the world's largest photography competition - the [Sony World Photography Awards](#). This year, his initiative, persistence, and talents were recognized and Fajar was announced as a National Awards winner for the 2017 Sony World Photography Awards.

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The National Awards is a global program to find the best single photographs taken by local photographers in 66 countries, and Fajar won the National Award for his home country, Indonesia.

To celebrate Fajar's success, we asked him about his process applying to the Sony Photography Awards, the story behind his winning photograph, and about his journey and reflections as a photographer.

Fajar Kristianto: This is my second time joining the [Sony Awards] competition. The main reason for applying remains the same: worldwide exposure of my work. I want to represent not only the beauty of Indonesia's nature, but also the colorful backgrounds of its people.

I submitted four photos to Portraits category in the competition. All of them are of random people I met on the street, and they have something in common- how to survive in Jakarta. The photograph that won shows that limited free space in Jakarta is an obstacle to be tackled with a joyful approach. I took the picture when I was strolling around Old Town. I found a group of people who seemed to be having fun playing billiards, even though it's located under a highway.

The first time I got into photography was eleven years ago. I borrowed my classmate's analog camera then started to spend rolls and rolls of negative films. I kept the momentum going by establishing a Photography Club called Psychology Photographic Society (PoPS). Ever since then, I have collected more literature, attended workshops, and had freelance jobs doing photography for weddings and modeling photo shoots.

My curiosity has led me to explore many categories of photography, but my favorite so far is portraiture. One thing I've learned is how to omit the personal barriers between the photographer and their objects, which are mainly human. Furthermore, I explore not only the visual perspectives of a photo, but also the story of the photo by writing captions or even essays.

My CCI Program Coordinator Paul said to me once, *have the eyes to see.* I think about the deep meaning of this quote, and have come to the conclusion that photography is an elaboration of observation. In Jakarta, where a colorful landscape with vibrant colors doesn't exist, this element transforms into people who live in the city.

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Congrats to CCI
[#ExchangeAlumni](#) Fajar who won the Indonesia National Award in the Sony World Photography Awards!
buff.ly/2oINLiP



30 Mar



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"Perhaps my story will encourage [women] to ...



Fajar's winning photograph . Indonesia National Award winner, 2017 Sony World Photography Awards (© Fajar Kristianto)

Fajar will be attending the Sony World Photography Awards & Martin Parr 2017 Exhibition in London where he will receive his prize during the annual awards ceremony. His photograph will be on display along with other competition winners. View all National Awards winners for the 2017 Sony Photography Awards [here](#).

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