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E. W. Stetson to receive the 2021 VTIFF Community Champion Award

Burlington, VT (Aug 26): VTIFF is pleased to announce the 2021 VTIFF Community Champion Award will be given to Bill Stetson on September 8 at the private home of an Officer of the VTIFF Board of Directors.

The annual VTIFF Community Champion Award, established in 2017, goes to an individual or organization who has enriched the community through using the power of film as a transformative art. Arguably the most democratic medium, Cinema broadens our understanding of the human condition and connects to us intellectually and emotionally. It brings us all together. And it often contributes to the economic life of our community. Previous recipients of the award were Mariah Riggs, Director of Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center; Bess O'Brien, documentary filmmaker and social justice lobbyist; Robin Lloyd, filmmaker, peace activist and philanthropist.

E W Stetson (known to his friends as Bill), and his commitment to film over many years, reflects our highest aspirations for cinema as a vital force. He was the Founding President of the Vermont Film Commission, which attracted feature films such as *The Cider House Rules*, *Me, Myself and Irene*, and *What Lies Beneath* to Vermont. He is a producer of such socially significant films as *What We Want*, *What We Believe: The Black Panther Party Library*, and *A Closer Walk*, an AIDS documentary for PBS currently in use by the Peace Corps. Stetson also served as an adviser for *Earth and the American Dream*, an HBO movie for Earth Day.

Bill is a great supporter of film festivals. He was for many years on the Board of VTIFF and was the co-founder of WRIF (White River Indie Festival). He currently serves on the board of the



Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital and on the Board of Vermont PBS. He gives generously to many film organizations and filmmakers.

The Vermont International Film Foundation (VTIFF) is a cultural non-profit organization whose mission is to enrich the community and bring the world to Vermont through film. VTIFF operates year-round with monthly screenings on the last Thursday of each month, a Global Roots Film Festival in the spring as well as supporting Regional filmmakers. VTIFF celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2020. The largest program of VTIFF is the annual Vermont International Film Festival, best known for featuring groundbreaking and independent films from around the world and Vermont. The 2020 festival runs October 23rd -Nov 1 on VTIFF's virtual portal. More information at [**VTIFF.ORG**](https://vtiff.org)

High-res photos of Mr. Stetson at [**VTIFF.ORG/PRESS**](https://vtiff.org/press)

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