



For details, art or photos about FLICKERS media releases, contact Shawn Quirk, [quirk@film-festival.org](mailto:quirk@film-festival.org)

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**MEDIA ALERT... MEDIA ALERT... MEDIA ALERT**  
**“PELL” DOCUMENTARY TO SCREEN AT**  
**12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ROVING EYE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**  
**MONDAY, APRIL 17 2017 AT 5:00 P.M.**

**BRISTOL, RI.** — The award-winning documentary "PELL" will be given a free screening at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Roving Eye International Film Festival, Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. at Roger Williams University and feature a Q&A with the film's director, Steven Feinberg. The location for the screening is the Global Heritage Hall, Room 01. It is a free event and open to the public.

"PELL" tells the inspiring story of Rhode Island Senator Claiborne Pell and his fight, against all odds, to give every American the opportunity to get a higher education regardless of their economic status. (See longer description below).

The **12<sup>th</sup> Annual Roving Eye International Film Festival** created by the Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF) in partnership with Roger Williams University kicks off April 17<sup>th</sup> and runs through the 23<sup>rd</sup>. This year's programming features over 60 films from across the world including Academy Award nominees and winners, numerous World and US Premieres; panel discussions/symposia; visiting filmmakers and student film showcases. The event will conclude with the Spring 2017 Soforenko Foundation Film/Speaker Series On The Jewish Experience.

Students at the University, with the guidance of Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival, create the Roving Eye International Film Festival through the Film Minor senior-level course, *Curation and Film Festival Production*. Flickers' Executive Director and RWU Professor, **George T. Marshall** teaches the class. This year, 16 students spent the first part of the spring semester reviewing more than 500 films provided by Flickers and from there went on to create the entire Roving Eye Festival. The students developed active marketing and PR strategies, including the planning for events plus staffing throughout the week. **Roberta E. Adams, Ph.D.**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, is the Festival Chair, linking faculty adjudicators with students, RIIFF and the RWU administration in a unique collaboration.

Students in the Curation and Film Production Class include: **Hadi Alyami, Alison Cellana, Reagan Cronin, Gabriela Dinobile, Gabrielle Dougherty, Taylor Flaherty, Jacob Johnson, Alissa Livingston, Tyler McCoy, Zachary Mobrize, Brett Pollina, Kelsey Rogers, Bradley Ross, Benjamin Scheff, Elliot Sirchio** and **Nicholas Stanglewicz**.

The **2017 Roving Eye International Film Festival** is sponsored by *The RI Film & the Television Office; Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival; Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia, Edge Media*

Network, the Edwin S. Soforenko Foundation; Roger Williams University Office of the Provost; the RWU Department of Communication and Graphic Design, the RWU Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences, Dean Robert Cole; Roberta Adams, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; the RWU Film Production Collaborative, the RWU Screenwriter's Guild, RWU Hillel, and the Spiritual Life Office.

To see a listing of this year's programming and to learn more about the Roving Eye Festival, go to: <http://www.film-festival.org/RovingEye.php>

#### **ABOUT ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY:**

**Roger Williams University**, located on the coast of Bristol, R.I., is a forward-thinking private university with 45 undergraduate majors spanning the liberal arts and the professions, where students become community-minded citizens through project-based, experiential learning. With small classes, direct access to faculty and boundless opportunity for real-world projects, RWU students develop the ability to think critically while simultaneously building the practical skills that today's employers demand. In the two years since launching its signature Affordable Excellence initiative, the University has established itself as a leader in American higher education by confronting the most pressing issues facing students and families – increasing costs that limit access to college, rising debt and the job readiness of graduates. In addition to its 4,000 undergraduates, RWU is home to more than a dozen graduate programs, a thriving School of Continuing Studies based in Providence as well as Rhode Island's only law school. For more information, go to: [www.rwu.edu](http://www.rwu.edu).

#### **ABOUT FLICKERS' RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL:**

The **Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)**, has secured its place in the global community as the portal for the best in international independent cinema, earning the respect of domestic and foreign filmmakers, filmgoers and trend watchers. Ranked as one of the top 10 Festivals in the United States, RIIFF is a qualifying festival for the Live Action, Documentary and Animation Short Academy Awards through its affiliation with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). There are only 6 film festivals worldwide that share this distinction and RIIFF is the only festival in New England. The Festival takes place every August.

For more information about the **Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival**, running Aug. 8-13, 2017 at the **Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC)** and **The Vets** (formerly Veterans Memorial Auditorium), please visit [www.RIFilmFest.org](http://www.RIFilmFest.org) or call 401.861.4445.

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#### **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR OF "PELL":**

##### **STEVEN FEINBERG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE RHODE ISLAND FILM & TELEVISION OFFICE**

**Steven Feinberg** is a life-long filmmaker and a proud Rhode Island native who spent 22 years as a Hollywood writer, director and producer. He sold original screenplays to the major studios including 20th Century Fox, Universal, Warner Brothers, Dimension and Sony and had international success with the sci-fi features FORTRESS and its sequel FORTRESS 2. In 2004, Steven brought his considerable talent, energy and wealth of industry contacts home to assume the new position of Executive Director of the Rhode Island Film & Television Office. Over a span of one decade, Mr. Feinberg aggressively promoted Rhode Island as a "film-friendly" location. He initiated ground-breaking tax incentive legislation, which became law in June 2005, developed infrastructure for film and television production, supports media education from the elementary level to college graduates, as well as co-sponsors local film festivals and has launched the comprehensive Film Office's website, <http://www.film.ri.gov/www.film.ri.gov>. Most recently, Steven has lured highly prestigious projects such as the upcoming thriller, THE DISCOVERY; with Robert Redford and Rooney Mara, the Martin Scorsese' production BLEED FOR THIS, Jack Black in THE POLKA KING and many other outstanding films including Wes Anderson's MOONRISE

KINGDOM; Woody Allen's IRRATIONAL MAN and the Golden Gobe nominated INFINITELY POLAR BEAR starring Mark Ruffalo.

To date, Steven Feinberg has brought well over \$400 million of film and television production into Rhode Island's economy and provided \$700 million of overall activity into Rhode Island's economy as well as thousands of jobs for local talent and crew. This success in Rhode Island has reverberated across New England, and now the Ocean State's neighbors are also prospering in the film/television industry. He has also created several promotional films for the State of Rhode Island Film & TV Office and wrote-directed-produced the award-winning documentary, PELL.

*"When the tide rises, all boats float, and that's a good thing!"* says Steven.

#### **SHORT FILM DESCRIPTION:**

PELL tells the inspiring story of Rhode Island Senator Claiborne Pell and his fight, against all odds, to give every student the opportunity to get a higher education regardless of their economic background.

#### **FULL FILM DESCRIPTION:**

PELL takes you from the mansions of Newport to the dramatic behind the scenes legislative conference in 1972 to recount how a wealthy, unassuming Senator from Rhode Island reached across party lines and was able to get the House and Senate members to vote for the passage of the Pell Grant legislation. From his early days in the Coast Guard, Senator Claiborne Pell sought to help his fellow seamen get access to the kind of college education that he received at Princeton. PELL details his fervent quest to bring the Pell Grants – financial aid for each and every student – to fruition.

Pell Grants, which was ultimately passed into law in 1972, as "government grants" continues to be an intricate part of the higher education puzzle for many college-bound students as tuitions spiral out of control. PELL reveals the in-depth, and often, suspenseful drama of how the Pell Grants developed from a dream to reality, and how the primary author, Senator Pell, overcame a host of challenges (from some of the most unlikely sources), and yet managed to successfully open the powerful gates of higher education for many students yearning to learn.

The original responsibility of Pell Grants was to cover nearly 80 percent of tuition costs at a four-year public college. However, as college today is unaffordable for many students, a Pell Grant maximum at \$5775, covers less than 36 percent of those costs. This seems minimal when you consider that \$24,061 a year is the average price tag for tuition, fees, room and board at a public college. The comparable figure is almost \$47,831 at a private university. Although a bipartisan legislation, Pell Grants continues to be treated by Congress as a 'welfare' program by trimming eligibility each year and the Pell Grants need to be re-appropriated.

PELL showcases personal stories of Pell Grant recipients including Jean Paul Valencia, the first in his family to go to college as he walks through the gates of Harvard; community college student advocates addressing lawmakers on Capital Hill; icon recipients including Viola Davis and former Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar –as well as former NASA Astronaut Leland Melvin, who talks about STEM education and its importance for future generations.

PELL takes you through the relevant issues of education today within the realm of politics, where players weigh in heavily on government's current mandate. And with the urgency of the student loan debt crisis, the PELL documentary could not come at a better time, as it shines the light on government's responsibility to aid in the education of those who seek it.

A quote from Senator Claiborne:

*"This is very important legislation, for it's through this Act that the dream of access, and opportunity for college education becomes a reality. It's in this Act that we say a lack of*

*financial wealth should not, and will not, stand in the way of a person who has the talent, the desire and the drive to reach out for a college education."*