



WIFV NEWS

January 2026

In this Issue

1. President's Message
2. Roundtable Roundup
3. New and Renewing Members
4. WIFV Top 10 Capitol Hill NonProfit According to Google
5. PUBLIC DEFENDER January Broadcasts on public television
6. Some WIFV 2025 Stats
7. HOLDING LIAT Shortlisted Doc
8. GalsNGear Women's Leadership Retreat - January 16
9. MediaMakers Spotlight Jan Guests
10. Wardrobe Refresh Discount
11. Talent Representation in DMV - January 5
12. Selling Yourself Like a TV Show: Confidence Edition - January 7
13. Mentor App Deadline - January 9
14. Mentee App Deadline - Jan 15
15. Docs: Impact Producing - Jan 12
16. Film Club: FORTY-YEAR-OLD VERSION - January 12
17. WIFV Holiday Party - January 16
18. Screenwriters: First 5 Pages - January 26
19. Coffees - Frederick, Jan 7; New Members, Jan 9; Executive, Jan 13; Annapolis Happy Hour, Jan 13; Reel Moms, Jan 16; Baltimore, Jan 20; DC, Jan 23; Arlington, Jan 29
20. Care for Creatives/Resources
21. Thanks to Our Sponsors

President's Message



Dear WIFV
Members and
Friends,

This is a difficult message for me because, since COVID and the death of my husband, I've done as little as possible to celebrate the holidays. Usually, I go visit my son and family in Chicago and borrow a little of their Christmas. But now, I'm supposed to give you all wisdom and encouragement to start the new year.

2025 has set the stage for dismal messages. Federal funding for the arts was largely eliminated. Foreign aid was also cut, including funding for health programs, food, schools and medicine. The US pulled back from most environmental initiatives, putting our planet at increased risk of natural disasters like wildfires, flooding and heat waves. The AI revolution accelerated, sucking up huge amounts of energy and transforming industries, amidst increasing controversy. The Federal government also abandoned DEI, making women once again the lesser-favored sex.

In spite of all this, WIFV is a bright light, continuing to serve a vibrant Mid-Atlantic media-making community with: Mentorship, Professional Development programs including ScriptDC, Wednesday Ones, Roundtables, Narrative Script Development and Documentary Development Fellowships. Then there is networking at the Women of Vision Awards, Coffees, Holiday Party, Open House, and Film Club plus keeping the community connected

Roundtable Roundup

Talent Lunch & Learn: Representation in the DMV with Paige Gold, Alenah Riffle, and Jason M. Jones

Mon, Jan 5, 1:00 pm [RSVP here](#)

Documentary: Impact Producing with Gabriel London

Mon, Jan 12, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

**Film Club: THE FORTY-YEAR-OLD
VERSION**

Mon, Jan 12, 7:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

FREE for All. Watch film in advance

Screenwriters: First 5 Pages Readings

Mon, Jan 26, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

Roundtables are free for WIFV Members /

\$15 for public

Confirmation email includes login info

Send Your News & Photos

The deadline for Members in the News is the 10th of the month. Send an article (100 words or so) and a photograph or link to director@wifv.org. **You can see past issues here.** The deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 20th of the month.

We welcome receiving photos of you at work - writing, filming, acting, and supporting colleagues. Send your photos to director@wifv.org. Please provide a project name and a photo credit.

Kudos from Google!

WIFV has been recognized as a Top 10 of 2025 Capitol Hill Award Winner in the Non-profit organization category - an honor based on verified data from Google Reviews as analyzed and certified by BusinessRate.



with MediaMaker Spotlight podcasts, Missives, and Newsletters.

Projects in the Fiscal Sponsorship program are finding audiences and success.

HOLDING LIAT from Meridian Hill Pictures follows an Israeli-American family as it copes with fear, trauma and grief in the wake of the 2023 Hamas attacks and kidnappings. The film is now in the short list for Feature Documentary Oscar recognition after winning awards at festivals from Berlin, Hamptons, Hong Kong and DocAviv. RITE OF PASSAGE, DOUEN, and EYES ON EVIL have all had successful crowdfunding campaigns with Seed&Spark. AIN'T NO BACK TO A MERRY-GO-ROUND had an extended run at the Avalon Theatre, is streaming on Kinema, continues in-person screenings and educational outreach. Many WIFV-member produced programs have been broadcast by public television stations across the country. We look forward to announcing and celebrating your many successes in 2026!

Media-making is important even if one doesn't celebrate the holidays or have much hope for America. Movies can entertain and provide an escape, but also have a unique ability to educate, raise awareness of social issues, challenge prevailing narratives, and inspire change. WIFV's support for media makers enables the telling of diverse stories by voices who might otherwise be silenced.

Thank you for making these successes possible. We look forward to working for your success in 2026.

Jacquie

Jacquie Greff

2025-26 WIFV President

New/Renewing Members (Nov 25, 2025 - Jan 4, 2026)

Sara Barger

Michelle Bowen-Ziechek

Kayona Ebony Brown

Sharon Burtner

Brittany Collins

Wm. David Crosson

Stefanie De Leon Tzic

Cassidy Edwards

Gabrielle Ewing

Tonya Fitzpatrick

Casie Graham

Jonathan Gruber

Caitlan Hendrickson

Pam Hervey

John Judy

Andrea Kalin

Stephanie Kolar

Stephen Kolb

Laura Kroeger

Augusta Lehman

Anja Paul

Molly Pegram

Christie Perry

Robyn Peterson

Zoe Poindexter

Laura Possessky

Bonnie Rich

Tara Roberts

Liz Savage

Paul Schutte

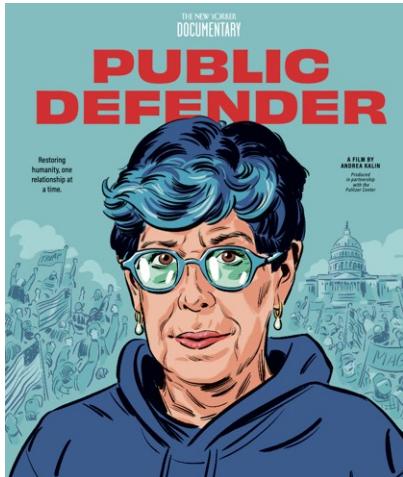
Michael Frank
Joy Frelinghuysen
Michael Gabel
Liz Galalis
Todd Gardner
Tara Garwood
Sedrick Gary
Mimi Gee
Joel Gershon
Zach Gindi-Chiaffullo
Chrissa Giorgi

Ellen Lent
Dave Lilling
Debbi Mack
Lisa Mao
Shannon Merrill
Ginger Moss
Lauren Noble
Elisabeth Noone
Elisa Padula
Andrea Palombella
Brian Pascale

Matt Sheehan
Kathleen Strouse
Sarah Teagle
Mary Tierney
Ilana Trachtman
Jed Winer
Andrew Yarrow
Amy Zhong

Corporate Supporter
Spark Street Digital

News You Can Use



PUBLIC DEFENDER on Local PBS Stations

Justice isn't easy. Empathy is harder.

Spark Media's latest doc, PUBLIC DEFENDER, premieres nationally on public television, marking the fifth anniversary of the January 6th Capitol Attack, and reminding us what's at stake for our country.

One lawyer's fight becomes a mirror for us all in this award-winning documentary about accountability, compassion, and the essential promise of American democracy.

PUBLIC DEFENDER is airing on:

WETA – January 5 at 8 pm ET
WHUT – January 6 at 8pm ET
MPT2 – January 6 at 10pm ET

The film will also be available on the PBS app.

[For more broadcasts, check out the Public Defender schedule here.](#)

Notes from 2025

- 210 Professional Development and Networking Programs delivered
- 3,153 Attendees
- 85 Presenters
- 65% attendees - WIFV Members
- 35% were media curious and many became members
- Majority of programming free or reduced fees for Members
- 23% of ED time spent with WIFV Members on their projects, not including fiscal sponsored projects
- 14% of ED time spent developing/nurturing partnerships to benefit networks and programming, not including fundraising
- 45 active fiscal sponsored projects. Thanks to those who donated their support!
- 750 hours of volunteer service from WIFV Board Members, WIFV Members, and many presenters for program provision
- 15% more Mentorship pairings than in 2024



- Oodles of gratitude for all of the above!



HOLDING LIAT Oscars® Shortlist

Meridian Hill Pictures is honored to announce that HOLDING LIAT directed by **Brandon Kramer** and produced by **Lance Kramer** was just named to the Oscars® Shortlist for Best Feature Documentary in the 98th Academy Awards. This marks a major milestone for the film, particularly as it is an

independent project without the backing of a major streamer or distributor. This is also the culmination of a massive grassroots effort to hold 96 in-person screenings in 18 countries and 50 cities since the world premiere at the Berlinale when the film was awarded Best Documentary. "This accomplishment was only possible thanks to the hundreds of people who supported us along the way when making the film, and the thousands of people who came to screenings over the past year to experience the film firsthand." [Official Academy announcement here](#).

#GALSNGEAR
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP RETREAT
East

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!
Friday, January 16, 2026
Columbia, Maryland
Minutes from BWI Airport and BWI Amtrak

LEVEL UP YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS
Use Code **WLE25** for **\$25 Off**

Discount code does not apply to the Supported Rate

Diversified **Vectorworks** **TriBridgePartners** WWW.GALSNGEAR.TV

Kick off the new year by focusing on you. Chart your career path, strengthen your leadership presence and turn your ambition into a mission with #GALSNGEAR's Women's Leadership Retreat. On January 16, join professional colleagues in production, tech and broadcast to (re)define your next role. Gain hands-on skills in negotiation and financial fitness. Develop your leadership advantage. Walk away inspired, with renewed confidence to make 2026 your breakthrough year! The retreat is an intensive experience designed to help women in media, tech, and entertainment strengthen their strategic leadership presence and gain hands-on skills in crucial areas like negotiation and financial fitness. #GALSNGEAR is offering \$25 discount to members who use code WLE25 when they register. [Learn more and save your spot](#).

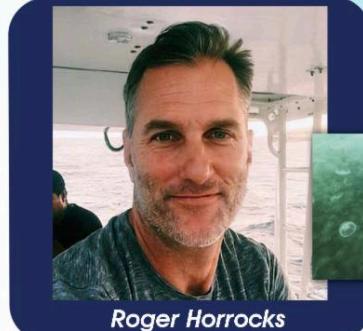
Coming Up This Month...



Sierra Urich

#115
Jan 4

Exploring Identity Through Film with Sierra Urich



Roger Horrocks



#116
Jan 18

Diving into the Patience & Art of Underwater Cinematography

Start January with ***“Exploring Identity Through Film with Sierra Urich”*** (Ep. 115) In this episode, host **Tara Jabbari** interviews **Sierra Urich**, an interdisciplinary visual artist and filmmaker whose documentary, JOONAM explores themes of identity, displacement, and the immigrant experience. Sierra shares insights from her festival circuit journey, the significance of her family's story, and the challenges of filmmaking in an authoritarian context. The conversation highlights the universal nature of longing for home and the importance of cultural narratives in connecting diverse audiences. Sierra emphasizes the power of persistence in the independent film distribution process and the value of networking at film festivals. [Learn more about JOONAM here.](#)

January 18th - ***“Diving into the Patience & Art of Underwater Cinematography”*** (Ep. 116)

Award-winning underwater cinematographer **Roger Horrocks** joins host **Candice Bloch** to discuss what it takes to capture the amazing underwater scenes we see in epic nature documentaries. Roger has worked on some of the most ambitious and acclaimed documentaries ever created, including **MY OCTUPUS TEACHER**, **OUR PLANET**, **BLUE PLANET 2**, and **OUR OCEANS**. These projects have taken him all over the world, and earned numerous awards, including an Oscar for Best Documentary Feature, The Critics Choice Award for Best Cinematography, and a BAFTA for Best Cinematography. Roger shares about his journey into the world of underwater filmmaking and the unique challenges and techniques involved in capturing the beauty of life below the surface. He emphasizes the importance of safety, the specialized equipment used, and the patience required during long shoots. Roger also reflects on the lessons learned from the underwater world and the significance of crew dynamics in filmmaking. You'll come away with an even greater respect and appreciation of the skill and commitment it takes to bring audiences these incredible glimpses into our oceans and their inhabitants. [You can learn more about Roger Horrocks and his work here.](#) [Learn more about his Ocean Footage Mastery mentorship program here.](#)

Have you listened to our December episodes yet?

Ep. 113 – [Fashions of Clueless & More with Costume Designer Mona May](#)

Ep. 114 – [Host Special: A Lively Chat About Animated Films & TV](#)

You can find MediaMaker Spotlight wherever you find your podcasts, including our video companion on [YouTube](#). Subscribe to the show so you don't miss any episodes!

Wardrobe Refresh 2026

Save 20% of All Items
January 20-25

[Shop here](#). Nothing more you need to know to make it happen!



Thank you for your support.

Upcoming WIFV Events

Talent Lunch & Learn: Representation in the DMV January 5

Let's talk about it with **Paige Gold** of **Triple Threat Talent**, **Alenah Riffle** of **Complete Mgmt**, and actor **Jason M. Jones**. Our market is not the same as other markets. We'll explore the history, present, and the future of talent reps in the DMV.

Monday, January 5, 1:00 pm [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Members (must be logged in) / \$15 for public
You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

Organized by **Alison Bauer** and **Kimberly Skyrme**

Selling Yourself Like a TV Show: Confidence Edition - January 7

This isn't about polishing your résumé—it's about owning your story. Selling Yourself Like a TV Show is a lively workshop designed by **Shannon Malone-deBenedictis** to help you step into the spotlight with confidence. Using the storytelling secrets behind hit television series, you'll learn how to frame your experiences, quirks, and strengths in ways that feel authentic and unforgettable. Instead of second-guessing yourself, you'll walk away with tools to speak about who you are and what you bring to the table with clarity, conviction, and ease. Whether you're pitching a project, introducing yourself at work, or navigating a career shift, this workshop helps you stop shrinking and start shining. [Presenter bio here](#).



Wednesday, January 7, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Executive Members (must be logged in and use discount code)
\$20 for WIFV Members (must be logged in) and Students / \$35 for public
You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

Event sponsored by **Interface Media Group**, **202Creates**, **OCTFME**, **Maryland Film Office**, and **Virginia Film Office**

Mentorship Deadlines - January 9 and 15

WIFV Mentorship Application - MENTORS - Jan 9

Applications are now being accepted for creative professionals willing to serve as a **mentor** to others, please click [here](#). Mentorship engagements usually require one hour per month virtually via Zoom. The WIFV mentorship program has been tremendously effective in its first few years and the committee's goal for 2026 is to increase the number of mentorship pairings to serve even more WIFV members.

Deadline for applications: **January 9, 2026**. [More info and application here](#).

WIFV Mentorship Application - MENTEES - Jan 15

Applications are now being accepted from WIFV members seeking to be paired with an industry professional. You can apply to be paired with a mentor for a specific project

or for general career mentorship. Whether you're an emerging filmmaker or an experienced professional pivoting to a new area of focus, everyone can benefit through meaningful mentorship engagement.

Deadline for applications: **January 15, 2026** [More info and application here](#).

Documentary Roundtable

Brought to you by:



Impact Producing - Jan 12

The Documentary Roundtable begins the new year addressing the relevancy of Impact Producing, using the documentary **IMMUTABLE** as our launching pad.

IMMUTABLE is a feature doc focusing on DC students from the Washington Urban Debate League. Finding your voice in a world which chooses not to

hear you is a daunting task for any teen. These young debaters learn to find their voices with the extra challenges of post Covid isolation, housing instability and neurodivergence.

Joining us will be Director/Producer **Gabriel London**. As a partner in the social impact creative agency, Found Object, London has directed purpose-driven campaigns on issues such as veteran's health, clean energy and climate change. His work on campaigns for Viacom — Spike's Veterans Operation Wellness (VOW) — and New York State (Reforming the Energy Vision or "REV4NY") combined storytelling with social activation around major policy issues of the day.

Monday, January 12, 6:30-8:00 pm [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Members / \$15 for public

You will receive login info and a link to the trailer with your registration confirmation.

Organized by **Randi Cohen**

THE FORTY-YEAR-OLD VERSION

January 12

Down-on-her-luck NY playwright Radha is desperate for a breakthrough before she turns 40. Reinventing herself as rapper RadhaMUSPrime, she vacillates between the worlds of Hip-Hop and theater to find her true voice.

Written/directed by Radha Blank. The film won the 2020 Sundance Festival Dramatic Directing Award and was nominated for the Sundance Dramatic Grand Jury Prize the same year. [More info on the film and discussion questions here](#).

The film is streaming on Netflix and Crunchyroll so it is easy to watch in advance of the Film Club meeting! Come prepared to share your likes, dislikes, and insights. It's like a book club, except instead of discussing a book, you get to discuss a film!



Monday, January 12, 7:30-8:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

Watch the film in advance of the meeting.

Film Club is organized by **Ericka Boston and Connie St. John**



WIFV Holiday Party - Jan 16

Let's celebrate winter with good company! Registration includes food, drink, and a chance to win a door prize.

Friday, January 16, 6:00-8:00 pm [RSVP here](#)

\$25 for WIFV Members / \$40 for public

Interface Media Group, 1233 20th Street NW, DC

First 5 Pages - January 26

Got something new you've worked on over the holidays? Get your pages read at this next Screenwriters Roundtable, our first of 2026! We will put out a call on the listserv the week before the event for a chance to submit your pages. Don't miss out!

Screenwriters Roundtable



Monday, January 26, 6:30 pm [RSVP here](#)

FREE for WIFV Members (must be logged in) and Students / \$15 for public

You will receive login information with your registration confirmation.

Organized by **Jane Barbara**



Frederick Coffee - January 7

Wednesday, January 7, 9:00-10:00 am [RSVP here](#)

Mon Bon Croissant Bakery Cafe, 162 W Patrick St, Frederick, MD

Organized by **Jean Rosolino**

New Members Coffee - January 9

Friday, January 9, 9:00-10:00 am [RSVP here](#)

You will receive the login information with your registration confirmation.

Executive Coffee - January 13

Tuesday, January 13, 9:00-10:00 am [RSVP here](#)

You will receive the login information with your registration confirmation.

Annapolis Happy Hour - January 13

Tuesday, January 13, 5:00-7:00 pm [RSVP here](#)

Leo Annapolis, 212 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Organized by **Felicia Barlow Clar** and **Alison Bauer**

Reel Moms Coffee - January 16

Friday, January 16, 10:00-11:00 am [RSVP here](#)

Login info will be sent with your registration confirmation.

Organized by **Alyscia Cunningham**

Baltimore Coffee - January 20

Tuesday, January 20, 9:00-10:00 am [RSVP here](#)

The Bun Shop, 238 West Read St, Baltimore, MD

Organized by **Jacquie Greff**

DC Coffee - January 23

Friday, January 23, 9:00-10:00 am [RSVP here](#)

Emissary Coffee, 2032 P St NW, Washington, DC

Organized by **Anna Griesshammer** and **Melissa Houghton**

Arlington/Clarendon Coffee - January 29

Thursday, January 29, 10:00-11:00 am [RSVP here](#)

Kaldi's Social House, 3100 10th Street North, Arlington, VA 22201

Organized by **Sandra Brennan**

Resources

WIFV has been collecting (and suggesting) relief resources for freelancers, artists, and small businesses across the region. [Access them here.](#)

Care for Creatives provides pay-what-you-can mental health support to the DC creative and entrepreneurial community. Individuals who reach out to the CCSC are matched with a clinical intern to support them through a solution-oriented therapy approach. All services are confidential and will be provided via telehealth.

Email CCSCFoggyBottom@gwu.edu and the Care for Creatives team will follow up with more information.

Thanks to Our Sponsors



Send Stories to:
director@wifv.org

About WIFV

Women in Film & Video provides educational and networking opportunities for screen-based media makers, celebrates women's creative and technical achievements in media, and advocates for parity both in front of and behind the camera to ensure that all voices can be heard.

Gold
Transparency
2025

Candid.



Volunteer. Donate. Review.



Women in Film & Video | 921 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE | Washington, DC 20003 US

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