

Urban Resource Institute and Eamon O'Rourke Partner, Deliver Storytelling Workshop for Domestic Violence Youth Survivors

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Urban Resource Institute](#) (URI) – the largest provider of domestic violence shelter services in the U.S. and a leading provider of shelter and services for homeless families, has partnered with actor, writer, and director Eamon O'Rourke to offer his [filmmaking expertise](#) to the URI Economic Empowerment Program and its participating youth clients.

URI provides transitional housing and comprehensive services to 2,200 adults and children every night in more than 20 domestic violence and homeless family shelters across New York City. That means approximately 1 in 35 unhoused individuals in NYC are served by URI. In addition, prevention and intervention programs reach approximately 40,000 adults and youth each year.

Approximately 60-70% of the residents in the URI shelters at any given time are youth and children. URI has long understood that working with youth and children is an important step in

ending intergenerational cycles of violence and poverty, and for years, URI has delivered programs in high schools and middle schools to teach healthy relationships via the URI Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (RAPP). New in 2022 and expanding the work with youth



Eamon O'Rourke has used storytelling as a method of catharsis throughout his life.



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URINYC envisions a world free of domestic violence, homelessness, poverty, and trauma.

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is the URI Economic Empowerment Program's Fabrication Lab (Fab Lab) an incubator of innovation and creativity that provides youth from URI shelters with skills and training opportunities in technology and fabrication, all while supporting them through their healing process.

At the Fab Lab, adults and youth have access to 3D

printers, laser cutters, and other technological tools intended to give new opportunities to youth and adults who have experienced trauma. John Jefferys, Director of the URI Fab Lab, works with O'Rourke to create a program that provides a safe space for youth who have experienced homelessness and domestic violence to be creative and practice storytelling and restore a sense of control over one's life. The workshop is intentional without clear rules so participants are invited to hold the reins of the filmmaking process, which engages them proactively and provides a needed sense of control. The collaborative nature of filmmaking also enhances the feelings of belonging, being a part of a group, and working together with a purpose, which increases levels of self-worth and self-esteem.

“We work to bridge the digital divide by providing an incubator of innovation and learning, a place to experience the latest technology and to find a pathway to jobs of the future,” added Jeffreys. “This filmmaking course adds another layer for each student to learn that they are capable of great things and they begin to see their own path in front of them. We hope to enlist Mr. O'Rourke in future film-related workshops as we explore the power of this medium to speak directly to the human soul.”

With more than 15 years of industry experience, O'Rourke has worked in theater, the music industry, on several short films, and his first feature film, *Asking for It*, which was released in March 2022. No stranger to trauma himself, O'Rourke suffered through the untimely deaths of both parents but has found solace and healing through his craft. Often taking the form of instruction, O'Rourke also served as an acting and improvisational coach for individuals working to overcome addiction.

“Writing and storytelling has always been important to me and has always been a big part of how I have navigated the death of my parents and some of the other experiences that I've been through that have been difficult for me” said O'Rourke. “It's a workshop combo of filmmaking and storytelling as a process of catharsis.” And catharsis can be crucial, as many of the workshop students may have faced poverty, trauma, disenfranchisement, and cycles of violence.

By adding his workshop to the mix of offerings, students are provided the chance to explore other mediums to express their emotions as they navigate through their difficulties and potentially discover new passions and other ways to be creative – and perhaps, they pursue filmmaking as a career down the road.

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About Eamon O'Rourke

Eamon O'Rourke is a seasoned actor, writer, and director with more than 15 years of experience in the industry. He has worked in theater, on [music videos](#), on short films, and released his first feature film that he wrote and directed, *Asking for It*, in 2022. O'Rourke is also a dedicated activist, focusing his efforts on increasing representation in Hollywood while also volunteering to protect immigrant rights, reproductive justice, economic equality, and to help tackle New York City's drug crisis. Learn more at <https://eamonorourke.com/>.

About Urban Resource Institute (URI):

Urban Resource Institute (URI) transforms the lives of domestic violence survivors and homeless families by empowering individuals, families, and communities, particularly communities of color and other vulnerable populations, to end cycles of domestic violence, homelessness, poverty, and trauma by increasing safety and resiliency. As the largest provider of domestic violence shelter services in the US and a leading provider of homeless services, URI's programs impact more than 40,000 individuals annually through prevention, intervention, education, and direct services in both residential and non-residential settings in New York. URI is recognized as a thought-leader with influence across the U.S. and beyond. For more information, visit www.urinyc.org or follow on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance, call NYC's 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-621-HOPE or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE.

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