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## LiveWell Colorado Film Challenge Announces Finalists from Three Colorado Universities

***More than \$12,000 in prizes to be awarded in a screening and awards event, August 18***

**DENVER, COLO. (May 27, 2016)** – LiveWell Colorado is thrilled to announce four student filmmaker finalists in the LiveWell Colorado Film Challenge, a new statewide competition for short films about barriers to healthy living in Colorado. At a public screening and awards event on Thursday, August 18, 2016, winners will take home a total of \$12,000 in cash prizes, with prizes going to both the filmmakers and the media/film departments at their respective schools.

The 2016 LiveWell Colorado Film Challenge finalists are:

- **Colorado State University-Pueblo** student team: Spencer Daniels, Kieren Kuiper, Avery Lewis, and Josh Smith who co-produced “Taking Life into Your Own Hands.”
- **Front Range Community College** student, Sunflower Matzen, a web design major who wrote, directed and produced, “My Mom Loves Colorado.”
- **Colorado Mesa University** recent graduate, Bronson Henriques, who wrote, directed and produced “Bridging the Gap.”
- **Front Range Community College** student, Scott Oney, who will receive an honorable mention for his film “Health Barriers.”

“Colorado is flourishing with talent and innovation in the creative arts, and much of it is being directed toward educating and inspiring action around important social challenges,” said Shepard Nevel, LiveWell Colorado CEO. “Too many Coloradans in our urban and rural communities face significant barriers to accessing affordable, nutritious food and engaging in physical activity, leading to significant health inequities. This film competition has given student filmmakers a platform for doing what they do best — telling powerful stories — so more Coloradans can understand and address these barriers in their own communities.”

“The first-ever LiveWell Colorado Film Challenge highlights the state’s emerging filmmakers,” said Donald Zuckerman, Colorado Film Commissioner. “We were especially impressed with the diversity of storytelling expressed and look forward to unveiling the leading filmmakers.”

Filmmakers were asked to produce a compelling one-to-three minute film of any genre. Finalists were selected by a panel of judges representing the film industry, health advocacy, and civic leaders. Judges screened and rated the films based on effectiveness in illustrating how a health barrier impacts people, persuasiveness in driving action, and resourcefulness in production.

LiveWell Colorado Film Challenge Judges included:

- **Luis Benitez**, the state’s first director of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office
- **Michael Brown**, a world-class mountaineer and three-time Emmy winning filmmaker
- **Matt Campbell**, film programmer for the Denver Film Festival
- **Olga Gonzalez**, director of community engagement for LiveWell Colorado

- **Shepard Nevel**, CEO, LiveWell Colorado
- **Aron Warner**, an Academy Award winning producer
- **Donald Zuckerman**, a film producer and Colorado Film Commissioner

Brandon Berman, director of the Multimedia Graphic Design department at Front Range Community College's Westminster campus, was thrilled that two of the finalists have been in his classes — Sunflower Matzen and Scott Oney. "Sunflower submitted her film as a final project in my video editing class this semester. A measure of success in filmmaking is if the student can create an emotional reaction. Her film really resonated with me," shared Berman.

In partnership with the Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media, the LiveWell Colorado Film Challenge seeks to inform, inspire and rally Coloradans around the urgency of addressing barriers to health. All four finalists will be honored at a public screening and awards event at Denver's Sie FilmCenter on Thursday, August 18, 2016, from 6:30-8 p.m. More information about tickets will be posted soon at [livewellcolorado.org/film-challenge](http://livewellcolorado.org/film-challenge).

#### **ABOUT THE FILM CHALLENGE SPONSORS:**

***LiveWell Colorado** ([www.livewellcolorado.org](http://www.livewellcolorado.org)) is a statewide nonprofit organization committed to preventing and reducing obesity in Colorado by promoting healthy eating and active living. With the goal of eliminating health disparities and advancing health equity, LiveWell Colorado focuses its efforts on policy, environmental and lifestyle changes that remove barriers and increase access to healthy behaviors. Working in partnership with obesity prevention initiatives across the state, LiveWell Colorado aims to provide every Coloradan with access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity to make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation.*

***The Colorado Office of Film, Television & Media** ([www.coloradofilm.org](http://www.coloradofilm.org)) takes pride in promoting the great State of Colorado to the film and television industry locally, nationally and internationally. We work to enhance the success of Colorado film projects through promotion, funding and education. The Colorado Office of Film, Television & Media attracts and facilitates content creation in Colorado to generate economic growth in all of its communities. It also connects filmmakers, animators, gamers and photographers to the resources they need, such as location assistance, crew referrals and inter-governmental cooperation.*

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