

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

â€”FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Northwest Film Centerâ€™s Young Filmmakers Program
and the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board present:â€”
CLEARING THE AIR: THE NATIVE TRUTH FILM PROJECTâ€”

The majority of smokers begin before the age of 18 (nearly 80% before age 18, nearly 90% before age 20). â€”truthâ„® Youth Smoking Campaign

Based on the data available, among seniors in high school, American Indians and Alaska Natives had higher rates of tobacco use than all other youth. â€”American Legacy Foundationâ„®, Fact Sheet on American Indian, Alaska Natives and Tobacco

Targeting American Indians for future customers, some tobacco companies use American Indian images and cultural symbols in their advertising, such as warriors, feathers, regalia and words like natural in the brand names. â€”American Medical Association

Portland, Ore. American Indian communities in the Northwest now have new tools to use in the fight against tobacco use. The Native Truth Film Project, a collaboration between the Film Center's Young Filmmakers Program and the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB), has empowered 15 American Indian youth from Yakama Nation, Spokane Tribes, and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to address the dangers of cigarette smoking by turning video cameras on their parents, friends, and community leaders.

Through the project, mentored by leaders in their local communities and filmmakers-in-residence Brian Lindstrom and Sue Arbutnot, the young people have created peer-to-peer anti-smoking short documentaries and public service announcements for broad distribution to NPAIHB's 43 member tribes and beyond.

With the youth filmmakers and mentors in attendance, the completed videos premiere in a FREE, public program on Saturday, May 16, at 5 p.m. in the Northwest Film Center's Whitsell Auditorium inside the Portland Art Museum.

Made on location in their local communities, the videos include interviews with parents, community leaders and positive American Indian role models including professional bull rider Wiley Petersen and Hollywood actor Wes Studi (*The Last of the Mohicans*, *Dances with Wolves*) who currently stars in the NBC series *Kings*. Topics range from the harmful chemicals in cigarettes, differing generational views on smoking, and secondhand smoke in the workplace, to the difference between sacred tobacco use and commercial tobacco use. The program was funded, in part, by a grant from the American Legacy Foundationâ„®, a national public health foundation devoted to tobacco use prevention and cessation.

We invite everyone to attend this special opportunity to witness the potential of young people to be empowered by and empower others through film. A reception at 4 PM in the Portland Art Museumâ€™s Andreâ„© Stevens Room, located adjacent to the theater, precedes the screening.

Location: Northwest Film Center's Whitsell Auditorium at the Portland Art Museum | 1219 SW Park Ave.

Contact: [Northwest Film Center](#), Jessica Lyness, 503-221-1156 x14 | jessica@nwfilm.org
[Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board](#), Nichole Hildebrandt,

503-753-5245, nhildebrandt@npaihb.org

[Native Truth images on Flickr](#)

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Jessica Lyness
PR/Marketing Manager
1219 SW Park Avenue
P 503.221.1156 x 14
<http://www.nwfilm.org>