



Contact: William Greer
Film Festival Director
filmfest@txdisabilities.org
(512) 478-3366 ext. 310
www.CTDFilmFest.org

Wheelchair Basketball, ASL Slam Poetry Front and Center at Annual Disability Film Festival

AUSTIN Texas (Oct. 24, 2016) -- Cinema Touching Disability, Texas' original cinematic celebration of disability, returns to the Alamo Drafthouse Village Theater, Nov. 4 and 5. This annual event works to uproot negative stereotypes about people with disabilities through film.

The Festival opens on Friday with *The Rebound* (2016), a wheelchair basketball documentary. *The Rebound* follows the lives of three wheelchair basketball players on and off the court as they work with unwavering resolve towards athletic, educational, and career ambitions. With each victory, their team, the Miami Heat Wheels, gets closer to showing that anything - even a shot at the national championship title - is possible.

The Festival will hold an audience Q&A on adaptive sports following the film with Austin Paralympian Dave Wear.

In Saturday's feature film, *Deaf Jam* (2011), filmmaker Judy Loeff explores the beauty and power of American Sign Language (ASL) poetry through the story of deaf teen Aneta Brodski's bold journey into the spoken word slam scene. *Deaf Jam* illuminates ASL poetry's extraordinary potency and power, taking us inside a fascinating and vibrant world where self-expression and cultural identity are fiercely pursued.

The Festival acknowledges and respects that some members of the Deaf community do not necessarily consider themselves to fall under the umbrella term "disabled." *Deaf Jam* is included in this year's program because of recurring themes and challenges common to both communities - diversity, accessibility, and changing perspectives, all within the context of the arts.

Following *Deaf Jam*, local ASL poet and performer Theron Parker will MC a slam-style performance with Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and hearing poets participating.

Both nights, the Festival will screen winners from its international Short Film Competition.

Admission to Cinema Touching Disability is free; however, a \$10.00 ticket guarantees a seat and can be redeemed for \$10.00 worth of food and drink from the Drafthouse menu. Full schedule, tickets, and more information can be found at www.CTDFilmFest.org.

Cinema Touching Disability is made possible with major sponsor support from Superior HealthPlan, United Healthcare, Amerigroup, Genentech, Gilead Sciences, and Mobility Works. This project is supported in part by the Cultural Arts Division of the City of Austin Economic Development Department.

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The Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival and Short Film Competition is a project of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD), Texas' oldest and largest cross-disability advocacy organization. CTD is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with Federal Tax ID #74-2071160.