



Whistleblowers: The Most Unlikely Stars to Shine at FestForums 2019

Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival is Named a Finalist For "Best Of The Fests" Award and Organizers Discuss How Black Culture is Impacting the Festival Market

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, November 12, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On November 20-22, over 1,000 attendees and exhibitors will converge on the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort, formerly The Fess Parker. [FestForums](#) Santa Barbara is back for 2019! This conference, which is all about the festivals, will be awarding winners from three festival types: Music; Arts, Film & Culture; and Food & Beverages. The award categories are: sustainability, innovation, and charity for a total of nine winners. The "Best of the Fests," is an award ceremony recognizing North America's leading festivals. Earlier this year the [ACORN 8](#) hosted the 8th Annual Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival on Capitol Hill. The summit is a finalist for innovative in Arts, Film & Culture. Recent events demonstrate the importance of whistleblowers in our society.

"I am pleased to participate in the For The Culture: How Culture Based Festival are Disrupting The Market panel during the conference. We designed the Whistleblower Summit for Civil & Human Rights to highlight the contributions of women and minority whistleblowers along with public health and safety advocates. Earlier this year we honored John Singleton with the Mary Pickford Award, not for his incredible talent as a filmmaker, but for his courage and activism standing up against racism in the studio system in Hollywood."— Michael McCray, Esq. co-founder / Managing Director, Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival.

Festivals that focus on African American culture have become a driving force in the festival industry. From Essence Festival in New Orleans, which boasts over half a million attendees, to AC3 in Atlanta, to festivals produced by Hip Hop moguls and top names in the industry, festivals mired in the Black experience are in a unique position to claim market space in a world oversaturated with festivals. The panel will examine the unique perspective of these festivals from the men and women who defy industry norms and have made culture a global experience using music, film, health and cuisine.

"When whistleblowers started meeting in Washington, DC in 2007, it seemed doomed to fail. Who wants to be known as a whistleblower? And why would they want to gather together? We began a campaign to help fellow whistleblowers and to inform the public about why whistleblowers are important. First, people asked could we pull it off—we did. Then, if we would we do it again—we did that too. Next, people said that most conferences start to wane after five years but we kept growing, innovating and adapting. Then we added the first TEDx Salon on Whistleblowers and the First Amendment, followed by the first Whistleblower Film Festival, and now we are a finalist for a Best Festival Award at Fest Forums." —Marcel Reid, co-founder / Festival Director, Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival.

The Whistleblower Summit & Film Festival is the largest assembly of whistleblowers in the country and is the only film festival dedicated to whistleblowers and first amendment activism. The summit recognizes that cinema is a powerful medium for highlighting civil and human rights violations across the globe. It seeks to shine a light on stories of courage and perseverance in the face of injustice; and to encourage individuals to stand together to achieve human rights for all. The call for submissions for this annual film festival, which will take place in July 2020, is open.

The summit is looking for films about whistleblowers, the First Amendment or that touch on one of several human rights issues including but not limited to freedom of expression, women's rights, discrimination, communal violence, and defending human rights. The themes mentioned are not exhaustive; films centered on social justice or other civil and human rights issues are equally welcome for submission.

Over the last twelve years' members from the Make it Safe Coalition (MISC) have arranged an assembly of whistleblowers in Washington, DC for an annual conference originally known as Washington Whistleblower's Week. During which they passed thirteen laws, including No FEAR and the WPEA, conducted congressional lobby days, provided Continuing Legal Education training, published magazines and books, hosted radio shows, submitted amicus briefs and law review articles, made television appearances, produced plays and theatrical productions, showcased films, even "occupied" government agencies.

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