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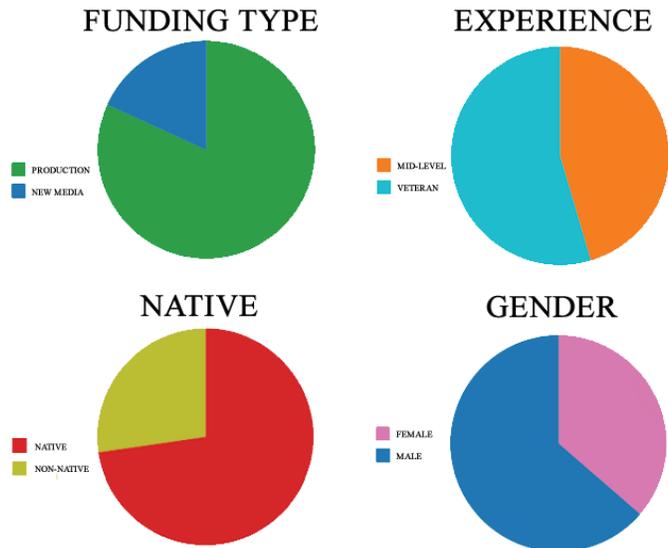
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For Immediate Release:

Vision Maker Media Announces 2014-2015 Public Media Content Fund Awards

Lincoln, Neb.: Vision Maker Media is pleased to announce support for thirteen new projects for production, new media, and acquisition. Eleven producers and Public Television stations were selected for funding and two for acquisition for their documentaries by and about Native Americans and Alaska Natives.

With funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), Vision Maker Media's Public Media Content Fund awards support to projects with a Native American theme and significant Native involvement that ultimately benefits the entire public media community. Since 1990, filmmakers have been invited to submit proposals in various stages of their film—from research & development, to production, post-production/completion, and outreach. All proposals are reviewed by a group of public television professionals, station programmers, independent filmmakers, educators, and executives from indigenous organizations.



“The goal of the Public Media Content Fund is to increase the diversity of voices available to PBS viewers,” said Shirley K. Sneve (Rosebud Sioux), executive director of Vision Maker Media.

The final slate of documentaries represents Native voices and stories from across the United States including California, Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Montana, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and a couple documentaries will span coast-to-coast.

In this funding cycle, of the selected projects, 45.5% are mid-level filmmakers, and 54.5% are veteran filmmakers. Of this, 36.3% of the filmmakers are women, 63.7% are male, and 72.7% are enrolled in a federally recognized tribe.

Funding was awarded as 18.2% New Media; 81.8% production, post-production, and completion; and an additional two projects selected for acquisition. Production provides funding for producers to film, record, and produce their documentaries. Post-production funding allows for completion of documentaries already-in-progress. New Media provides for programs with primary distribution over the Internet such as vignettes and webisodes, as well as creation of community engagement materials. Acquisitions are provocative and engaging completed programs from independent or Public Television producers acquired by Vision Maker Media for broadcast.



In alphabetical order, the funded projects are:

Boarding School Stories

Jonathon Skurnik

New Media

Board School Stories is an interactive new media website built around videotaped oral histories that will educate users about the history of the American Indian boarding school system—a policy of forced assimilation imposed on more than 100,000 Native American children between 1879 and 1975.

Injunuity 2

Adrian Baker (Hopi)

Production

Injunuity 2 is a half-hour documentary made-up of nine short films using a mix of animation, music, and real Native voices. Together, the pieces create a thought-provoking collage of reflections on modern America from a contemporary Native perspective. (www.injunuity.org)

Lake of Betrayal: The Story of Kinzua Dam

Paul Lamont, Scott Sackett

Production

When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers attempts to take their land to build Kinzua Dam, the Seneca people stand up to the government and prevailing political forces of the 1950s and 60s to save their culture, their sovereignty, and their way of life to preserve their future.

Mankiller

Valerie Red-Horse (Cherokee), Gale Anne Hurd

Production

Mankiller explores the life of Wilma Mankiller, the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation who led her people in building one of the strongest Indian Tribes in America. More than a biography, the program delivers an empowering message.

Medicine Woman

Princella Parker (Omaha), Christine Lesiak, NET Television

Production

Medicine Woman is about healing and identity in the lives of Native women past and present. It weaves together the stories of the first Native American doctor, a woman born seven generations ago, and present-day Native healers.

Metal Road

Sarah Del Seronde (Navajo), Leighton C. Peterson

Production

For decades, thousands of Navajos worked the railroads, maintaining the trans-continental network. *Metal Road* explores the dynamics of livelihood, family, and the railroads through the lens of a Navajo trackman.

Navajo Math Circles

George Csicsery

Production

Navajo Math Circles documents the meeting of two worlds where some of the country's most accomplished mathematicians and math educators work with children and teachers in the underserved, largely rural Navajo educational system.



VISION MAKER
M E D I A

Neon Buffalo

Pierre Barrera (Klamath/Lakota), Jeff Franken, Daniel Montano

Production

Neon Buffalo is a documentary film exploring the history of Indian gaming from the first bingo halls to today's destination resorts. The film delves deeper into Indian Gaming than slot machines and black jack tables. (www.neonbuffalo.com)

Our Fires Still Burn

Audrey Geyer

Acquisition

Our Fires Still Burn suggests how Native Americans can address the serious economic and social issues that affect them while respecting and understanding their heritage and what was done to them by European settlers and the United States government. The stories shared are fresh, uplifting, powerful, startling, despairing, and inspiring. (www.ourfiresstillburn.com)

Red Power Energy

Larry Pourier (Oglala Lakota), Lisa D. Olken, Rocky Mountain PBS

Production

Red Power Energy is the first-ever, trans-media film project (TV, radio, web-exclusive videos, print articles, photos, and timelines) that explores the promises and perils of fossil fuel and renewable energy production on 14 American Indian reservations in a five state region—Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The Blackfeet Flood

Brooke Pepion Swaney (Blackfeet/Salish), Ben Shors

New Media

The media ignored the 29 victims of the worst natural disaster in Montana history, the 1964 flood on the Blackfeet Reservation. *The Blackfeet Flood* gives voice to the survivors to tell their stories through a mobile app and website that present a series of place-based short films, text, historic documents, and images. (www.sixtyfourflood.com)

Tribal Justice

Anne Makepeace, Ruth B. Cowan

Production

Tribal Justice is a one-hour documentary about the innovative work of two tribal judges, both remarkable women leaders who are using traditional forms of restorative justice to help heal their communities. (www.makepeaceproductions.com/tj)

Watchers of the North

David Finch, Maureen Marovitch

Acquisition

Watchers of the North is an action-packed, six-part documentary adventure series following the training, patrols, and search & rescue missions of Canadian Rangers in two Nunavut communities. (www.watchersofthenorth.com)

Vision Maker Media shares Native stories with the world that represent the cultures, experiences, and values of American Indians and Alaska Natives. Founded in 1977, Vision Maker Media, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) which receives major funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, nurtures creativity for development of new projects, partnerships, and funding. Vision Maker Media is the premier source for quality Native American and Pacific Islander educational and home videos. All aspects of our programs encourage the involvement of young people to learn more about careers in the media—to be the next generation of storytellers. Located at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, we offer student employment and internships. For more information, visit www.visionmakermedia.org.