



Film Review: The Providers (Green and Moot-Levin, 2018):USA

Description

Posted by [Larry Gleeson](#)

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[The Providers](#), recently selected for the [AFI Impact Lab](#) was directed, produced and photographed by Laura Green and Anna Moot-Levin. Green and Moot-Levin follow the movements and activities of Matt Probst, Chris Ruge and Leslie Hayes, three health care providers working for a small network of clinics, El Centro, in northern, central New Mexico. El Centro clinics cover an area of 22,000 square miles and treats all patients regardless of insurance, condition or ability to pay. This area is in the top five for heroin overdoses in the United States. Moreover, approximately 70,000 deaths occurred last year in rural areas due to a lack of health care access – ten times the number of deaths in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined.

After introducing the three characters, *The Providers* kicks into high gear, as Green and Moot-Levin begin capturing footage of the medical workers as they treat their patients and deal with their own individual life issues on life's terms. Probst's father, an opioid addict dies and his sister is arrested for buying drugs with monies fraudulently obtained via identity theft with a gang of five. Ruge receives a letter indicating his Echo Care funding will probably not be renewed and struggles with an imbalance between his obsession for work and a wife at home. Meanwhile, while Dr. Hayes continues to manage her workload quite well and worries what will happen if the Echo Care funding dries up.

In addition to the work these three –country doctors– perform, each one has an extraordinary backstory and history that not only informs them but also inspires them to keep providing care to their own community that is so absent in far too many communities across the land. Green and Moot-Levin provide sharp cinematography and make effective use of traditional documentary filmmaking techniques with testimonials, voice-over narration, still photography, text overlays and non-diegetic music. Paul Brill provides a mesmerizing musical score and sound composition and the cinematography provided by Green and Moot-Levin is exquisite. Most importantly, the narrative is quite compelling as the protagonists make life a little brighter, a little better and a lot more hopeful for those they care for.



Matt Probst, a physician's assistant, highlighted in Laura Green and Anna Moot-Levin's *The Providers* documentary, serves as the Director of El Centro, a small network of health clinics in north-central New Mexico. El Centro treats all patients regardless of their ability to pay and covers an area of 22,000 square miles. (Photo credit: theprovidersdoc.com)

Matt Probst, a physician's assistant, serves as the Director of El Centro and laments to a group of recruits that by the end of the summer El Centro will have a shortage of eight positions. Chris Ruge, a former truck driver who wanted to feel more connected, is a nurse practitioner and has been funded for one year through a pilot program called Echo Care which allows Ruge to visit the sickest individuals in the region 24 hours a day. Leslie Hayes is a family doctor who treats her patients with compassion as they struggle with everyday, real-life problems and was in the first training session for treating opioid addiction in a primary practice. Dr. Hayes was recognized by the White House as a [Champions of Change](#) for her work in advancing the treatment, prevention and recovery for the opiate-addicted.

One thing becomes tantalizingly clear by the film's end, *The Providers* is a heart-warming, soul-affirming documentary and it provides a deep insight into small-town America while confronting the challenges of keeping those in poor, rural communities safe. Warmly recommended with a run-time of an hour and twenty-four minutes.

*Featured photo: Chris Huges ((Photo credit: theprovidersdoc.com)

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Author

hollywoodglee