



## FOCUS on Impact Film Tour presents *Storied Streets*

*Building Empathy in our Schools*

*2017 Focus - Homelessness*

- Presented by the San Diego Film Foundation In partnership with Susan Sarandon and Thomas Morgan -

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The San Diego Film Foundation, best known for presenting The San Diego International Film Festival, launches their **FOCUS on Impact Film Tour, May 2nd - 4th** in San Diego Schools. The tour reaches out to San Diego students of diverse backgrounds with a goal to educate on social justice and create empathy for social issues - with a 2017 focus on homelessness. They will present the documentary *Storied Streets* - shattering stereotypes about our homeless population. The tour provides teens with a basic understanding of social justice, a personal connection to homelessness and an awareness of how they can encourage change and empathy within their own community.

*Storied Streets* is an acclaimed documentary - by Executive Producer Susan Sarandon, Director Jack Robbins and Producer Thomas Morgan - that explores homelessness across America by telling the stories of those who live it every day. The San Diego Film Foundation will offer the documentary at 5 local schools followed by discussions with Giuseppe Pizano, the former homeless youth featured in *Storied Streets*, Thomas Morgan, Filmmaker and Producer of the documentary and Sarah Hernholm President and Founder of WIT, a San Diego based organization that works with teens to empower them to become social entrepreneurs and leaders.

Executive Producer **Susan Sarandon** embraces the opportunity to make a difference with educational outreach in the community. She shared, "Our passion for making documentaries allows us to shine a light on issues of social justice both here at home and around the globe. But making the film is only the first step. To have an impact, the film has to be seen. We are so grateful to the San Diego Film Foundation for their partnership to take *Storied Streets* into the classrooms where it will make a difference in the overall understanding of the issue of homelessness and provide students with the knowledge and compassion to make changes within their own community."

**Tonya Mantooth**, Executive and Artistic Director of the San Diego Film Foundation shares Sarandon's passion for both film and social justice. "We've been working with Susan and Thomas to make the San Diego Film Foundation's FOCUS on Impact Educational Series Film Tour a reality for over two years now. We can't wait to get into the classroom to share these stories and encourage our youth to step up and make a difference."

Understanding and addressing homelessness is an active conversation in San Diego as we navigate our city's struggles with addressing homelessness. San Diego's microcosm falls in line with some unsettling National Statistics. Most homeless individuals - up to 70%, go undetected across the United States. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, there are as many as 2.8 million homeless youth in the United States - which equates to **1 out of every 30 children**. 34% of the homeless population in the US is under the age of 24 and the average age teen who becomes homeless is 14.7 years old. **75% of homeless or runaway youth ultimately drop out of school**. These national statistics are reflected in thousands of individuals - adults and children in San Diego.

*Storied Streets* personalizes homelessness for students by introducing them to individuals instead of statistics. **Giuseppe Pizano**, a former homeless youth who is featured in the film - will also be on site for discussion with students. Abandoned by his mother at age 15, Giuseppe was prepared to fight for his education. With no other options, Giuseppe moved to the stadium box at his high school and lived among the bleachers for five months. Toward the end of his freshman year, a teacher stepped in, as he was unable to enroll for the upcoming school year without parental help. This teacher registered him for his sophomore year and connected him with the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth. Giuseppe praises the association to this day for saving his life. Thanks to the support of the Nevada Partnership, he was able to attend college and became the first in his family to attend university. He studied biomedicine and nutritional science at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. The 22-year old is willing and eager to create change for others. He believes “every action, no matter how small, can have a positive effect.”

Filmmaker, **Thomas Morgan** is eager to speak with San Diego students at the screenings and shared “The impact of *Storied Streets* for audiences across the country over the past three years has truly been remarkable. The opportunity to carry this message with the San Diego Film Foundation into more schools at a time when the community is truly polarized on this issue is so timely and important. I am sure that the students will never see the issue the same— and my ultimate hope is that they work toward and find creative solutions to eradicate homelessness in their community and in this country.”

#### **How Additional San Diego Schools Can Get Involved:**

For information on the 2018 tour, schools should contact Cindy Saylor [cindy@sdfilmfest.com](mailto:cindy@sdfilmfest.com)

#### **How Patrons can Support FOCUS on Impact Film Tour:**

To support ongoing education on social justice through film in San Diego through the **FOCUS on Impact Film Tour**, patrons should contact Merridee Book at [merridee@sdfilmfest.com](mailto:merridee@sdfilmfest.com) or donate online at <https://secure.sdifff.com/e/donation/charities>

#### **About the San Diego Film Foundation**

The San Diego Film Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization that is dedicated to making a difference through film. Our mission is *to use film to explore issues of global impact, to create dialog, to encourage self-reflection, and ultimately to develop empathy*. We believe that film can be transformative. We are bound together through human connection. The San Diego Film Foundation is best known for the annual San Diego International Film Festival held each October. The San Diego Film Foundation also operates FOCUS - a year round educational program in SD schools, The Film Insiders Series, The Industry Insiders Series and the annual Oscar Viewing Party.