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SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY JAIL HOSTS REEL RECOVERY FILM FESTIVAL

Innovative National Recovery Month Program Offers Inspiration & Hope

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA (September 16, 2015) – In a unique National Recovery Month program supported and promoted by Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi and his staff, two films are being screened to engage inmates with honest stories about substance misuse as well as the hope and opportunity for recovery. Expert panel discussions follow the films. San Rafael-based Alcohol Justice and Studio City-based Writers In Treatment have brought the REEL Recovery Film Festival into the San Francisco Jail system this week after winning a small, competitive San Francisco Sheriff's Department innovation award.

One recovery film was shown to 60 women prisoners on Monday night with filmmaker Nicole Boxer. Tonight there will be a different film shown in the men's San Bruno Jail with engaging humor and conversation with comedian Michael Pritchard.

"As we've seen with the failed U.S. war on drugs, substance abuse has become one of the many social problems relegated to the criminal justice system," said San Francisco Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi. "Instead of addiction being treated as a crime, it instead needs to be treated as a public health priority, combined with a recovery system available to all people, long before jail becomes the first resort."

"It was an honor to show **How I Got Over**, at the SF Women's Jail," stated Boxer. "As a fillmmaker I believe in the power of film to change the world. By showing our film to incarcerated women, we highlight strong, female role models that will inspire inmates to tell their stories and rewrite their next chapter with positivity. I hope to continue working in social justice causes and to create a



Bruce Lee Livingston, Nicole Boxer and Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi

groundswell of positive solutions in the community. This film program in San Francisco could light the way," she added.

"We are grateful to Sheriff Mirkarimi and his staff for allowing us to show these films in the San Francisco Jail system and for believing that by engaging audience members with honest stories about substance misuse, as well as the hope and opportunity for recovery, they will be able to make better choices to lead more productive lives," said Bruce Lee Livingston, Executive Director/CEO of Alcohol Justice, the alcohol industry watchdog. "The REEL Recovery Film Festival helps bring alcoholism and addiction out of the closet to reduce the stigma, and raise public awareness that it is not a moral failing but a devastating disease that, like other potentially fatal diseases, requires specialized treatment."

The films for the inaugural RRFF-SF Jail sessions are:

1) Death Of An Addict: The Tio Hardiman Story (2010) is the brilliant and entertaining urban saga of director Tio Hardiman's struggle to understand and break the cycle of intergenerational drug addiction in his family and neighborhood. From the late 70s to the mid 80s, Tio struggled with drugs and alcohol before turning his life around in 1986. Working the 12 Steps in Narcotics Anonymous helped him crystallize his perspective on his past, present and future. Written, directed and starring Tio Hardiman. Michael Pritchard will facilitate the discussion following the film.

Watch the trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWYnFlpst34



2) How I Got Over: Produced and directed by award-winning filmmaker Nicole Boxer, is a documentary that follows 15 formerly homeless women as they craft an original play, based on their harrowing true-life stories, to be performed one-night-only at The Kennedy Center in D.C. Guided by teachers from the Theatre Lab School of the Dramatic Arts, the women of N Street Village - a community for addiction recovery - discover their untapped artistic talents and reckon with their traumatic histories. Sharing their pasts to release the potential in their futures, the emboldened women take the stage before a packed house, illuminating the transformative power of arts education. Nicole Boxer facilitated the discussion following this film.

Watch the trailer

http://www.imdb.com/video/screenplay/vi3647450649/?ref =tt ov vi

HOW I GOT OVER will open the REEL Recovery Film Festival - New

York City Edition on October 16, 2015. More info here: http://reelrecoveryfilmfestival.org/new-york/

For more information about the REEL Recovery Film Festival – Bay Area Edition, please visit: https://alcoholjustice.org/projects/reel-recovery-film-festival

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