



Press Contact:

Dorean Pugh, WNET, 212.560.3005, PughD@wnet.org

Press materials: thirteen.org/pressroom and aptonline.org

***Films BYkids* Returns for Season 2 Featuring Four
New Films by Youth Filmmakers and Emmy-
Nominated Actress Ashley Judd as Series Narrator**

*Premieres nationwide beginning January 29 on public television
(check local listings)*

Series Synopsis:

Films BYkids, a collaboration between THIRTEEN and the non-profit organization, BYkids, pairs accomplished filmmakers with teenagers from around the world to create short personal documentaries that educate and encourage understanding about global issues. Season 2 of the four-part documentary series premieres nationally on public television beginning Tuesday, January 29, 2019 (check local listings). In the New York metro area, the series premieres Sundays, March 3 – March 24, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. on THIRTEEN.

Emmy- and Golden Globe-nominated actress **Ashley Judd** returns as series narrator, introducing each 30-minute film in the series: “**I Could Tell You ‘Bout My Life**” focuses on the juvenile justice system in the U.S., “**My Beautiful Nicaragua**” explores the effects of climate change on coffee growers in Nicaragua, “**Out of Aleppo**” follows Syrian refugees living in Germany and “**Walk on My Own**” examines cultural shifts around child marriage in Senegal.

In addition, the series companion website will offer streaming video of the four films at thirteen.org/filmsbykids. Video-based resources for middle and high school educators designed to engage students in meaningful conversations about world issues will be available on PBS LearningMedia beginning January 29. PenPal Schools, which connects students to the films in more than 30 countries through social media, is developing an online course that will be available in the spring.

Runtime: 4, 30-minute episodes

Episode 1: “I Could Tell You ‘Bout My Life” (United States)

Michael Martin, a 19-year-old boy from Harlem, N.Y., endured a challenging upbringing. At age 17, he was party to a felony. Unable to post bail, he was sent to Rikers Island, one of the country’s most violent prisons, where youth and adults are incarcerated together. After his release, Martin was determined to turn his life around. He joined a support program for formerly incarcerated youth, was hired to paint murals in New York City and began working toward his GED. Mentored by filmmakers Chiemi Karasawa and Hollis Meminger, Martin shines a light on the juvenile justice system, while providing a message of hope and encouragement to others.

Episode 2: “My Beautiful Nicaragua” (Nicaragua)

Twelve-year-old Edelsin Mendez’ family has been growing coffee for generations in rural Nicaragua, but climate change and shifting weather patterns are contributing to a devastating crop disease that threatens coffee production. Harvests have decreased dramatically and poverty is on the rise in her community. Mentored by filmmaker Joyce Chopra, Mendez shares the impact of climate change on her family, and the ways in which her community is striving to maintain its traditions and livelihood while forging a sustainable future.

Episode 3: “Out of Aleppo” (Germany)

Seventeen-year old Mohammad Shasho and his family narrowly escaped violence and destruction in his hometown of Aleppo, Syria. Like millions of Syrians, the Shasho family fled their war-torn country in search of safety. Now, they are struggling to make a new life in Berlin, Germany, learning to navigate a different culture and communicate in a foreign language. Mentored by filmmaker Anja Baron, Shasho shares how he and his fellow refugees are surviving displacement — finding strength and comfort in the arts, education and new friends — and their hopes for a brighter future.

Episode 4: “Walk On My Own” (Senegal)

Thirteen-year-old Ndèye Fatou Fall from Keur Simbara, Senegal, was born free to choose her own destiny. Had she and her friends been born eighteen years ago, they would have been forced into marriage, or subjected to the life-threatening ritual of genital cutting, which has impacted an estimated 200 million girls and women alive today in 30 countries. Mentored by filmmaker

Elizabeth Hummer, Fall reports on the changes that have happened around her since her village abandoned these practices, and the ways in which these cultural shifts have empowered and transformed her community.

Notable Talent:

- Ashley Judd - series narrator
- Chiemi Karasawa - film mentor/producer (*I Could Tell You 'Bout My Life*)
- Hollis Meminger - film mentor/producer (*I Could Tell You 'Bout My Life*)
- Joyce Chopra - film mentor/producer (*My Beautiful Nicaragua*)
- Anja Baron -film mentor/producer (*Out of Aleppo*)
- Elizabeth Hummer – film mentor/producer (*Walk On My Own*)
- Sandra Sheppard, executive producer for THIRTEEN
- Holly Carter , executive producer for BYkids

Production Credits:

Films BYkids is a production of BYkids in association with THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET. Executive Producer for BYkids is Holly Carter. Executive Producer for THIRTEEN is Sandra Sheppard. Senior Producer for THIRTEEN is Suzanne Rose. Distributed nationally by American Public Television.

Major funding for **Films BYkids Season 2** is provided by Sharon Sullivan and Jeff Kindler, Tiger Baron Foundation, The Henry and Lucy Moses Fund , Hilary and Joe Adams, Janet Goldsmith, Melanie Grisanti and Gordon McLeod, Henry Nias Foundation, Nancy Chemtob and Michael Kubin, Gladstein Family, NYC Council/NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, India Foundation, and Inter-American Development Bank and Sherrell Andrews and Robert Kuhbach.

About WNET

WNET is America's flagship PBS station: parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. WLIW21 is home to [ALL ARTS](#), a new multi-platform home for art, artists and arts lovers. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (THIRTEEN PBSKids, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters***, ***PBS NewsHour Weekend***, the new nightly interview program ***Amanpour and Company*** and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET's groundbreaking series for children and young adults include ***Get the Math, Oh Noah!*** and ***Cyberchase*** as well as ***Mission US***, the award-winning interactive history experience. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique issues and culture through ***NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams*** and ***MetroFocus***, ***NYC-ARTS***, ***Treasures of New York***, ***Theater Close-Up***, and ***WLIW Arts Beat***. WNET creates online-only programming, including the award-winning series about gender identity, ***First Person***. Through multi-platform initiatives ***Chasing the Dream: Poverty and Opportunity in America*** and ***Peril and Promise: The Challenge of Climate Change***, WNET showcases the human stories around these issues and promising solutions. The weekly program ***SciTech Now*** explores the nexus of new ideas in science and technology. Through

THIRTEEN Passport and WLIW Passport, station members can stream new and archival THIRTEEN, WLIW and PBS programming anytime, anywhere.

About BYkids

BYkids believes that we can understand the world's challenges — and how to best meet them — through the personal stories of young people. **BYkids** provides kids around the world with video cameras and film mentors to make short documentaries about their lives. Each film is accompanied by teaching materials that are used in classrooms around the world to encourage conversation and action. **BYkids creates understanding through storytelling.** (www.BYkids.org)

About APT

American Public Television (APT) is the leading syndicator of high-quality, top-rated programming to the nation's public television stations. Founded in 1961, APT distributes 250 new program titles per year and one-fourth of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles in the U.S. APT's diverse catalog includes prominent documentaries, performance, news and current affairs programs, dramas, how-to programs, children's series and classic movies. *America's Test Kitchen From Cook's Illustrated, Cook's Country, AfroPoP, Rick Steves' Europe, Chris Kimball's Milk Street Television, Front and Center, Doc Martin, Nightly Business Report, Midsomer Murders, A Place to Call Home, Lidia's Kitchen, Globe Trekker, New Orleans Cooking With Kevin Belton, Simply Ming, and P. Allen Smith's Garden Home* are a sampling of APT's programs, considered some of the most popular on public television. APT also licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service and distributes Create@TV — featuring the best of public television's lifestyle programming — and WORLD™, public television's premier news, science and documentary channel. To find out more about APT's programs and services, visit APTonline.org.

###