

Foster-A-Voice

Press Release

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‘Silence’ Film Project Launch Event

When it comes to *Foster Care*, the statistics are staggering.

- 50% of girls in foster care get pregnant within years of aging out
- 74% of former foster kids are in the US prison
- 50% of fosters are incarcerated two years after aging out
- 80% of youths on death row are fosters
- 30% of the homeless in America were once in foster care
- 40% of foster children are white; 34% are black; 18% are Hispanic

Raleigh, North Carolina - March 20, 2015

“SILENCE” Film Project Launched

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“*SILENCE.*” **SILENCE** tells the story of the plight of sisters who find themselves torn apart through the foster care system

Foster A Voice launched a crowd funding, Kickstarter campaign to raise capital in order to produce the film, “**SILENCE.**” The purpose of “**SILENCE**” is to make the public aware of the foster care crises that are taking place all around them, to educate those who can help prevent it, and support the programs already in place, such as the Foster Care Foundation, Foster Alumni Association, and Kinship Care Programs.

The plot chronicles the plight of two sisters who become embroiled in the foster care system. Like so many children in real life, they are separated, moving from home to home and school to school. It depicts the difficulty these children face in finding lasting friendships, becoming involved in school sports or other activities, and keeping up grades due to ever changing curriculums.

And just like these girls, what sustains thousands of foster care children, is the hope that someone will open their hearts and consequently their homes to give a foster child a chance to live a normal and healthy life. Otherwise, for far too many children and young people, the cycle never ends.

With your help, Foster A Voice will not only continue its mission to be an advocacy group, dedicated to providing a voice to diminish the time and bureaucracy in the foster care system, which hinders so many wonderful people from becoming foster parents. Moreover, it will provide mentorships to help break the cycle of becoming homeless, getting pregnant, not finishing school, going from foster Care to Welfare, and their children following their same path.

Through the launch of this film, "Silence", Foster A Voice's goal is not only to work with those programs already in place, but our goal is to create a unique mentor program, "Cycle Out", a program that will provide diverse skill-sets of volunteer mentors who will lend their time, provide a listening ear, and a shoulder to lean on. This, provides unique pathways for the mentee to help them cycle out of a system of dependence and into a normal environment.

Larry Perkins: President and CEO of Foster A Voice, and VP of Guest Relations and Assistant General Manager, PNC Arena

*"I have never before felt so passionate about a project like this. The more I researched and learned, the more I wanted to do something. While writing my latest book, **Buck Seventy-Two, A Destiny of Will**, I discovered who I am." As Perkins tells it, "I attempted to write about my professional career and life. It started on the fifty-yard line of Giants Stadium, home of the New York Football Giants and Jets of the NFL, where I served as Vice President. By that time, I had a very successful career and I wanted to share my journey of the many fun and not so fun experiences of my life over the years. As I wrote, I just didn't feel right. The words were not flowing and a strange inner feeling loomed. I was nearly twenty pages in, when it hit me. I stopped typing, looked around as if someone tapped me on the shoulder and asked the question, 'Who Are You?' My eyes darted from place to place as my mind raced for an answer. Pausing and searching, I became frightened. Shaking, I experienced the feeling of being lost.*

Early on, my mother abandoned my brother, sister and me, leaving for New York City to chase her dreams. We bounced from one family member to another before landing in my father and stepmother's home where I was soon enslaved, forced to work on their farm. By day's end, I'd fall into bed exhausted, finally falling asleep with the heartache of knowing I'd lost another day of my young life, and would suffer the same fate when I woke up.

I finally ran away when I was a young teen, and now I realized I'd never stopped running. My body and brain were in perpetual motion.

But now...I know who I am. And I've stopped running."

US Ambassador, James P. Cain

“In recent years, I have had the honor of promoting and, in cases securing America’s vital interests across six continents. I have witnessed the cruel impact of war and poverty, of crime and drugs, of abandonment and hopelessness.

From Africa to Greenland, China to Russia, Kosovo to Afghanistan, I have seen countless children whose eyes have lost the spark of hopefulness. Homeless, sleeping in the streets, out in the rain and cold, with no bed to call their own.”

He went on to say, *“Many turn to drugs and alcohol, while others sell themselves or become victims of human trafficking.”*

The ambassador acknowledged that there are many reasons why children need foster care. *“Abandonment, given up by a parent too young to care for them, a caregiver who has lost his or her job, or who has developed a debilitating medical condition. Then there are those who, I hate to say, have to be removed from an unsafe environment.”*

The ambassador finished by saying; “I ask you to support this film. Bring awareness and support to so many of our young citizens as they struggle to break the cycle of abandonment and hopelessness.”

Bill Jordan: Long Time Triangle Radio and Television Personality

“We are excited about this project. When you think about those who are forgotten, fosters fit that bill. It is the exception, rather than the rule that you see or hear commercials about those in foster care. People just aren’t aware of just how many children and young people need our help. All they want is to have a place they can call home. When you take a close look at the physical and psychological health effects on those in the system, we can’t stand idly by and be Silent!”

Don Sill, Executive Director, “What got me was Larry’s story; *hearing about his life really touched my heart. Then he shared his vision for this project, wanting to illuminate the issues of fosters to bring them out of the shadows. For me, I knew right then that I wanted in.” said Sill. As the Executive Director, filming the “Silence” has been both a joy and difficult at the same time. The main characters played by Lauren Bell and Laurie, brought such emotion, I could feel their pain, which for me is exactly what I want the audience to feel.” He said.*

Lauren Bell, as “Jen”, playing the role of the older sister, *“I have a friend who was in a bad place at home, she was in and out of the foster care system. Her mother and father were going through a divorce, and they used her like pawn. They would go to court and fight get her back, and then leave her again. Her stories have been stuck in my mind since I was little. I can’t get them out of*

my head. She said. "I just put myself in her shoes and my character, "Jen", just comes out of me", she explained.

Tim Bell, "When Larry wanted to cast someone to play the lead role of the sisters, we chatted about the age range and storyline, my daughter Lauren, was mentioned. Then we casted her and her best friend Laurie, wow, the two just couldn't be more perfect for the roles, being best friends brings out the genuine affection they have for each other, and it shows. But, it's tough for me, the roles they play are so moving and as a father I never want her to experience the pain of not having a loving home and parents who love her unconditionally, no matter what." Bell recounted.

Marianne Mason Jordan: Author, Playwright, Public Speaker

"It is a tremendous honor to play a role in making this project a reality. Our goal is to inspire people to help break the cycle. To free a child from their mental and emotional agony so they can go live a life of feeling accepted and loved. To know what it feels like to just be a kid, to create lifelong friendships, and to experience all the opportunities available to reach their potential. It's time to speak up."

Lauren Bell and Laurie Turbeville, plus Jonathon Perkins performed the original music from the film.

Help us to end the cycle of hopelessness.

Help us to end the SILENCE.