



## AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES AFI DOCS 2017 IMPACT LAB PARTICIPANTS

### Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson



### Two-Day Intensive Leads to Greater Issue Advocacy, Grants and Distribution

### Five 2016 AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grant Recipients Received Distribution Deals

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — May 30, 2017, WASHINGTON, DC** — The American Film Institute (AFI) has announced this year's AFI DOCS Impact Lab participants. The third edition of the AFI DOCS Impact Lab will take place June 13–14. Presented in collaboration with NBCUniversal, the intensive program is designed for select filmmakers with issue-driven films who aim to create broader social and political change through the power of film. The Lab will provide filmmakers with training in the areas of advocacy, grassroots communications and grassroots engagement. After completion of the Lab, participating projects are eligible to apply for the AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grants, which

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support the outreach and social action campaigns of select Lab participants.

Selected from films screening at AFI DOCS 2017, the 10 films participating in the Impact Lab are ACORN AND THE FIRESTORM (DIRS Reuben Atlas, Sam Pollard), CHASING CORAL: THE VR EXPERIENCE (LEAD ARTIST Jeff Orlowski), EDITH+EDDIE (DIR Laura Checkoway), FOR AHKEEM (DIRS Jeremy Levine, Landon Van Soest), THE FORCE (DIR Peter Nicks), I AM EVIDENCE (DIRS Trish Adlesic, Geeta Gandbhir), NOWHERE TO HIDE (DIR Zaradasht Ahmed), A SUITABLE GIRL (DIRS Sarita Khurana, Smriti Mundhra), WHAT LIES UPSTREAM (DIR Cullen Hoback) and THE WORK (DIRS Gethin Aldous, Jairus McLeary).

Last year, six out of 10 AFI DOCS Impact Lab projects were selected to receive funding from the AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grants. These films include ALMOST SUNRISE (DIR Michael Collins), CARE (DIR Deirdre Fishel), CHECK IT (DIRS Dana Flor, Toby Oppenheimer), NEWTOWN (DIR Kim A. Snyder), RAISING BERTIE (DIR Margaret Byrne) and THEY CALL US MONSTERS (DIR Ben Lear). Receiving a total of \$75,000 in support from AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grants, the selected documentaries were recognized for demonstrating their ability to leverage distribution and enact change.

Five of the 2016 AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grants recipients went on to receive theatrical or television distribution. ALMOST SUNRISE will air on PBS' POV on November 13, 2017; CARE will air on the World Channel's America Reframed this fall; Gunpowder & Sky Distribution and Kartemquin Films acquired RAISING BERTIE, which opens in theaters on June 9, 2017; THEY CALL US MONSTERS aired on PBS' Independent Lens on May 22, 2017; and NEWTOWN aired on Independent Lens on April 3, 2017.

"Distribution of the Impact Lab projects is a crucial step in these documentaries' efforts to create meaningful change," said Michael Lumpkin, Director, AFI DOCS. "These films will have the power to awaken global audiences to critical issues facing the world today. With the support of the AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grants, essential documentaries move from the festival screen onto a theatrical or television run, reaching larger audiences."

"NBCUniversal is excited to once again partner with AFI on this initiative to empower filmmakers to effect change. The AFI DOCS/NBCUniversal Impact Grants help these films make an impact by enabling filmmakers to engage with communities and stakeholders," said Cindy Gardner, Executive Vice President of Global Communication and Corporate Affairs, NBCUniversal. "We are proud of the success that has come out of the Grants, and the support provided to the filmmakers so their films can be seen more broadly."

The 2017 AFI DOCS Impact Lab is sponsored by NBCUniversal, with additional support from CrossCurrents Foundation, the Embrey Family Foundation and the International Documentary Association. The Impact Lab is produced by AFI DOCS and The Raben Group.

The 15th edition of AFI DOCS will run June 14–18 in Washington, DC, and Silver Spring, MD. For more information about the Impact Lab, please visit [AFI.com/AFIDOCs](http://AFI.com/AFIDOCs).

### **About AFI DOCS**

AFI DOCS is the American Film Institute's annual documentary festival in Washington, DC. Presenting the year's best documentaries, AFI DOCS is the only festival in the U.S. dedicated to screenings and

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events that connect audiences, filmmakers and policy leaders in the heart of our nation's government. The AFI DOCS advisory board includes Ken Burns, Davis Guggenheim, Chris Hegedus, Werner Herzog, Rory Kennedy, Barbara Kopple, Spike Lee, Errol Morris, Stanley Nelson, D A Pennebaker, Agnès Varda and Frederick Wiseman. Now in its 15th year, the festival will be held June 14–18, 2017, in landmark Washington, DC, venues and at the historic AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring, MD. Visit [AFI.com/AFIDOCS](http://AFI.com/AFIDOCS) and connect on [twitter.com/AFIDOCS](https://twitter.com/AFIDOCS), [facebook.com/AFIDOCS](https://facebook.com/AFIDOCS), [youtube.com/AFI](https://youtube.com/AFI) and [instagram.com/AmericanFilmInstitute](https://instagram.com/AmericanFilmInstitute).

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