

The 5th Annual Justice on Trial Film Festival Opens with TV One's "When Love Kills: The Falcia Blakely Story"

Social Justice Advocate Susan Burton; Civil Rights Attorney Benjamin Crump; and Criminal Justice Reform Activist Shaka Senghor Lead Panels at the 3-Day Festival

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA, September 8, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Fifth Annual Justice on Trial® Film Festival (JOTFF) opens with a star-studded red carpet on Friday, September 15, 2017 at 5 p.m. The 3-day film festival is hosted by JOTFF Founder and CNN Hero [Susan Burton](#) of A New Way of Life Re-Entry Project (ANWOL) and Loyola Marymount University on the LMU Campus at One LMU Drive in Los Angeles, CA 90045.

JOTFF speaks to the challenges of individuals caught up in the judicial system, particularly people of color and women, which are the fastest growing incarcerated population. The 3-day festival is open to the public and is media friendly.

"The Justice on Trial Film Festival is devoted to films that examine America's broken criminal justice system," said Susan Burton, the JOTFF Founder dubbed the Modern-Day Harriett Tubman. "Current political tension presents an opportunity for progressive change."

JOTFF creates an opportunity to project the stories of those impacted by the injustice of mass incarceration, providing a voice that is often deafened by the negative images and stereotypes presented in the media.

The opening night ceremony and VIP reception are sponsored by TV One and Ebony Magazine. Among those confirmed for the red carpet event will be the director and cast members of the feature film, "When Love Kills," Director Tasha Smith (For Better Or Worse, Empire,) and [Tami Roman](#) (Basketball Wives, Belle's). Celebrities invited to the opening night are filmmakers; Jimmy Jean-Louis (Claws); Vivica A. Fox (Empire, Chocolate City:Vegas; Independence Day: Resurgence); Patrick Faucette (All Eyez on Me, Haves and Have Nots); Liana Mendoza (Better Call Saul, Hey Mr. Postman); Omar Gooding (Family Time, Hey Mr. Postman); Paula Jai Parker (Ray Donovan, Hey Mr. Postman); Darius McCrary (Love Under New Management: The Miki Howard Story, Star); Shawn Hazz McDonald (Chocolate City, Keys); Ernest Thomas (The Gospel Truth, Chocolate City:Vegas,



The 5th Annual Justice on Trial Film Festival Opens with TVOne's "When Love Kills," on September 15, 2017 in Los Angeles on the Loyola Marymount University campus.

Chocolate City); Tammy Townsend (K.C. Undercover), Melvin Jackson, Jr. (The New Edition, The Wire), and more.

Casting Director Leah Daniels-Butler will host the VIP reception. When Butler's not busy helping to shape the many fictional characters international audiences, she dedicates her time to helping shape the futures of real women in her community who are in need of second chances. She sits on ANWOL's board.

In addition to the film, "When Love Kills," a total of seventeen films were selected for screening throughout the festival. Films scheduled for Saturday the 16th: "Who Will Watch the Watchers?," "Jake," "It's Criminal," "The Devastating Game," "Incarcerating US," "Robert," "The Honest Struggle," "Hands Up - Don't Shoot," "Perception of Violence, Breathin' - The Eddy Zheng Story," "When Justice Isn't Just," "Life After Life" and "Revolving Doors." Films scheduled for Sunday the 17th: "A Walk to Freedom," "Susan," "Bang!" and "For They Know Not." Learn more about the films at www.justicefortrialfilmfestival.net and click on Films and Tickets.

The festival's theme is "Exposing Injustice...Exploring Solutions," and features nationally known panelists who will lead discussions on Saturday, September 16 and Sunday, September 17 about civil rights, social injustice and second chances. The panelists are Social Justice Advocate Susan Burton (Becoming Ms. Burton: From Prison to Recovery to Leading the Fight for Incarcerated Women); Criminal Justice Reform Activist [Shaka Senghor](#) (Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death and Redemption in an American Prison); and Civil Rights Attorney [Benjamin Crump](#) (Attorney for the families of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and others whose sons were killed by cops); A New Way of Life Associate



JOTFF Founder, Social Justice Advocate and CNN Hero Ms. Susan Burton is the keynote speaker and will sign her best-selling memoir, "Becoming Ms.Burton" on September 17, 2017.

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Director/Social Justice Advocate Tiffany Johnson and Women's Rights Activist/Criminal Justice Reform Advocate Donna Hylton (A Walk to Freedom).

More than one million women sit behind bars, and despite this fact, when talking about prison reform, they are nearly completely overlooked. Studies show that Hispanic women are incarcerated at nearly twice the rate of white women, and Black women are incarcerated at four times the rate of white women.

With millions of Americans outraged by the current political climate, the festival's film screenings, speakers and panelists will offer attendees insight and opportunities to create impactful change within their communities.

"My passion for advocacy has given me the privilege to fight for justice on behalf of the marginalized in our country, a calling to which I remain dedicated," said Crump who can be seen in the upcoming feature film, "Marshall," about a young Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court

Justice.

The festival will culminate in an awards ceremony. The JOTFF screening committee, comprised of entertainment industry professionals and criminal justice subject matter experts, reached consensus in determining the "Best Short" and "Best Documentary" screened at the festival. Both awards will be presented to film makers by Leah Daniels-Butler during the festival's closing ceremony.

Attendees include students from surrounding colleges and universities, local and national community based organizations, the entertainment industry, film schools, and law firms and schools.

Sponsors include TV One, Ebony Magazine, Californians for Safety and Justice, The California Endowment, Building Healthy Communities: Long Beach, Serving California, and Race, Gender & Human Rights, a fund of the Women's Foundation of California. Gift bag T-shirts sponsored by Shantaya Pace-Kitchen for The League of Extraordinary Black Girls.

Media sponsors: The Compton Herald, Untouchable Magazine, Los Angeles Wave Newspaper, Global Street Wave and News4UsOnline.com.

Invited press include: Los Angeles Sentinel, The Watts Times, Pace News, Our Weekly, LA Weekly, KPFF, LA Times, EUR Web, Hollywood Unlocked, The Shade Room, The Inland Valley News, NAACP The Crisis Magazine, The Voice, Viewpoint Newspaper, and more.

To purchase tickets, contact www.justiceontrialfilmfestival.net or call 323-563-3575.

For press credentials, talent submission consideration, an interview request or speaking engagement for Ms. Burton or any of the panelists, and sponsorship opportunities, contact Marie Lemelle, publicist for ANWOL at 213-276-7827 or info@platinumstarpr.com.



Shaka Senghor, a leading voice in criminal justice reform, is a panelist and will sign his best-selling memoir, "Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death and Redemption in an American Prison" on September 16, 2017.



Donna Hylton is a women's rights activist and criminal justice reform advocate. Her film, "A Walk to Freedom" will screen on Sunday, September 17, 2017. Hylton will lead the Q&A after the screening.

About JOTFF Founder and Keynote Speaker Susan Burton:

CNN Top Ten Hero Susan Burton, described as the "Harriet Tubman" of our time, is the founder of A New Way of Life Re-Entry Project (ANWOL). Founded in 1998, ANWOL provides housing and support to formerly incarcerated women for successful community re-entry, family reunification and individual healing. ANWOL, based in South Los Angeles, California, also works to restore the civil rights of formerly incarcerated people through empowering, organizing and mobilizing advocates for social change, civic engagement and personal transformation. Five years ago, Burton founded Justice on Trial Film Festival to visually raise the awareness about social justice, mass incarceration, and the need for criminal justice reform.



Benjamin L. Crump, a renowned civil rights attorney and founder of Ben Crump Law, is the attorney for the families of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and others whose sons were killed by cops is a keynote speaker on September 16 at JOTFF.

In 2017, ANWOL collaborated with McKinney & Associates, to launch JustUS Voices Storytelling for ChangeSM – a multimedia initiative aiming to transform the policy and public dialogue on mass incarceration through the lived experiences of formerly incarcerated women. Also in 2017, Burton launched her critically-acclaimed memoir, "Becoming Ms. Burton: From Prison to Recovery to Leading the Fight for Incarcerated Women."

Among the many honors and recognition bestowed on Ms. Burton, she is the recipient of the James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award in 2014. In 2015, the Los Angeles Times named her one of the nation's 18 New Civil Rights Leaders.

About JOTFF Panelist Shaka Senghor:

Shaka Senghor is a leading voice in criminal justice reform, a senior fellow with The Dream Corps, and President/ Creative Director of Mind Blown Media. His memoir, *Writing My Wrongs: Life, Death and Redemption in an American Prison*, was released in March 2016 and debuted on The New York Times Best Seller List as well as The Washington Post Best Seller List. An unforgettable tale of forgiveness and second chances, *Writing My Wrongs* reminds us that our worst deeds don't define who we are or what we can contribute to the world. Shaka's story has inspired thousands and serves as a powerful testament to the power of hope, compassion and unconditional love.

About JOTFF Keynote Speaker Benjamin L. Crump, Esq.

Benjamin Lloyd Crump is an American civil rights attorney and founder of the Tallahassee, Florida-based law firm Ben Crump Law. The attorney for the families of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and others whose sons were killed by cops, Benjamin Crump has been recognized as one of The National Trial Lawyers Top 100 Lawyers, Ebony Magazine Power 100 Most Influential African Americans, and bestowed such covenant as the NAACP Thurgood Marshall Award, the SCLC Martin Luther King Servant Leader Award, the National Urban League's Whitney Young Award, and the AKA's Eleanor Roosevelt Award. Mr. Crump is President and co-founder of MyDad360, a mentoring

program for fathers that has been acknowledged by President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Initiative and endorsed by Retired General Colin Powell. On July 23, 2015, Mr. Crump became the 73rd President of the National Bar Association, the largest organization of lawyers of color in the world, representing over 60,000 Black lawyers, judges, and legal professionals.

About JOTFF Speaker Donna Hylton:

Donna Hylton is a women's rights activist and criminal justice reform advocate. Donna speaks publicly about the issues facing incarcerated women and girls and the significant impact the significant increase in the female prison population is having on families, children and our communities. Hylton served a 27-year prison sentence in Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women. She is featured in A Walk to Freedom which is also being screened at the JOTFF. "My lifelong journey is one of many emotional and physical prisons; I went from abused child to repeated rape victim to desperate teen mother to solitary confinement where the boundary of my world was a 6'x10" cinder block room. It's a story of tremendous pain and suffering, but it's also a love story about freedom, hope, survival, sisterhood, redemption, and forgiveness. It's about learning to love myself and fight for myself and for others."

Her memoir, 'A Little Piece of Light,' tells the story of the childhood abuse she endured, the spiral of events that lead to her incarceration and how she learned to live, love and trust all over again. Hylton was one of the speakers at the 2017 Women's March on Washington.

About JOTFF Panelist Tiffany Johnson

Tiffany Johnson entered A New Way of Life's safe housing program in 2010 after serving a 15 to life prison sentence. In 2015, Tiffany became A New Way of Life's Associate Director. As a subject matter expert, Tiffany has completed numerous presentations throughout the country and offers a unique perspective on the intricacies of overcoming re-entry barriers after years of incarceration.

Connect with Ms. Burton and A New Way of Life Re-entry Project on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ANewWayofLifeReentryProject/

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ANewWayOfLifeReentry>

Twitter: @anewwayoflife1 and @susanburtonLA

Instagram: @justiceontrialfilmfestival @anewwayoflifereentryproject

#BecomingMsBurton #ANewWayOfLife #UpAndOut #FreeAmerica #JusticeOnTrial
#ExposingInjustice #ExploringSolutions

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