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Contact: Jonathan J. Cavallero,
Bates College

Phone: (207) 755-5937

Email: jcavalle@bates.edu

BATES FILM FESTIVAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP FAR MORE INCLUSIVE THAN HOLLYWOOD INDUSTRY ITSELF

Equity and Justice Continue to Drive Decision Making in Festival's Second Year

LEWISTON, MAINE, August 16, 2019 – The Bates Film Festival (BFF) has announced its board membership for its 2019 festival. Of the 40 members across the BFF's professional and faculty advisory boards, 22 are women and 10 are people of color. These numbers represent a dramatically more inclusive representation than is typical of Hollywood. According to 5050by2020, in Hollywood, 81% of board members are men and 94% of film executives are white. By contrast, BFF board members are 55% women and 25% people of color.

"Creating a more diverse board was important to us," festival director Jon Cavallero said, "the BFF has a stated commitment to social justice. We are proud of Bates College's dedication to issues of equity and justice, and we wanted to see that reflected in our advisory board membership."

A small team of students worked with Cavallero during the short term to create the Boards. "We were inspired by the '5050by2020' initiative that asks Hollywood film industry organizations to commit to equal numbers of male and female core decision makers by 2020," Eleanor Shields, a rising Bates senior who will be a BFF programmer in the fall, said, "However, we used this initiative as only a philosophical starting point. We aim to hold ourselves to higher standards of inclusivity – ones that disregard the notion that gender is a binary and ones that recognize the importance of racial diversity and intersectional identities. This commitment will be lasting, as we hope to continue increasing inclusivity on the Bates Film Festival boards for years to come."

Advisory board members work closely with students in Cavallero's "Film Festival Studies" seminar to offer guidance on everything from marketing strategies to programming opportunities. "During the first week of the class," Cavallero said, "students are paired with both a professional advisory board member and a faculty advisory board member. Throughout the semester, they speak directly with them and report back to the class on those conversations."

This year the professional advisory board includes Oscar-winners, Emmy-winners, and Golden Globe-winners. There are documentary filmmakers, screenwriters and directors, film and television executives, and talent agents. The faculty advisory board includes 11 Bates faculty members from 10 different departments as well as faculty members from Bowdoin College, Cal State – Los Angeles, Colby College, Emerson College, Northern Illinois University, Sarah Lawrence College, Towson University, and the University of Washington – Tacoma. Many of the faculty from outside of Bates run their own festivals or are experts in the field.

The Bates Film Festival is a curated event that brings nationally and internationally recognized films to Lewiston. It is organized by students in Jonathan Cavallero's "Film Festival Studies" seminar in the Department of Rhetoric, Film, and Screen Studies. Students are involved in every aspect of the festival's planning and execution. The Bates Film Festival is scheduled to take place in early November 2019.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please email jcavalle@bates.edu. More information can also be found on the BFF website at: www.bates.edu/bff