

AGING IN MAINE



Aging in Maine is a two-year program of the Camden International Film Festival and Working Films that connects nonprofit leaders, healthcare professionals and communities across the state with powerful documentary films to spark intergenerational public dialogue around the challenges and opportunities of Maine's aging demographics.

Phase 1 (2013-2014)

The program began in September 2013 when 15 Maine-based nonprofit leaders and healthcare professionals converged in Camden during the festival for a daylong strategic summit meeting designed and facilitated by Working Films, a national organization that specializes in connecting storytelling with community engagement and action. The summit allowed participants to identify a wide range of needs facing aging communities and the organizations that support them, including opening public dialogue about end-of-life planning, redesigning communities, raising awareness about Maine's demographic shift, and convincing policymakers to place attention on the needs of an aging population. Participants also developed strategies for using documentary films to strengthen and extend their work while planning a statewide screening tour that took place between March and July 2014. The tour has generated an overwhelmingly positive response, reaching over 20 communities (more than double what we had initially planned for) and more than 2,000 people across Maine thus far, including a capacity screening and panel discussion at the Portland Museum of Art in collaboration with MaineHealth and the state's leading advocates at Maine Medical Center's Annual Geriatrics Day Conference. Many of the screenings were free and open to the public. At several of the events where the screening tour collaborated with conferences, physicians and nurses who participated were able to earn credit towards the continuing education requirements for keeping their license. In total, over 16 community organizations participated statewide.

Phase 2 (2014-2015)

Building on the successes of Phase 1, the Aging in Maine program is being extended through a second year with additional support from the Fledgling Fund and Camden National Bank. This will allow us to address the scope of needs identified during the summit and tour and the desire of partner organizations to deepen their work with documentary media. The original cohort of 15 partner organizations will be joined by 15 additional participants in a follow-up strategic summit led by Working Films during the 2014 Camden International Film Festival.

The meeting will allow partners to assess the strengths and weakness of the screening tour thus far, participate in skill-building workshops and plan a second statewide tour. It will also create a unique opportunity for nonprofit leaders and medical professionals to connect outside of a conference environment and speak candidly about shared issues and challenges.

Goals & Outcomes

The central goal of the Aging in Maine program remains to use documentary storytelling as a catalyst for building public dialogue and bringing attention to social, political and economic issues facing Maine's aging population. A secondary goal is using the summit and screening tour as an opportunity to build statewide collaborations among nonprofits and medical professionals working on aging-related issues.

In addition, our long-term objective is to provide partner organizations across the state with training, tools and experience that build their capacity to use documentary film as an organizing tool more sustainably. An additional year will allow us to develop partnerships and an infrastructure that continue beyond the two-year window of this program, so that CIFF can remain a connector between issue-driven documentary filmmakers and Maine-based nonprofits prepared to use their work

At the end of the second screening tour in 2015, CIFF will research and publish an impact report detailing the program's successes and failures using both qualitative and quantitative metrics. This will allow us to share with other regional festivals a replicable model for connecting social issue filmmakers with local activists, advocates and engaged audiences. We believe that regional festivals like CIFF can play a vital role educating advocates, connecting films to locally relevant issues, and building the infrastructure needed to create meaningful impact with great documentary media at the grassroots level. The process of producing the report will also help us prepare for future Engagement Summits and screening tours tackling other issues relevant to Maine communities.

Schedule

- August 2014: Summit planning and invitations
- September 2014: Festival + Summit
- October 2014 - January 2015: Screening Tour planning
- February - May 2015: Aging in Maine Screening Tour
- June - September 2015: Research and Write Impact Report
- October 2015: Impact Report published



Testimonials

The University of Maine Center on Aging has been delighted to partner with CIFF and other partnering organizations in offering citizens across the state high quality filmmaking depicting the multiple dimensions of the aging experience. We look forward to continuing to work side-by-side with the CIFF staff for another year insuring this program is able to inform and enrich the lives of increasing numbers of Mainers to both the joys and realities of aging in the oldest state in the nation.”

Len Kaye - Director, University of Maine Center on Aging

The Aging in Maine screening tour provided such an incredible opportunity to raise awareness about issues affecting families in Maine, The film *Genius of Marian* touches on so many of the challenges persons living with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's or other dementias face, along with the people who love and support them. It is an amazing love story and really shows how this disease affects the whole family. We applaud the Camden International Film Festival and Ben Fowlie for their vision and creativity with this project. We look forward to future partnership and the opportunity to continue the discussion of these very important issues with as broad an audience as possible

Laurie Trenholm - Executive Director, Alzheimer's Association - Maine Chapter

I can only say that I think we hosted our best Annual Geriatrics Day ever - the energy at the conference was tremendous and I think we had attendance stay very high throughout the day. I have been stopped by many people who attended the Genius of Marian last night saying what a wonderful film and speaking of the conversations that have already started in their families surrounding dementia. I look forward to the possibility of future collaborations.

Heidi R. Wierman, MD - Division Director, Geriatrics, Maine Medical Center/Maine Medical Partners

From my perspective, I think this type of education, using this film, is particularly powerful for showing physicians what happens within a family, and within a person's home – a glimpse most physicians never see and possibly never consider. People do not live their lives within the walls of their physician's office.

Sharon Foerster, L.C.S.W. - Program Manager, Elder Care Services at MaineHealth

I found the attendance and participation in the follow-up discussion to be really motivating and inspiring. Collaborative events like these need to happen more often. I think the response and excitement around this event was a real testament to what we're capable of as a group.

Liz Thompson - Development Director, Southern Maine Area Agency on Aging

About Us

CIFF *small towns, big films.*

The Camden International Film Festival (CIFF) is New England's most respected documentary film festival, and recognized as one of the top 12 documentary festivals in the world. Established in 2005, each year CIFF highlights work that shows a dedication and commitment to the craft behind nonfiction storytelling, showcasing over 80 films from around the globe. CIFF also hosts the Points North Documentary Forum, a career-making platform dedicated to providing emerging and established documentarians with opportunities for professional development and inspiration.

The 10th Camden International Film Festival will take place September 25 - 28, 2014 in Camden, Rockport and Rockland, Maine. CIFF is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Fledgling Fund, the Unity Foundation, and Vimeo. For more information, visit www.camdenfilmfest.org.

Working Films *linking non-fiction film to cutting edge activism.*

Recognizing the power of stories to inspire and transform, Working Films builds partnerships between nonfiction media-makers, nonprofit organizations, educators and advocates to advance social justice and environmental sustainability, and support community-based change. We train and consult filmmakers in audience engagement and work with NGOs to use documentaries to enhance their programs, extend their reach, and move their missions forward. For more information, visit www.workingfilms.org.