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“Outcasts: Surviving the Culture of Rejection” Film Is Jury-Selected for Screening at Down East Flick Fest

KINGSPORT, Tenn. – “Outcasts: Surviving the Culture of Rejection,” a documentary video produced by Hillhouse Video Works LLC of Kingsport, Tennessee, is one of 32 films jury-selected for a free, public screening at the Down East Flick Fest being held April 24-25 in Greenville, North Carolina.

“Outcasts,” which was written and directed by Stephen Newton and produced by Jane Hillhouse, was one of four films chosen in the Extended Shorts and Features category and will be shown on April 24 at a venue in Uptown Greenville. The venues include the Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge Art Gallery, Topsy Teapot@Limelight and Art Avenue.

After-parties will be held following the screenings. The following day, festival participants are invited to attend a symposium before the awards.

“We were thrilled to learn that ‘Outcasts’ was selected for screening at the Down East Flick Fest,” said Newton. “Our film has an important message that we want people to hear, so we’re pleased for the opportunity to have a free, public showing. Also, this festival is a juried event, open for both emerging and experienced filmmakers, and I’m looking forward to meeting the other screenwriters and cinematographers.”

“Outcasts: Surviving the Culture of Rejection” examines the history and causes for the high rate of recidivism in Tennessee, where more than 50 percent of all released prisoners return to jail or prison within three years. Recidivism refers to a person's relapse into criminal behavior after previous incarcerations.

“Once you’re convicted of a felony crime, your chances of having a normal life after you serve your time are slim to none,” noted Newton of the film’s content. “Being branded as a felon means you’re barred from most jobs, denied public housing and food stamps; probably you have no transportation and cannot vote. Unless you have family support or qualify for rehabilitation, your felony record condemns you to live your life as an outcast.”

The documentary, which has aired twice on Knoxville's East Tennessee PBS station, dramatically shows how recidivism devastates Tennessee families and communities. It also offers possible solutions, such as work carried out at John R. Hay House in Kingsport.

Hillhouse Video Works LLC is a division of Hillhouse Graphic Design LLC and produces documentary films for regional nonprofit organizations. For more information about the documentary, please visit www.cultureofrejection.org.

2015 marks the first year for Down East Flick Fest, which is dedicated to providing an annual user-friendly showcase for independent filmmakers, writers, actors and other artists. The festival's organizers hope to discover, support, and inspire independent film and theater artists throughout North Carolina, the United States and the world as they introduce audiences to new work.

For more information about the film festival or for volunteer opportunities, visit <http://downeastflickfest.org/>.

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