

STORIES BEYOND BORDERS

5 FILMS TO SPARK ACTION FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE

DO-IT-YOURSELF SCREENING GUIDE

WORKING FILMS



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT:

This guide is designed to assist you in planning screening events in neighborhoods, community groups, non-profits, schools, faith-based organizations and other venues to propel your audience to think critically and to take meaningful action for immigrant justice.

Contents:

About Stories Beyond Borders.....	3
Planning your screening.....	5
Discussion Guide.....	11
Building Authentic & Transformational Relationships.....	12
Creating a Community Altar.....	15
Ending Your Screening with Hope.....	17
Safety and Security.....	18



ABOUT STORIES BEYOND BORDERS:

Stories Beyond Borders is an organizing initiative that uses documentary films to show a more complete picture of the attacks on immigrant families and communities. Beyond building empathy, these five short films lift up real stories of resilience and strength, while illustrating some of the ways people can give their time, energy, and resources to support organizing led by immigrant communities.

At a moment when the rights of immigrants are being attacked, a fuller story of immigration needs to be told to address the harms perpetuated by immigration enforcement practices and policies that extend beyond the crisis at the border. Whether it's through raids, people being picked up at courthouses, or being forced to live in churches - families are being separated and attacked across America. People are standing up against these attacks and Stories Beyond Borders is a resource in these efforts, sharing powerful media and connecting audiences to the timeliest actions.

ABOUT EACH FILM:

Santuario By Christine Delp & Pilar Timpane
Juana Luz Tobar Ortega came to the United States 24 years ago as an asylum seeker from Guatemala. For the last six years living in North Carolina, Juana has checked in with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) annually and received a stay of deportation. But in April of 2017, she was told without warning that she had 30 days to leave the country or be deported. Non-criminal deportation cases like Juana's have skyrocketed. Deportation is devastating, separating mothers, and breadwinners like Juana from the families and communities who need them. But deportation is not the only option. After over two decades in the United States, Juana refused to leave her 4 children and two 9-year-old granddaughters to return to Guatemala. Instead, in May, 2017, Juana entered sanctuary at an unfamiliar church. St. Barnabas Episcopal in Greensboro, North Carolina welcomed Juana, a complete stranger, into their church home.



Not a Citizen By Daniel Quintanilla. Animation by Hanji Chang

A story of Abdi Ali, a 28 year-old permanent resident from Maine, who was detained by ICE in a Portland courthouse while meeting with his attorney about an Operating Under the Influence charge. The U.S. Government intends to deport Abdi back to Somalia, the same country his family fled as refugees when he was only a child.



The Legacy of the Zero Tolerance Policy By Almudena Toral, Lorena Arroyo & Cindy Karp

Adayanci Pérez is one of more than 2,500 children that were separated from their families at the border by the U.S. government as part of the Zero Tolerance policy. This 6-year-old Guatemalan girl was away from her family for three and a half months. Before going back, she was diagnosed with PTSD. She was not the same when she returned. There are still 400 children that haven't been reunited with their families.



The Dream Ride By Konrad Aderer

Young Dream Riders — Asian American activists on bikes — make a 1,700-mile #Journey2Justice from border to border to raise awareness of these emerging movement leaders who are not dreaming of DACA. Their six-week trek is a campaign relentlessly focused on #Citizenship4All, a path to citizenship for all 11 million out-of-status immigrants. This campaign is led by NAKASEC, National Korean American Service & Education Consortium, and their affiliates.



UndocuJoy! By Monica Medellin, Shauna Siggelkow, Yosimar Reyes, & Define AmericanUndocuJoy combats victimizing representations of people who are undocumented, by showcasing authentic moments of joy.



PLANNING YOUR SCREENING

Here are some helpful hints for organizing a screening, from securing the location, to publicizing the event, to planning a discussion afterwards and involving your audience in meaningful action.

1) Assess Your Community and the Issues

What are the major messages in Stories Without Borders that connect to your community around immigration? Who and what groups are involved in addressing immigrant rights issues, and who is impacted and has a stake in the outcome of these films? What is already happening to address the problem?

Considering these questions will help you determine:

- The aspects of the film and related issues to focus on when promoting and creating the program for your event;
- Whom to invite to the screening. Consider the following to identify your target audiences: Who has an interest in the topics at hand? Who has the power to make a decision or implement change to resolve the issue? Who can influence the decision makers? Who has been left out of the conversation but needs to be heard?





2) Set Goals

What do you want to accomplish with this screening? What are your goals for the event? Do you want to take action, build membership, build alliances, pressure decision makers or raise funds? How can you help people do something meaningful or point them toward the most relevant resources? Answering these questions at the beginning will help make every step of the way easier and more effective.

3) Partner Up!

Consider partnering with other individuals or organizations to make your event more dynamic, split the workload and increase the number of attendees and diversity of the audience. Your partners can also extend the reach of your get-the-word-out efforts. Be sure to reach out to people directly affected by the issues.

If your organization is not led by directly impacted individuals or focused on immigrant justice - please see the “Building Authentic & Transformational Relationships” section below.



4) Sign Up — Register Your Event & Request the DVD/Downloadable Link

Be sure to request Stories Without Borders by filling out the screening request form [here](#). After submitting your information, we will send you a confirmation email and mail you either the DVD or an online screener (depending on the format you need).

5) Choose A Location

Secure a venue for your screening that will be comfortable, have the right atmosphere and provide the basics. This could be your living room, a local theater, a community center, a place of worship or even a park – you decide.

DON'T FORGET... If you need to reserve a space, try to contact the venue at least one month in advance. Here's what you'll need:

- A television or projector with a screen large enough for everyone to see
- Speakers that provide plenty of volume
- An accessible entrance and amenities for all people, including those with disabilities
- Comfortable seating
- An information table for petitions, handouts and sign-up sheet for follow-up with attendees
- If you plan to provide snacks and drinks, make sure there is a place to set them up and that the venue permits refreshments

6) Get the Word Out

Below are a number of avenues you can use to leverage your networks and reach beyond your immediate circle:

Tell Your Friends. Utilize listservs, flyers and social-networking sites to let folks know about the screening. Check out the flyer template [here](#) & email your event info to amyers@workingfilms.org to get one. Also, consider making a Facebook Event (template [here](#)).

- Tell Your Allies. Engage organizations or constituencies that you know will be interested, and ask them to cosponsor the screening event if you haven't already. Then, reach out to the larger public by posting flyers, placing notices in newspapers or community calendars (check out our community calendar template [here](#)) and forwarding notices to various email lists.
- Tell Community Stakeholders. Invite them face-to-face or over the phone. They could also be speakers. Reach out to community leaders such as impacted community members, clergy, elected officials, youth leaders, policy experts, or leaders at nonprofits on the issues covered in Stories Beyond Borders. Tell them why their participation is important, and ask them to preview the films.
- Tell the Press. Contact a reporter who covers immigration issues in your community. Be in touch early on, let them know your event is part of a national screening campaign, and give them a local angle: How do the issues in Stories Without Borders resonate in your community? Why should your audience be passionate? What impact do you aim to have? (check out our press release template [here](#)).



7) Come up with Agenda & Divide Roles

It's important to create an agenda and divide roles with your partners before the day of the screening. Keep your goals in mind when creating the agenda to ensure that it maximizes impact. Below is a sample agenda along with a list of common roles to assign before your screening.

SAMPLE AGENDA (total time: 1 ½ - 2 hours)

- Arrive Early (at least 30 mins before start time) Make sure your local team arrives early to set up and ensure everything is running smoothly.
- Start on time (no later than 10 mins from posted time)
- Brief introduction to Stories Beyond Borders (5-10 mins) Introduce the films and make a brief introduction of any speakers or guests that you want to recognize. Make sure the audience knows that the films will be followed by discussion and action, and encourage them to stick around. If the group is small enough, ask the audience to make very brief individual introductions. Tell them an ending time.
- Viewing of the films (50 mins).
- Discussion (20-30 mins) This is a key part of the agenda. Stories Beyond Borders is intentionally short to allow for enough time to dig into discussion and take action. Folks will likely have strong emotions about what they've seen and will want to reflect and find out what they can do to make a difference. Make sure that everyone who wants to speak has a chance, but keep the conversation flowing. For more specific tips & ideas for the discussion please see "Discussion Guide" below.
- Take Action & Thanks (about 5-20 mins) Sometimes the Take Action comes up organically in the discussion (ex: How can we support immigrant communities and organizations in an authentic and meaningful way?). If it doesn't come up naturally, be sure to take time to invite your audience to get involved in the issues and in your organization (if you represent one). At the end, be sure to thank everyone for their participation.

Common Roles

1. Someone to hand out materials, and welcome people as they enter the venue.
2. Someone to run a sign-in sheet to capture names, emails, and other info of attendees.
3. Someone to do a welcome before the film plays and say who will be speaking after.
4. Someone to take pictures throughout the event.
5. Someone to handle tech, or work with venue to make sure tech is good to go (basically just someone who can be a point person with the venue day-of).
6. Someone(s) to speak to audiences during Q&A, tell them how to get involved locally.

8) Host Screening & Take Action

Arrive early with your agenda and roles prepared. Try to stick to your agenda as much as possible and be sure to ask your audience to take action, such as:

- Writing a postcard, signing a petition, or phone calls to your local representatives / policy makers
- Supporting local immigrant justice work and/or signing up to stay involved.
- Writing an op-ed about how immigration enforcement practices & policies are harming your community.

If you or your organization is not actively involved in a local or national campaign please visit the following organizations for regional and national action ideas that you can share with your audience:



NAKASEC
미주한인봉사교육단체협의회



9) Report Back

During the event, take pictures, and video your audience's reaction to the film. Ask attendees how they liked the event and what they'd like to see next. Did the film change their understanding, raise their awareness or motivate them to take action on immigrant justice?

Pay attention to press representatives who attended and outlets that printed or aired stories. Save these! Share photos, videos and press with your members and network as well as on our [Screening Feedback Form](#) to show how the collective efforts around the film are making an impact. Your story may inspire others to replicate your efforts in their community.

THANKS!

We hope that this guide helps you to have a meaningful screening that makes an impact. Contact us if you have questions along the way: amyers@workingfilms.org.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1) Decide a format:

There are two main formats we recommend for Stories Beyond Borders: A non-formal Q&A with 1-3 speakers and a sit down panel with 3-5 speakers. The Q&A model often results in more audience questions and interaction, where as the panel model allows for more of a deep dive into the issue and discussions between panelists.

In deciding which format to pursue, consider the voices you'd like to feature, the tone you'd like to set with your audience, and whether significant audience participation will help you reach your goals.

2) Moderators:

No matter which model you choose, be sure to find people who can lead the discussion, ask questions to the audience, and generally keep the conversation flowing. Perhaps this is one of the experts you're featuring and they can double task? Perhaps it's someone from your local organization?

3) Discussion Tips & Question ideas for the Moderator:

1. What are your initial thoughts/reactions after watching these films?
2. In the films, it is clear that family separations are happening throughout the US, and not just at the border. How are immigrant communities impacted here in [CITY NAME]?
3. What are local organizations doing about these attacks locally? What can we do to support their efforts?
4. What are some other actions audience members can take right now to stand up against these attacks?
5. In many of the films, the main characters make the case for citizenship for all - not just those with DACA. How do impacted communities & allies sometimes get it wrong with our messaging, and what are some of the harmful narratives we should stop perpetuating? What should we say instead?
6. In the film Santuario, a faith community is able to provide sanctuary for Juana Luz Tobar Ortega, a woman who is facing deportation. While providing sanctuary is a powerful act of solidarity, what else might people like Juana need from their allies at the host church? How else can faith communities stand up against these attacks on immigrants?

BUILDING AUTHENTIC & TRANSFORMATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Working on a complex and deeply personal issue such as immigration requires collaboration, patience, and constant learning with community members, stakeholders, families, service providers, and advocacy organizations. People who have been pushed to the margins and shut out from the conversation and decision-making around immigration often have the lived experience and vantage point to truly understand and address xenophobia, white supremacy, criminalization, and other forms of violence against immigrant communities, families, and individuals.

If you are a group or organization that seeks to use Stories Beyond Borders but is not led by directly impacted individuals or focused on immigrant justice - we believe it is imperative for you to partner with impacted organizations and follow their leadership for this event. We hope that your event is a resource to help you build strong, long-term and sustainable partnerships beyond your film screening.

WHAT TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE REACHING OUT TO IMMIGRANT JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

Before you reach out to potential co-hosts for your Stories Beyond Borders screening, there are points you must clarify within your group and/or organization before reaching out to directly impacted community members and/or immigrant justice organizations: Allyship and Privileged Leadership, and Meeting Your Network Where They Are.

Allyship and Privileged Leadership

Through the lens of allyship and to authentically be in solidarity with the immigrant justice movement, we must support leadership, vision, and wisdom coming from individuals directly impacted by the issues. Impacted community members are often excluded from the conversation and decision-making table due to various power dynamics and various forms of institutional and structural racism. Are you ready to listen to the needs and follow the leadership of impacted communities when planning your film screening?

Even though your organization may not be focused on immigrant justice or led by impacted individuals - community members and stakeholders may look to your organization's leadership on issues of advocacy. However, it is important to consider what kind of leader your organization should be in immigrant justice spaces in the context of reaching out to immigrant individuals, communities and/or organizations. Does your organization come from a place of "impacted leadership" or "privileged leadership"?

Impacted leadership means that leaders of group, community and/or organization are experiencing the effects of the issues they are advocating for. In this case, impacted leadership would be leadership by people who identify as immigrants. **Privileged leadership** comes from people not directly affected by issues, but often advocate and work on issues such as immigration. If you do not identify as an immigrant and/or are not directly impacted by anti-immigrant policies and attitudes, then you can consider yourself privileged showing up and being in immigrant justice spaces. People who are not directly impacted must intentionally leverage their privilege to make space for the leadership, voice, and equitable representation from the most impacted individuals and communities.

Because allies and stakeholders may look to your organization as a leader, it is incumbent on all of us to consider how we are using our leadership to ensure that we are using any privileged leadership we may have to center and support the leadership of those most directly impacted by immigrant justice issues.

**Our work is most impactful when we use our privilege
to lift up those who know more than we do.**

Meet Your Network Where They Are

As you evaluate how to best engage your community as you begin planning your film screening event, consider the preparedness of your existing network to engage on issues of immigrant justice. Is your network ready to:

- Respect and follow the “impacted leadership” of others?
- Work with immigrant justice coalition partners to address issues that are most important and immediate for their community, that often requires you to not be front-and-center?
- Respond to calls to action from immigrant justice coalition partners?

The answers to these and other questions can help you “right-size” the activities around your film screening for your network and community. Your network might benefit most from awareness raising about immigrant justice issues in your community or they may be ready to participate in advocacy-focused activities and/or calls-to-action.

Intentionally and realistically assessing your network’s readiness to engage around immigrant justice issues at the outset of your planning can help **engage your network where they are and build your relationship for future efforts** - inside and outside of the Stories Beyond Borders screening campaign.

MOVING FORWARD WITH A STORIES BEYOND BORDERS SCREENING

Now that you've considered the points above, below are a few tips to ensure that your Stories Beyond Borders screening helps you build authentic and transformational partnerships.

Listen To Your Partners

Following the leadership of impacted communities means listening to them. All of the questions outlined in the guide above should be answered by your co-hosts. From deciding the goals for the events, to choosing a venue, to planning the after-screening discussion and action(s) - be sure to ask these questions directly instead of making assumptions.

Do (some of) the Heavy Lifting!

If you're seeking leadership from your partners on all of these questions, it's going to take a lot of energy on their part to make suggestions. Be sure to provide logistical support wherever you can. For example, if your partners suggest 3 or 4 venue possibilities, volunteer to reach out to those locations to see if any of them are available. Find all of the ways that your organization & network can ease the burden of participation of your partners.

Remember this screening is not the end all be all. To build meaningful relationships, particularly with individuals and organizations working at the frontlines of justice issues, we must continually center and amplify the experiences of those closest to the issue. A Stories Beyond Borders screening event is a great way to do this, but we must continually seek opportunities to lift up and center these voices.



CREATING A COMMUNITY ALTAR

One practice that can help you build community and stay grounded throughout the screening is the use of a community altar. A community altar is a dedicated physical space for people to place objects or written notes that embody peace, calm and love for the purpose of healing. They are easy to set up and modify, and do not require active facilitation or management.

For directly impacted communities, the altar is a reminder of resilience; for all communities, it is a reminder that we are human and deserve nothing less than dignity and humanity.

Jenni Garcia Mendoza from United We Dream's UndocuHealth Program says:

"Altars have represented a sacred space for various cultures around the world since the beginning of time. From shrines to altars - there is a human craving for a sense of connection to our spirituality, our ancestors, nature or anything that reminds us that we are resilient. An altar is a way in which we honor ourselves by having a place that is solely ours and represents our deepest ideals, dreams and realities. The altar is an outer representation of our inner being."

If you will be asking people to offer objects for the duration of the screening, make sure to include this in your promotional materials. Items will need to be picked up at the end of the screening.

The setup. The setup can vary but may include:

- A cloth placed on a floor or table that is visible and accessible to the audience
- A centerpiece, such as stones, flowers, water vessels, or candles (be mindful of smoke or fire restrictions in your venue)
- Essential oils
- Sage, for communities with indigenous ties (be mindful of smoke restrictions in your venue as well as peoples' sensitivity to scent)
- Paper and pens/color pencils (if choosing to not use objects or as backup for people who do not bring objects)

How do I offer up the community altar?

You can mention the altar pre-screening or before you dive into the Q&A/panel. You can say: "We hope these films inspire you to take action, but we also know that the journey to justice is long and the stories we watched can be heavy. We've set up a community altar so that we can center our emotions on peace and unity, and so that this can serve as one step in processing your emotions."

Be the first to offer an example of how to use the altar.

- If objects, you can say: “We ask that you place an object on the altar that is meaningful to you. You don’t have to provide a reason for placing it there, just go up at any time. At the end of the screening you are free to take your object back. I brought with me today, a photo of my father. When I think of him, I think about the time we spent together when I was a kid. He makes me smile, and he is one person who inspires me to keep fighting.”
- If notes, you can say: “We’d love to have you write down an image, the name of a person, or a few words that inspire happiness, love, or unity. At the end of the screening you are free to take your note. I’ve written down the words “my mom’s home made meals,” my dog’s name “Rocko” and “gardens.” I invite you all to share your words and put them in the community altar.

If you are providing essential oils, let people know that they are free to use them. A dot on each wrist or behind the ears will suffice.

If you are providing sage, let people know that they are free to cleanse their body and spirit. One technique that can be used: smudge out the sage before each use; focus on a positive intention or image that represents peace; cleanse by swirling the sage in small circles across your legs, arms, and head.



ENDING YOUR SCREENING WITH HOPE

One way you can end your screening with hope is through a practice called a healing circle, which helps you gauge the emotional state of the audience. Although screenings and panel setups tend to direct our eyes toward one place, taking the time to create a circle (standing or sitting) can be a valuable way to create human connections because you can physically see your neighbor.

Facilitating a Healing Circle

- Make a circle with everyone present at the event.
- Start the conversations by first burning sage or doing a quick, mindful meditation.
- Ask, “How are you truly feeling with the films we have watched?” or “What grounds you and reminds you that you are still a human being?”
- After everyone has shared, end with a hopeful activity.
 - If anyone in the group wants to offer an exercise to transform the low and painful energy, let them take the lead.
 - If no one steps up, a hopeful activity can be another mindfulness breathing session for 3 minutes. Another option is to ask your group to share a song or chant, do art, or play music.
 - You can end with a hopeful chant such as “I believe that we will win!” or Assata Shakur’s poem “It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”
- Don’t rush people out of the space. Give them space to process and feel safe.. Some folks are able to process their emotions through the sharing of food and water with others, or spending time at a community altar.



Safety & Security

These days, thinking about the safety and security of your event is an unfortunate necessity. Check out the section below on questions you should consider and tips for ensuring a safe event.

First, consider the following questions for your event to determine a specific plan: 1.) Where will the event take place? 2.) Who will the audience be? 3.) How widely has the event been publicized? & 4.) What threats could occur (i.e. mass incident (active shooter, fire, etc), right wing media, heckling, etc.)?

From there, you should come up with a plan based on your specific event and potential threats. Together with you team think about if you need staff assigned in a safety/security role, if you need additional volunteers to play this role, or to seek out additional outside security. Think about how big of a safety team you need, what their roles would be during the event, and where they will be posted at the event. Also, be sure to identify all the emergency exits, where everyone should meet outside the location, and whether or not your team would call 911.

Be sure to balance all of this with how it aligns with your values (i.e: if and when you would call the police as it might make members of your community unsafe or uncomfortable, if you want security guards at the event, etc.).

Then be sure to spend time coming up with a communication plan between members of the safety team, with the rest of your staff, and with event participants. Consider ways to help visibilize the safety team including neon armbands or vests.