NORTH CAROLINA—Essays about the emotional distance between a father and son, a woman's capacity for violence, and a functionally disabled teenager received top honors in the 2010 Rose Post Creative Nonfiction Competition, sponsored by the North Carolina Writers' Network.

John Picard of Greensboro won first place for his essay "The Iceman." Author Virginia Holman, the final judge of this year's contest, praised Picard's essay for its "wonderful use of detail." She added, "Fully developed characters emerge in spite of profound physical and emotional limitations."

Durham writer Rachel E. Pollock's essay "Until Morale Improves" came in second place. Pollock's essay describes a costume-shop worker preparing a costume for a violent scene, and "in the process explores her own personal sources and capacity for violence," according to Holman.

Holman awarded third place to Deborah Gold's essay "Cody, age 14 (or 15, if you ask him)." Holman praised Gold's "engaging, energetic prose" in this story of a functionally disabled young man.

Virginia Holman is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, a Rosalynn Carter Mental Health Journalism Fellowship, and a North Carolina Arts Council grant. Her memoir Rescuing Patty Hearst won the 2003 Outstanding Literature Award from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

Sponsored by the North Carolina Writers' Network and administered by the creative writing department at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, the Rose Post Creative Nonfiction Competition encourages the creation of lasting nonfiction work that is outside the realm of conventional journalism. The contest is open to any legal resident of North Carolina or member of the NC Writers' Network. First-, second-, and third-place winners receive $300, $200, and $100, respectively, and the winning entry is considered for publication in the magazine Southern Cultures.

The nonprofit North Carolina Writers' Network is our state's oldest and largest literary arts services organization devoted to writers at all stages of development. For additional information, visit http://www.ncwriters.org.