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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **October 6, 2016**

NYC Media Will Air DCTV's Landmark Documentary Series By Young New Yorkers

**Award Winning, Emmy Nominated Series "Our Cameras, Our Stories"
To Air Weekly On New York City WNYE-TV Channel 25**



Young NYC Directors win the RFK Journalism Award
for Our Cameras, Our Stories

New York, NY (October 6, 2016) – “Our Cameras, Our Stories” is a six-week series of short autobiographical films made by New York youth. They tell the truth about their lives, and the often heartbreaking challenges of living in the Big Apple. All the teenagers completed their films as part of DCTV’s PRO-TV youth programs with adults limited to supervisory roles. The series was nominated for a 2016 NY Emmy and won the prestigious Robert F. Kennedy 2015 Book and Journalism Award.

This is real New York... teenage homelessness, coping with a crippling illness, the difficulty of living in two widely divergent cultures, dealing with a parent’s devastating mental illness... these stories are personal and intimate, told in a way that only those who have lived them can tell, with remarkable artistry, honesty, and courage. These lives make our youth strong, resilient, creative and unique – just like their films.

“The most important aspect of this program is that it’s 100% kid built,” said DCTV co-founder and Co-Executive Director Jon Alpert. “They shot the films, they edited the films and, of course, they *lived* their films.”



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- 17 year-old Jasmine Barkley was homeless for three years during high school, which is the subject of her film *When Life Hands You Lemons*. Despite coming from a broken family and having many of the responsibilities of an adult, she finds the strength she needs to survive in her passion for filmmaking, and in writing letters to her incarcerated father.

- Ronald Merritt has lost 35 friends and relatives to gun violence. In *My Camera's My Gun Now*, he breaks that cycle of violence.

- Mohammed Yakub is a Bengali American, struggling between the world of his devout Muslim parents and his life as a typical American teenager.

These are only a few of the heartfelt tales being told in “Our Cameras, Our Stories.” The stories reflect the lives of young New Yorkers normally not represented in the media. “There is nothing on TV that I want to see,” says filmmaker Derek Horton a 17 year-old from East New York. “Nothing that represents my life, my world.”

“We did the filming. We did the editing. No one else can tell my story,” says Jasmine Barkley, adding, “I want people to know what many young New Yorkers go through. And I want to inspire those facing the same challenges.”

The films were made while the students were participants in DCTV’s acclaimed PRO-TV youth media program. PRO-TV began in 1978 in response to a fiscal crisis and budget cuts which eliminated most elective programs from New York City high schools, especially those in poorer districts. Today, through PRO-TV’s programs, hundreds of high school students gain hands-on experience and make riveting films. Every year the students achieve success both academically and artistically.

The series premieres on WNYE-TV 25 on October 28th at 10 pm and will air weekly, with encores on Saturdays at 7am. A total of 21 films by 21 young New York City young filmmakers will be featured as part of the series. This partnership with DCTV affirms NYC Media’s determination to tell the story of our city and the people who “make it here” – especially our talented youth.

Downtown Community Television Center, Inc. (DCTV) is a non-profit independent media arts center that provides free and affordable public programs and services to NYC media artists, youth, and residents. These programs include media arts training workshops in moving image media, community access to state-of-the-art digital production equipment and edit systems, and production/screening facilities for public use.



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