



Perry and Johnson Documentaries Confirm La Costa Film Festival's Dominance in Sports Films

September 20, 2015 | Carlsbad, CA – Competing documentaries - one about pop-icon **Katy Perry**, the other about political-icon **Kevin Johnson** - tied for the coveted **Audience Choice Award** at the 2015 La Costa Film Festival held September 10-13 in Carlsbad, California. Movie fans showed love for the two behind-the-scenes films about professional football, **Katy Perry-Making of the Pepsi Super Bowl Half Time Show**, and basketball, **Down In The Valley**. The Audience Choice short film winner is **All-American Family**, an emotionally raw film about a deaf family in a deaf community who lived, loved and played football generation after generation.

Mike Tollin, Co-Chairman of Mandalay Sports Media, a Festival collaborator and major sponsor, executive produced the Perry movie. **John Hirsch**, the director explains why this festival audience was quick to praise the film, "Katy obviously has a tremendous fan base, but here they get to see her in a different light - as a perfectionist. The preparation that goes into a performance of just a few minutes is just as riveting as the game itself and Katy is involved with every detail." Perry's **Super Bowl XLIX Half Time** performance was seen by a world record-shattering 119 million viewers. The audience in the intimate 215-seat Ruby G. Shulman Auditorium viewing one of the world's biggest pop stars performing on one of the world's biggest stages made the Perry Super Bowl movie one of the Festival's biggest hits.

In only its third year, the La Costa Film Festival is carving out a distinct niche in the film festival world. A draw for A-list celebrities like **Andy Garcia**, **Ed Harris** and **John C. McGinley**, the magnificent Omni La Costa Resort and Spa venue, with seemingly endless red carpet receptions managed with "welcome home" graciousness by nearly 200 community volunteers, defined the Festival's allure. But it is the quality of films – 48 screenings including five world premieres, many screened in the ultra-chic Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas La Costa while others were showcased under the stars on Center Court where **Venus Williams**, **Maria Sharapova** and **Steffi Graf** have done battle – that offers proof that the Festival's focus on attracting the finest sports films in the world is paying off big time.

Former NBA All Star and Sacramento Mayor, **the Honorable Kevin Johnson**, was honored with the hallmark **Ambassador of Sports Award**. His monumental triumph of keeping the *Sacramento Kings* from leaving his hometown, California's state capital, and brilliant collaboration with documentarian Jason Hehir as part of *ESPN Films'* award-winning "30 for 30" film series is nothing short of awe-inspiring. While in town, Mayor Johnson chatted on local sports-talk radio's *Scott & BR Show* showering praise for San Diego **Mayor Kevin Faulconer's** leadership and encouragement to embattled *San Diego Charger's* fans. Johnson described **Down In The Valley** as "one of those great stories where the underdog prevailed, where the good guys, the little guys, can win if you have the right community and the right team in place." Then he firmly schooled San Diego pro-football fans that the big take away is "never give up, it's not over."

Entries in the Festival's signature Sports Film category are judged by a jury of distinguished film and sports professionals. **Every Day**, a short about the late **Joy Johnson's** record-breaking New York City Marathon run, and the epic documentary **The Great Alone**, which authenticates the implausible, near-miraculous comeback of noted Iditarod racer, **Lance Mackey**, each stole top honors. The jury's selection of those two remarkably contrasting films gives testimony to the bold diversity of sports films screened. In fact, Festival moviegoers enjoyed films about football, golf, baseball, basketball, hiking, soccer, snowboarding, sled dog

racing, marathon running and big-wave surfing – a cinematic smorgasbord of sports, athletes and just plain plucky competitors.

Despite the Festival's full embrace of everything sports, comedies and drama were also received affectionately. **Worthy**, a self-described "modern day coming-of-age story for the millennial generation," won the **Audience Choice Award** followed very closely with an Honorable Mention for the comedy/drama, **All In Time**, which opened the Festival. The special events highlight was movie and television star **John C. McGinley's** gracious acceptance of the **2015 Legacy Award** presented not only for his incomparable body of work onscreen but his inspirational advocacy on behalf of Special Olympics, the Global Down Syndrome Foundation.

One of the earliest of the season, La Costa's four days overlap one of the industry's most popular festivals, the TIFF. Despite this, #LaCostaFilmFest still caught the fickle eye of the "twittersphere" generating more than three million impressions, up 4,425%, and seeing profile visits soar 1,228%. Not only did the Katy Perry world premier cause tremendous buzz, but also the vigorous interaction by ESPN personality and best-selling author **Yogi Roth** built a spike of followers. Roth drove down the coast from LA for the after-screening Q & A with the audience about his film **Life in a Walk**. Completely sold out, the entire cast gave up their front-row seats revealing the genuine affection between filmmakers and fans. Out of five stars, fans gave an average of four for all films screened at the Festival.

"We are delighted at the public's response, both here and online," states Festival Co-Founder **Ruby Callihan**. "Measuring our social media impact, we're astonished how many people are tuning-in. It's a clear endorsement by movie fans around the world that we're creating something very special here - something unique, something that's worth appreciating." Festival organizers may well look back on 2015 and see it as a pivotal year. Given the public's voracious appetite for top-quality sports films, the La Costa Film Festival is becoming the film festival that best feeds the need for athletic action on the big screen.

For more information please visit LaCostaFilmFestival.org or email Tickets@LaCostaFilmFestival.org

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FESTIVAL HONORS

2015 Legacy Award
Actor/Activist John C. McGinley

2015 Ambassador of Sports Award
The Honorable Kevin Johnson

SPORTS FILM JURY SELECTIONS

FEATURE **The Great Alone**
Director Greg Kohs

SHORT **Every Day**
Director Gabe Spitzer

2015 AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARDS

NARRATIVE FEATURE **Worthy**
Director Marianna Palka

NARRATIVE FEATURE Honorable Mention: **All In Time**
Directors Marina Donahue, Chris Fetchko

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE **Down In The Valley**
Director Jason Hehir

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE **Katy Perry: Making Of The Pepsi Super Bowl
Halftime Show**
Director John Hirsch

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Honorable Mention **The Great Alone**
Director Greg Kohs

SHORT **All-American Family**
Director Andrew Jenks

SHORT Honorable Mention **Discipline**
Director Christophe M. Saber

The REEL PITCH WINNER **Caitlin Reed**
Working Title: Erased

The REEL PITCH Honorable Mention **Jared Hillman and Matthew Helfgott**
Working Title: Shuttlecock

The REEL PITCH Honorable Mention **Richard Rosenblatt and George Crall**
Working Title: Abduction of a General

HIGH SCHOOL SHORT

Julia Elihu-Canyon Crest Academy

HIGH SCHOOL SHORT Honorable Mention

Haylie Bantle-Carlsbad High School

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La Costa Film Festival

The La Costa Film Festival is an annual arts and cultural experience enriching the quality of life in San Diego County by showcasing local businesses, promoting tourism and supporting the local film industry by introducing students and professionals pursuing careers in the motion picture and television arts to leaders in the industry. La Costa Film Festival is produced by La Costa Dreams, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation

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