

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Veterans Film Festival to Connect Americans through Veterans' Voices and Stories

Call for entries underway for films made by, about Veterans

(Columbus, Ohio) February 3, 2020 — A coalition of Columbus cultural institutions will join forces to host the new “National Veterans Film Festival,” September 11-13, 2020. The three-day event seeks to connect Americans through Veterans’ voices and stories by celebrating the contributions and resiliency of our nation’s Veterans.

“There is so much more that unites Americans than divides us,” said Lt. General Michael Ferriter, U.S. Army (retired), President and CEO of the National Veterans Memorial and Museum. “By screening great films made by Veterans or that tell stories about Veterans, this festival can address the human experience of Veterans and inspire a dialogue about what it means to serve our nation and commit to something larger than yourself.”

The festival is a partnership of some of Columbus’ leading arts and culture organizations – the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, WOSU Public Media, Gateway Film Center, the VA Central Ohio Health Care System (Columbus VA), and the Barnett Center at The Ohio State University.

“Columbus is uniquely positioned to lead a national dialogue through film about the Veteran’s experience and WOSU is excited that festival plans include public forums, exhibits and storytelling opportunities,” said Tom Rieland, General Manager of WOSU Public Media. “This will establish Columbus as the only major Veteran’s film festival outside of San Diego and Washington DC.”

“Sitting at the intersection of art, education, technology, and politics, film is the art form that has been most influenced by Americans and that has had the greatest impact on

our culture. It is arguably our most enduring cultural connector,” said Chris Hamel, President of Gateway Film Center, which will be leading the film festival’s submissions and programming processes. Added Hamel, “Columbus is developing a great collection of annual film festivals, and the National Veterans Film Festival is a needed addition.”

The feature length and short films, including narrative films and documentaries, that will be screened as part of this festival will be gathered through an open submissions process and selected by an impartial jury of partner organizations and Veterans. Filmmaker submissions are open starting today and more information can be found at Film-Freeway.com/NationalVeteransFilmFestival. Narrative and documentary feature films (20 minutes or longer) and short films (shorter than 20 minutes) can be any style and from any genre, but should be made by, feature, and/or be about Veterans, military service, military families, or a related subject. Films made by Veterans need not focus on Veteran-specific issues. Short film blocks will be programmed based on submissions received.

In addition to Veteran-focused films, the Columbus VA’s Veteran Arts Initiative will be working with Veteran artists to develop exhibits and live performances to complement the film screenings. The festival will feature opportunities for visual artists, live performers, and panel discussions with filmmakers.

“We believe in the power of visual storytelling. Sharing our narratives allows us to heal, it communalizes the human experience and connects communities. We are proud to share this opportunity throughout the country through our VA national network,” said Heather P. Seymour, Creative Arts Coordinator at the Columbus VA.

Additional information about the National Veterans Film Festival can be found here www.VeteransFilm.org.

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The National Veterans Memorial and Museum

The National Veterans Memorial and Museum takes visitors on a narrative journey telling individual stories and shared experiences of Veterans from all military branches throughout history. The National Veterans Memorial and Museum pays tribute to the sacrifices of men and women in service and their families. History is presented in a dynamic, participatory experience with photos, letters and personal effects, multi-media presentations, and interactive exhibits. Together, these elements link our national story to the larger context of world.

Gateway Film Center

We believe in the power of movies to strengthen, unite, challenge, and inspire our community. As a nonprofit cinema, we are committed to screening films from around the

world within a sustainable business model. We curate an experience where the stories shown on our screens and the artists who create them are treated with respect and appreciation. The center has been recognized as Columbus's best movie theater by every major city publication, and is a Sundance Institute top-20 North American art house cinema.

VA Central Ohio Health Care System

By serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans, the VA Central Ohio Health Care System has been improving the health of the men and women who have so proudly served our nation.

WOSU Public Media

The mission of WOSU Public Media is to engage, inform and inspire our diverse community. An NPR and PBS affiliate, WOSU is a noncommercial multimedia organization serving over two million citizens in Central Ohio through broadcast, digital, programming, events and education experiences. A licensee of The Ohio State University, member-supported WOSU Public Media moves its headquarters and studios to the new 15+HIGH District on campus in 2021. Learn more at wosu.org.

The Barnett Center at the Ohio State University

The Barnett Center for Integrated Arts and Enterprise educates and prepares students for successful careers in the arts and related entrepreneurial fields. The Center advances and increases students' understandings of the business side of the arts and the worlds of arts management, policy and culture by focusing on the entrepreneurial aspects of the arts.

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